Part III:

History as Social Science:

Statistics, Summaries,

Conclusions,

and

Methodological Notes

Chapter 19: Quantitative Evidence of Gradual Reform

Anyone who has attempted to keep a diary knows that faithfully recording history is nearly impossible, even in very small number settings. There is much that must be left out because of space and time constraints. Both deductive and inductive approaches to history face similar problems. Just as every historical narrative can potentially be more complete, so can every model. Indeed, many, perhaps most, debates among historians, political scientists, and economists arise from disagreements about whether variable *x* or event *y* has been inappropriately neglected or focused on by others. In this the preceding chapters are no different from other models and alternative historical narratives, and so are naturally open to such criticism. Although a good deal of historical evidence suggests that the models of part I can shed useful light on the emergence of Western democracy, no proof is possible.

Nonetheless, more evidence is always useful. With this in mind, chapter 19 develops quantitative evidence and statistical tests to assess the explanatory power of the model of constitutional reform developed in part I. Statistical inference rarely ends debates over the relevance of models or variables, but it does allow hypothesized relationships to be examined systematically and often sheds light on the extent to which particular relationships and variables can account for the events of interest.

The estimates and tests conducted in chapter 19 broadly support the main hypotheses: (a) that democratic governance arose gradually through a series of parliamentary and electoral reforms and (b) that constitutional and economic liberalization were interdependent phenomena during the nineteenth century.

A. The Temporal Structure of Political and Economic Development

The models developed in part I provide an explanation for ongoing reforms and for time dependency among institutions and policies. Institutions and policies are adjusted from time to time, because the circumstances and goals of persons with the authority to adopt reforms change through time. Not all such changes induce institutional reforms, because risk aversion, information problems, institutional interests, and advantages of stability produce considerable institutional conservatism. Relatively large changes or a series of small changes in circumstances or interests, however, may produce sufficient interest in reform to satisfy a government's rules for formal and/or informal amendments. The models imply that constitutional reforms alter of a subset of existing procedures

and policies, rather than create entirely new constitutions, and that the amendments adopted tend to be multidimensional and linked, because they are consequences of constitutional bargaining.

Although the models characterize the decisions of a single polity at a moment in time, the same exogenous changes in circumstances may pose similar problems or create similar new possibilities for several polities at a time. Insofar as reforms are adopted at somewhat different times and vary in their details, the experience of other polities provides can useful evidence about the effects of particular reforms. The reforms producing the most desirable results for policymakers can be copied by other countries can be used as the basis for subsequent reforms, which produces convergence among institutions and policies.

Constitutional Reform and Economic Development as Time Series

Many predictions of the models seem are so evident in the historical narratives, that further empirical analysis may seem unnecessary. On the other hand, the historical narratives were written with the models in mind, and it is possible that the factors focused on were given greater prominence than they deserved. It is also possible that the pattern of reform was less regular and predictable than the narratives make them appear, because so much has been left out. The narratives focus on a single process of reform along a single strand of history. So, it is possible that constitutional bargaining played a smaller role in constitutional developments than the narratives suggest. Additional light can be shed on the explanatory power of the model by conducting statistical tests.

Subjecting the models to statistical tests, however, requires a somewhat more quantitative and coarser formulation than used in the narratives. Recall that the models of part I imply that the bargaining equilibrium determines the nature of a government's constitution (C_t) in period t. These reflect preexisting distributions of ideological (I_{t-1}) and economic (W_{t-1}) interests; the preexisting constitutional architecture (C_{t-1}), and political shocks (v_{t-1}) random "shocks" in the previous period that affect the bargains reached by the parliament and the king. Some of these shocks may be sufficiently large to be considered crises, but crises are not necessary for constitutional reforms to be adopted.

The extent of economic liberalization (L_t) in period t reflects past political decisions and so the extent of economic liberalization is determined by the same political and economic variables as those that determine the current constitution. The distribution of human capital (E_t) reflects past education policies and the distribution of wealth (W_t); so it is largely determined by the same past

political and economic variables as constitutional and economic liberalization. The distribution of economic interests (W_t) is largely determined by economic regulations (L_t), the past distribution of available resources (including human capital), the state of production technology (T_t) and economic shocks (u_t). Economic inertia exists because the distribution of natural resources and capital (physical, human, and organizational capital) and past regulations tend to change relatively slowly because of institutional conservatism with respect to economic regulations and the economic enterprises themselves. Consequently, W_{t-1} is an important determinant of present economic opportunities.

The general temporal logic of the models can be summarized with a series of intertemporal equations:

$$C_t = C_{t-1} + c(I_{t-1}, W_{t-1}, v_t) \quad (19.1)$$

$$L_t = l(I_{t-1}, W_{t-1}, C_{t-1,} v_{t-1}, u_{t-1}) \quad (19.2)$$

$$E_t = e(I_{t-1}, W_{t-1}, C_{t-1}, v_{t-1}, u_{t-1}) \quad (19.3)$$

$$W_t = W_{t-1} + x(L_t , T_t , E_t , u_t) \quad (19.4)$$

To simplify for the purposes of statistical analysis, C_t can be thought of as an index of liberal democracy, W_t as average real wealth, and I_t as an index of the liberalness of the ideology of the median member of parliament. Natural resources are assumed to be determined by national boundaries, geographic location, and geological factors, which are taken as given for the period of interest. Technology and ideology are exogenous variables in this model, and reflect past innovations and experience in science and philosophy.

Note that even with these simplifications, time dependency in a constitutional bargaining model is not an unexplained property of the "error term," but rather is predicted by the internal logic of the model. The implicit function theorem allows the constitutional and economic systems to be characterized as functions of the predetermined and exogenous variables.

$$C_t = c(u_t, v_t, C_{t-1}, W_{t-1}, I_{t-1}, T_{t-1}, v_{t-1}, u_{t-1}, I_{t-2}, T_{t-2}, v_{t-2}, u_{t-2} ...) \quad (19.5)$$

$$W_t = x(u_t, v_t, C_{t-1}, W_{t-1}, I_{t-1}, T_{t-1}, v_{t-1}, u_{t-1}, I_{t-2}, T_{t-2}, v_{t-2}, u_{t-2} ...) \quad (19.6)$$

These reduced forms demonstrate that constitutional and economic systems are interdependent and substantially determined by similar past chance events and innovations. That is to say, constitutional

liberalization and economic development are predicted to be highly correlated, because they are determined by the same variables.

Unfortunately, there are no good quantitative measures of the magnitude of past ideological and technological changes. Indeed, the importance of particular innovations are normally assessed by looking at their economic and political impacts, rather than through independent measures of the innovations themselves (Burke 1978, Mokyr 2002).

These data problems can be bypassed to some extent, if technological and ideological innovation can be regarded as stochastic processes. In that case, it can be argued that innovations are substantially unpredictable insofar as they are produced by men and women with random collections of talents and knowledge, whose new ideas are catalyzed by chance events.[370] This makes the ideology and technology sequences analogous to those of v and u, and they can be treated in a similar manner for purposes of statistical tests.

This additional assumption allows equations 19.5 and 19.6 to be approximated as:

$$C_t = \gamma(C_{t-1}, W_{t-1}, u_t , v_t, z_{t-1}, z_{t-2} \dots) \qquad (19.7)$$

$$W_t = \chi(C_{t-1}, W_{t-1}, u_t , v_t, z_{-1t}, z_{t-2} \dots) \qquad (19.8)$$

with

$$z_{t-1} = v_{t-1}+u_{t-1}+T_{t-1}+I_{t-} \qquad (19.9)$$

Equations 19.7 and 19.8 are similar to those used in most contemporary empirical work on the political economy of institutions, although the models predict that the stochastic parts of even reduced form models tends to be serially correlated and are likely to be mixed, rather than pure, distributions. The models also differ from much empirical work in that they do not imply

[370] If ideological and technological shocks are not completely exogenous, one could represent such innovations with functions such as $T_t = s(T_{t-1}, E_{t-1}, L^E_t, W_{t-1}, z_t, u_t)$ and $I_t = i(I_{t-1}, E_{t-1}, C_{t-1}, W_{t-1}, v_t, z_t u_t)$. These relationships can be substituted into equations 19.5 and 19.6, and would yield reduced forms similar to those of 19.7 and 19.8, but without explicit technological and ideological variables. Nonetheless, if genius and/or luck are required for innovation, the "genius factor" z_t remains an important variable both in the T and I models and in the reduced forms. In such cases, "genius" and "luck" drive both economic and constitutional development in the long run, which provides a role for exceptional men and women in the model.

unidirectional causality or particular trigger points at which democratic politics or market economies become feasible.[371] The assumed continua of government and market types allows peaceful and gradual transitions to parliamentary democracy and to market-based economies when there are what might be called "liberal trends" in the random shocks, but stability when there are no trends.

History and the Intertemporal Equations

The historical narratives suggest that both kinds of periods have existed in Europe. Medieval forms of king and council governance were stable for centuries at time, although there were reforms and counter-reforms. Trends in economic and political reforms are evident in the nineteenth century. The historical narratives suggest that the trends reflect increased rates of technological innovation and the "radicalization" of liberalism.

There is also evidence of the predicted boot-strapping effects. The early market and educational reforms contributed to increased rates of innovation, which tended to increase support for further liberalization of economic rules insofar as new economies of scale became possible. Broader markets allowed new industrial organization to be profitable, which increased specialization and helped expand the middle and upper middle classes, who generally favored greater openness in politics and markets. Upward mobility required eliminating medieval privileges in economics and politics. Economic liberalization often advanced political liberalization, and political liberalization often supported economic liberalization. There was no conflict between democracy and economic development in the nineteenth century.

Although each transition includes unique features, the Western transitions were qualitatively similar and occurred during roughly the same time period, largely between 1825 and 1925. The remainder of this chapter suggests that Western transitions were also quantitatively similar.

B. Descriptive Statistics for the Nineteenth Century

Economic historians and political scientists have constructed macroeconomic and macro-political data sets for the nineteenth century. These data are less precise than their contemporary counterparts, but they are sufficient demonstrate that the historical narratives developed in part II are consistent with recent efforts to quantify institutional developments.

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[371] For an extensive overview of the contemporary literature on the interdependence between economic and political development, see Paldam and Gundlach (2008). Congleton and Swedenborg (2006) provide an overview of the contemporary rational choice–based empirical research on the policy effects of alternative democratic constitutions.

Estimates of reduced forms of the models based on that data demonstrate that the models provide useful causal theories of the constitutional developments of the nineteenth century.

It should be acknowledged that the quantitative data are imperfect in many respects. For example, per capita gross domestic production data is, for example, often used as a measure of average personal income or welfare. There are conceptual problems with doing so in contemporary work, because not all sources of income or economic welfare are measured. There are additional problems with nineteenth century data, because GDP is less precisely measured and to some extent measures the wrong thing.

Nineteenth-century GDP data are not based on extensive survey data, but are estimated from economic models that link GDP to other available quantitative data, such as tax and trade flows. Moreover, gross domestic product measures market activity and neglects domestic sources of goods and services. Household production was a much larger fraction of personal income during the first part of the nineteenth century than at the century's end, because more of economic life took place in the home in 1800 than in the money economy. The gradual reduction in household production during the nineteenth century implies that GDP per capita provides an estimate of average income that is biased downward in the early part of the century relative to the last part of the century This tends to bias growth rates of personal income upward and exaggerate the effect of business cycles on personal income in the first half relative to the second half of the century.[372]

Quantitative political indicators are also problematic for much of the nineteenth century. With the exception of vote counts and seats in parliament, evidence about the nature of constitutions is inherently less numerical than data about economic income. Even election data tend to be sparse in the early part of the nineteenth century, because voting was often by voice and division, rather than ballot, and because elections for seats in parliament were often not contested. Data on party affiliation are also unreliable during the first half of the nineteenth century, because disciplined political parties emerged in most of Europe only in the late nineteenth century, although various more or less stable factions have long existed. The absence of party platforms and good voting records implies that the standard measurements of party and voter ideology are unavailable.

Moreover, one can say with some confidence that average wealth or suffrage are each twice as large in country A than in country B, but one cannot so easily conclude that the parliament in country A is twice as powerful or its government twice as democratic as that of country B. The

[372] This bias may be offset to some extent by reductions in environmental amenities, but tends to be increased by reduced access to communal resources.

breadth of suffrage and the division of authority between the king or president and the parliament are quire different things and the historical narrative suggest that they are not always highly correlated.

Quantitative Indices of the Relative Authority of King and Council

Nonetheless, several attempts have been made to construct indices of democracy for the nineteenth century. For example, the Polity IV data base extends back to 1800 for many countries. That data series is based on expert appraisals of a number of common characteristics of governance for the countries in the data set. These characteristics are used to create numerical "subindices," which are then aggregated into their widely used indices of democracy. The subidices of Polity's 0–10 index of democracy assess both formal constitutional procedures and de facto political procedures, as judged by various country experts.

The widely used Polity index is a similar -10 to +10 index that subtracts an index of autocracy from the democracy index. Democracies (10) have broadly competitive systems for choosing their chief executives, institutional constraints on governance, and guarantees for civil liberties. Autocracies (-10) have executives that are chosen by a narrow elite, who can govern without significant institutional constraints.

Unfortunately for the purposes of this book, the Polity indices focus for the most part on the procedures through which a country's "chief executive" comes to office, rather than on the distribution of policymaking authority between the executive and parliament, or the election laws for parliament, which are the main focus of this book. In nineteenth-century parliamentary systems, determining who the chief executive is and whether he or she is elected or not requires determining whether the prime minister or king is actually the chief executive in a given year, and who ultimately chooses the prime minister.

As developed in part II, the precise manner in which prime ministers are chosen and their policymaking authority relative to the king is not entirely determined by constitutional documents. Consequently, the polity indices implicitly require assessing the relative importance of policies controlled by the king and cabinet and the extent to which the king or parliament determines the membership of the cabinet. Because of this, one of the democracy subindices, XrComp, indirectly sheds light on one of the key shifts in authority required for the emergence of parliamentary democracy in the nineteenth century. The subindex XrComp characterizes the competitiveness of executive recruitment. It focuses the selection process for the executive (hereditary, designated, or

elected). In nineteenth-century Europe, a value of 1 implies royal dominance, 2 sharing between a king and an (indirectly) elected prime minister, and 3 dominance by an (indirectly) elected prime minister (Marshall and Jaggers 2005: 24). Clearly, three categories can only roughly measure the continuum of policymaking authority. The other subindices for the democracy index provide equally coarse assessments of the extent to which "chief executives" are politically and constitutionally constrained.[373]

Some Suggestive Data Plots

Figures 19.1, 19.2, and 19.3 plot economic and political indicators for the United Kingdom, Sweden, and the Netherlands. The figures include per capita gross domestic product in constant dollar terms (RGDPpp) and three Polity indices. The RGDPpp data are from Officer (2006) for the United Kingdom, from Smits, Horlings and Van Zanden (2000) for the Netherlands, and from Edvinsson (2005) for Sweden. The political liberalization indices include (i) Politiy's executive competition subindex, XrComp, which takes values from 1–3, (ii) Polity's democracy index. which takes values from 1–10, and (iii) the Polity index, which takes values from –10 to +10. Because there are different experts for different countries, cross-country comparisons are less than completely reliable, although the country indices are internally self-consistent.[374]

[373] The democracy index focuses on three characteristics: (1) the existence of institutions through which citizens "express effective preferences about alternative policies and leaders," (2) the extent to which there are "institutionalized constraints on the exercise of power by the executive," and (3) aspects of civil liberties and the rule of law. Overall, the index attempts to measure "the competitiveness of political participation, the openness of executive recruitment, and constraints on the chief executive." Many of the subindices are simple 0-1 variables. (Marshall and Jaggers 2005: 17–18).

[374] See Jacobs and Smits (2001). Van den Berg et al. (2006) note that business cycles in the nineteenth century had significant effects on quality of life and mortality.

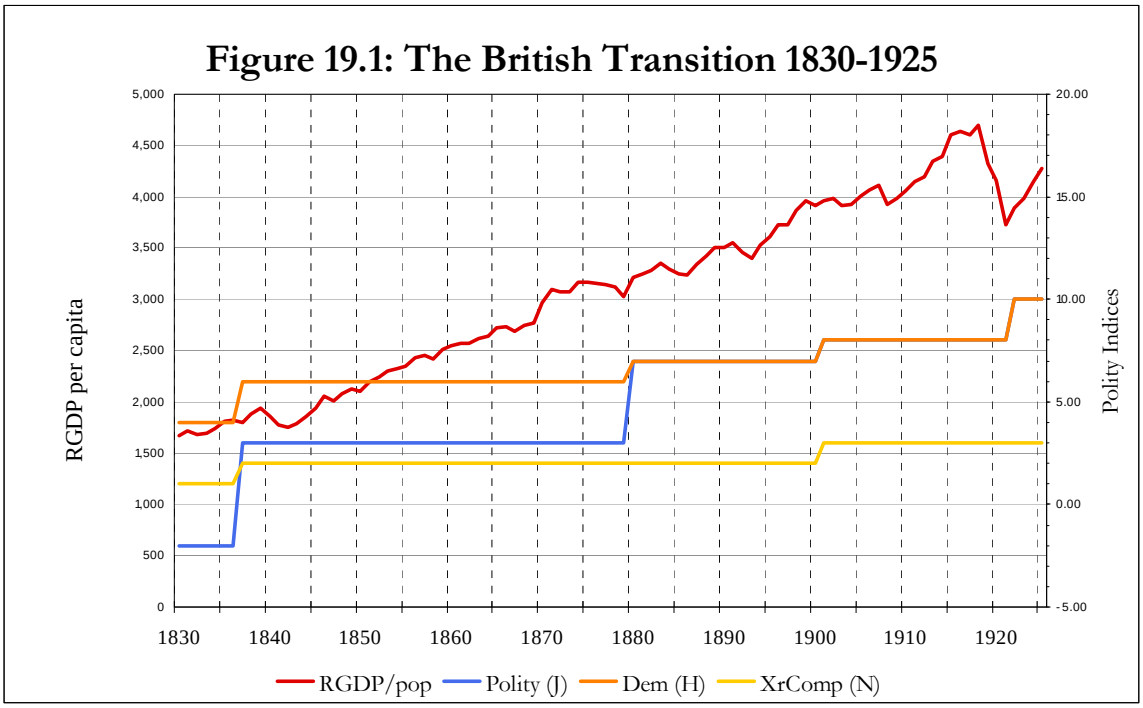


Figure 19.1: The British Transition 1830-1925
RGDP per capita
Polity Indices
5,000
4,500
4,000
3,500
3,000
2,500
2,000
1,500
1,000
500
0
20.00
15.00
10.00
5.00
0.00
-5.00
1830
1840
1850
1860
1870
1880
1890
1900
1910
1920
RGDP/pop
Polity (J)
Dem (H)
XrComp (N)

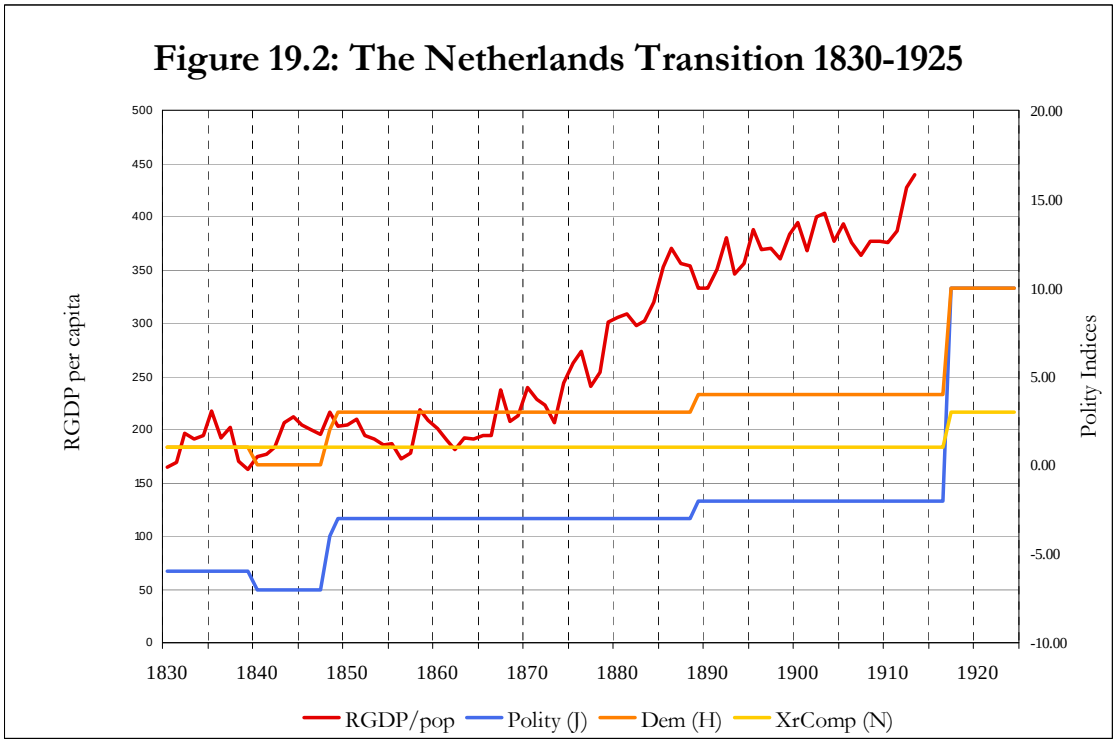
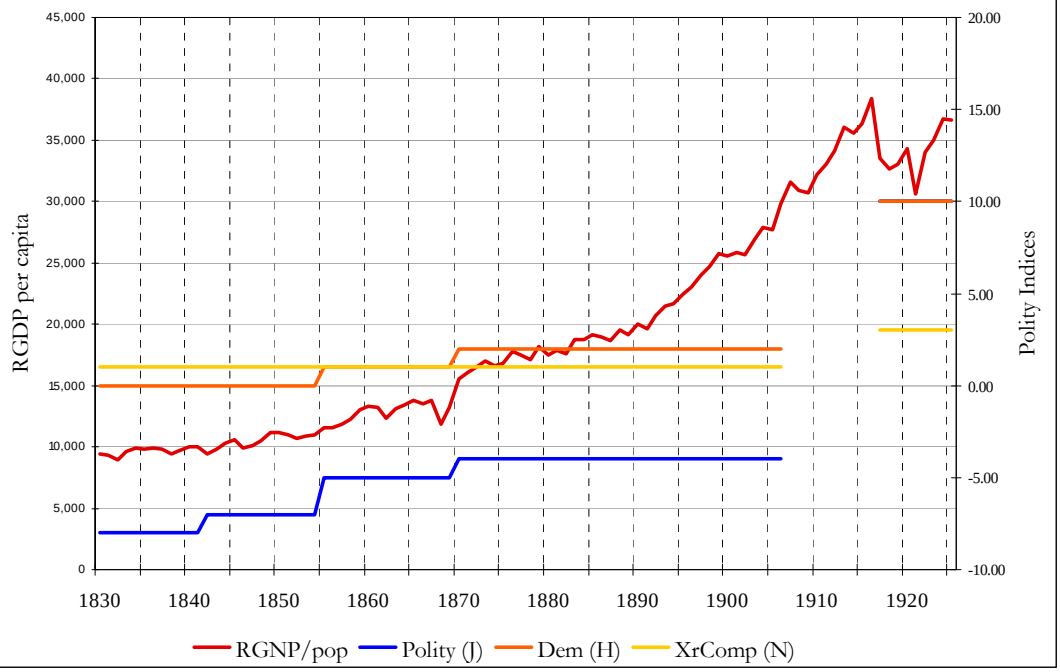


Figure 19.2: The Netherlands Transition 1830-1925
RGDP per capita
Polity Indices
500
450
400
350
300
250
200
150
100
50
0
20.00
15.00
10.00
5.00
0.00
-5.00
-10.00
1830
1840
1850
1860
1870
1880
1890
1900
1910
1920
RGDP/pop
Polity (J)
Dem (H)
XrComp (N)

Figure 19.3: The Swedish Transition 1830-1925



The data plots reveal that average income increased more or less continuous during the nineteenth century in Great Britain, the Netherlands, and Sweden, although there were several business cycles. Business cycles are evident in spite of the fact that the estimated RGDPpp data have been smoothed somewhat by researchers to reduce various measurement errors. Indeed, many of the business cycles were severe and international in scope.[375]

The political indices reflect the gradual increase in the democratic basis of executive political authority. Kings became less important and prime ministers and parliament more so during the century. The latter is most directly indicated by the executive competition index, which unfortunately takes only three values. The political indices have been "smoothed" somewhat, but their integer values tend to make very gradual transitions appear to be step functions. The polity indices for Sweden rise more slowly than seems consistent with the rise of parliament and expansion of Swedish suffrage in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As noted in chapter 14, significant reforms of its parliament were adopted in that period. For example, the 1907 election law reforms established universal (unweighted) suffrage and proportional representation for the selection of

[375] Most studies of this period rely on Maddison's (2003) compilation of data. The country-level studies of Smits, Horlings and Van Zanden; Officer; and Edvinsson are used here because they make use of more recently available information and tend to be more fine grained. Trends in the Maddison RGDP per capita estimates are similar to these individual country studies.

parliament. Control over the cabinet (as opposed to authority over budgets), however, was not completely resolved until the period of World War I. Unfortunately, the effects of parliamentary reforms are only indirectly measured by the Polity indices.[376]

Overall, real per capita GDP and liberal democracy increased gradually throughout the period, although the timing of economic growth and institutional reforms differred somewhat.

Quantitative Indicators of Suffrage Reform

A more direct indication of the use of democratic procedures for selecting members of parliament, as opposed to the chief executive, is the number of votes cast in national elections for seats in parliament. Records exist for suffrage law reforms, population, and the number of votes cast in late nineteenth-century elections. This information has been used by Flora et al. (1983) to calculate eligibility to vote within Europe, although the estimates do not cover the entire nineteenth century. Time series of eligibility for the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Sweden, and Germany are plotted below in figure 19.4. (Aidt provided the interpolated values of the Flora estimates.) The Flora calculations clearly indicate a gradual expansion of suffrage—more or less as step functions for the countries depicted. (The individual "steps" should tilt upward somewhat, reflecting the suffrage effects of increasing personal wealth and tax payments under the suffrage laws of that period.)

Suffrage reform was not an all-or-nothing revolutionary event, rather significant reforms were adopted occasionally throughout the nineteenth century. Several significant revisions are evident in each of the four countries.

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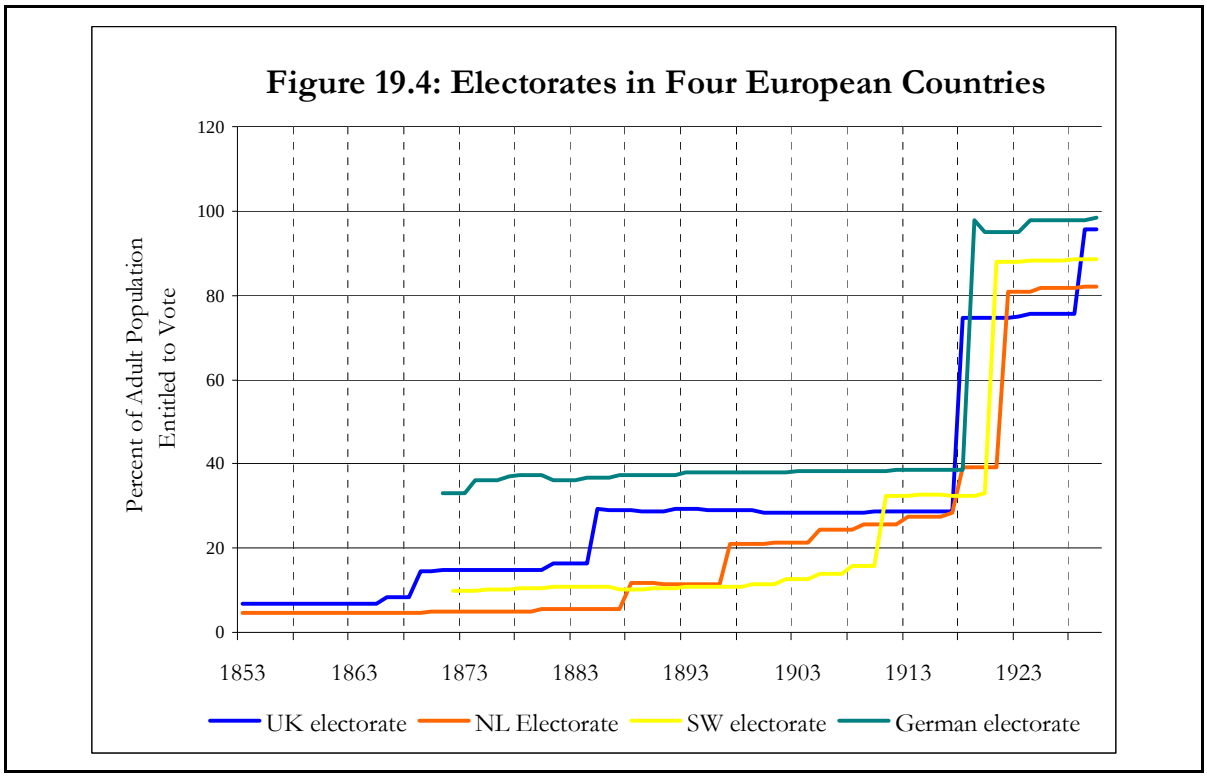
[376] Some of the coding for the Swedish case is coded as "88" from 1907–16, which indicates a period of "transition" in which the usual indices cannot be definitively judged (Marshall and Jaggers 2005: 18). This coding indicates that there was greater ambiguity in this period than usual over who could appoint the cabinet and prime minister.

Chapter 14 suggests, however, that intermediate values of XrComp (2) would have been appropriate for this period. Although there were several large public demonstrations in favor of economic and political reform, elections continued to be held as constitutional reforms were introduced, debated, and adopted. Some of the reforms adopted in this period had delayed effects, for example, turnover in the upper chamber took place during nine years (Congleton 2003c, ch. 3; Verney 1957, ch. 8–9).



Voter turnout in the early nineteenth century is more difficult to assess than eligibility to vote, because early elections were often by voice vote, and many candidates for parliament ran unopposed before the emergence of well-organized national political parties. These factors, together with parliaments limited authority, tended to make casting votes less important in the early nineteenth century. Vote tabulations, however, are available for the second half of the nineteenth century, as more elections for seats in parliament were contested and as paper ballots and secret ballots were introduced. Table 19.1 lists votes cast, population, and fraction of the population voting using data from Cook and Paxton (1978, 1998) for the number of voters and population. The Cook and Paxton data for the Netherlands and Sweden are supplemented by data taken directly from Dutch and Swedish election records.

Population figures from national census data do not align perfectly with election dates and are interpolated from the nearest available data points. Turnout rates are rough approximations, based on the assumption that adults make up half of the population and that the adult population is equally divided between men and women. As long as the true ratios are stable, the relative magnitudes of turnout will be similar to those included in the table. Note that electoral participation gradually expands both numerically and proportionately throughout the century. It also bears noting that the

largest single suffrage reforms occurs just before or after World War I, when most adult women became eligible to vote.

Table 19.1
Votes Cast in National Elections and Population

in Nineteenth-Century Netherlands, Sweden, and the United Kingdom
(in thousands, from Cook and Paxton, *European Political Facts 1848-1918*)

	Netherlands			Sweden			United Kingdom		
Election Years (NL and UK)	Voters	Pop (interpolated)	Turnout (est)	Voters (nearest yr)	Pop (interpolated)	Turnout (est)	Voters	Pop (interpolated)	Turnout (est)
1831							435.4	26081.571	0.033
1833							652.8	26211.457	0.05
1866							1056.7	30206.1	0.07
1869							1995.1	30973.32	0.129
1883							2618.5	35454.42	0.148
1886							4380.5	36308.85	0.241
1888	292.6	4471.267	0.131	274.7	4719.196	0.116			
1891	293.8	4629.92	0.127	288.1	4784.98	0.12		37732.9	
1894	299.1	4807.7	0.124	339.9	5101.258	0.133			
1897	576.6	4985.48	0.231						
1901	609.6	5254.84	0.232				6730.9	41458.7	0.325
1905	752.7	5556.52	0.271						
1909	843.5	5858.2	0.288	503.1	5445.2	0.185	7710	44976.44	0.343
1913	960.6	6243.4	0.308	1066.2	5558.837	0.384			
1918	1081.5	6690.1	0.323	1124	5777.462	0.389	21392.3	43833.754	0.976
1922	1844.8	7079.36	0.521				21127.6	42957.442	0.984

In combination with the Polity indices, the election data support the contention that substantially new procedures for selecting public policy gradually emerged in the nineteenth century. Broadly elected parliaments gradually obtained broad authority over public policy (through their prime ministers).

Overall, the data plots and table support the hypothesis that the political and economic "revolutions" of the nineteenth century were the consequence of a long series of reforms, rather than a single great innovation or change in institutions.[377] Similar diagrams and tables could be

[377] It seems clear, for example, that women's suffrage was based on ideological considerations,
Continued on next page...

constructed for Belgium, Denmark, Italy, and Japan, and also for the republics of the United States, Switzerland, and France. Although each of these countries had a somewhat different path of electoral and parliamentary reform, their beginning and end points were remarkably similar. Liberal parliamentary democracy did not emerge in a single great step, even in France, where major reforms were experimented with.

C. Statistically Significant Correlations

The same data sets allow statistical tests of some of the "bootstrapping" hypotheses of the bargaining model of constitutional reform. For example, equations 19.7 and 19.8 imply that there will be significant correlation between per capita RGDP and the democracy indices during the nineteenth century. Such correlation is evident in the figures above, insofar as RGDP per capita and the various Polity indices of democracy generally increase throughout the century.

To determine whether or not these visual regularities are statistically significant, regressions were run on real per capita GNP and the democracy index for the period from 1830 to 1929 for the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and Sweden. These are the countries that best fit the model, which are also the ones for which the democracy index provides the best measure of the degree of political liberalization. Linear estimates of equations 19.7 and 19.8 are reported in table 19.2.

The hypothesized positive correlations between economic and political developments are present at statistically significant levels. Similar correlations between income and political developments are often found in studies of late twentieth-century governance in cross-sectional and panel studies. See, for example, Lipset (1959), Grier and Tullock (1989), Knack and Keefer (1995), Przeworski (2000), Bueno de Mosquita et al. (2003), and Paldam and Gundlach (2008).

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rather than a response to revolutionary threats or economic development. The women's movement never organized armed militias, nor did economic income expand at unprecedented rates in the decade before suffrage was granted to women. A majority of men (who were directly represented in parliament) had become persuaded that women were sufficiently competent and independent to cast a thoughtful vote.

Table 19.2
Ordinary Least Squares Estimates of the Relationship between Real Domestic Product Per Capita and Polity's Democracy Index
United Kingdom, Netherlands, and Sweden
1830–1929

	UK RGDP per capita (LS)	**UK RGDP per capita (Arch)**	**NL RGDP per capita (LS)**	**SE RGDP per capita (LS)**
Constant	-588.435 (-2.47)**	-1017.974 (-8.32)***	140.654 (8.86)***	12584.35 (23.97)***
Democracy Index	545.860 (34.16)***	630.203 (38.78)***	46.751 (8.94)***	2515.341 (19.31)***
R-square	0.72	0.68	0.49	0.81
F-statistic	255.33***	39.83***	79.93***	373.21***
DW	0.16	1.7	0.15	0.06
N Observations	100	100	84	90

	UK Democracy (LS)	**UK Democracy (Arch)**	**NL Democracy (LS)**	**SE Democracy (LS)**
Constant	2.667 (9.89)***	3.863 (13.72)***	-0.0864 (-.25)	-3.584 (-10.37)***
Real GDP per capita	0.001 (15.97)***	0.001 (15.25)***	0.011 (8.94)***	0.000322 (19.32)***
R-square	0.72	0.94	0.49	0.81
F-statistic	255.33***	252.98***	79.93***	373.21***
DW	0.19	1.42	0.15	0.05
N Observations	100	99	86	90

* Denotes statistical significance at the 10 percent level. ** Denotes statistical significance at the 5 percent level. *** Denotes statistical significance at the 1 percent level.

The model also has predictions about the stochastic components (residuals) of the estimates. The models imply that both systematic and stochastic components should be evident in the residuals. Note that the linear estimates support both predictions. The "error terms" account for a significant fraction of the variation in the economic and democratic developments in the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and Sweden. The predicted time dependency is evident in the Durban-Watson statistics, which indicate the presence of statistically significant autocorrelation.

Overall, the regression estimates suggest that choice framing variables focused on in the models are relevant ones that help to describe the course of constitutional history, notwithstanding the various measurement problems.

D. Joint Causality Tests for Economic and Political Liberalization

The regressions reported in table 19.2 support the contention that economic and political liberalization were associated with one another in the nineteenth century, but they do not shed much light on the nature of that dependence. The estimates suggest that somewhat more than half of Western economic and constitutional developments in the nineteenth century were jointly determined. Similar results can be found for other countries of interest for the purposes of this study, including Belgium, Germany, and the United States, although the Polity indices even less faithfully reflect the path of parliamentary reform in these other countries.

The theory developed in part I suggests that constitutional and economic liberalization are jointly determined, rather than causally related. Both are induced by trends in technological and ideological developments that produce constitutional gains from exchange and/or compromise.

Direct tests of the bootstrapping and joint-causality hypotheses can be undertaken with the statistical causality tests developed by Granger (1969). The Granger approach uses past values (lags) of the two variables as estimators for each other. If past values of variable *X* contribute to the explanation of current values of variable *Y*, then *X* is said to "Granger cause" *Y* in the sense that past values of *X* help predict current values of *Y*. Joint causality is said to exist if past values of *Y* also help to predict present values of *X*. Joint causality would, thus, provide evidence that economic and political liberalization are common outcomes of other similar (or correlated) variables. Granger causality tests are possible for five of the six case study countries using data similar to that used above. Table 19.3 summarizes the results.

Table 19.3
Granger Causality Tests for Economic and Political Change

United Kingdom (UK), the Netherlands (NL), Sweden (SE), Germany (DE), and the United States (US)
Mid-Nineteenth Century to Early Twentieth Century (two lags)

UK Rgdp per capita does not Granger cause U.K. democracy	7.96***
UK democracy does not Granger cause Rgdp per capita	2.12*
NL Rgdp per capita does not Granger Cause NL democracy	242.62***
NL democracy does not Granger cause NL Rgdp per capita	25.77***
SE Rgdp per capita does not Granger Cause SE democracy (logs)	3.48**
SE democracy does not Granger cause SE Rgdp per capita (logs)	0.49

DE Rgdp per capita does not Granger Cause DE democracy	1.59
DE democracy does not Granger cause DE Rgdp per capita	3.81**
US Rgdp per capita does not Granger Cause US democracy	7.00**
US democracy does not Granger cause US Rgdp per capita	26.87***

* denotes significance at the 10 percent level.
** denotes significance at the 5 percent level.
*** denotes significance at the 1 percent level.

(The period of interest is 1830–1929, although the data sets were somewhat incomplete for the Netherlands and Germany. Some periods of transition in Germany and Sweden are coded as not available.)

The results reveal somewhat stronger causality from economic to political developments, although joint causality for economic and political developments is found in three of the five cases. Joint causality of economic and political liberalization in the United Kingdom, the United States, and the Netherlands—cannot be rejected at plausible levels of statistical significance. Swedish causality is stronger from economic to political liberalization. German causality is stronger from political to economic reform. The joint-causality result for the United States is the most surprising, because so much of its economic and political liberalization took place before 1830.

Given the coarseness of the Polity indices and the fact that the democracy indices focus on the executive, rather than parliament, or parliament-executive relations, the statistical results are stronger than might have been expected. In general, they are consistent with the predictions of the models of part I and the narratives of part II.

E. Empirical Support for the Constitutional Bargaining and Reform Model

The visual and statistical tests of this chapter demonstrate that the predictions of the models of part I and the conclusions of the historical analysis are supported by statistical analysis of the data available for the nineteenth century. The regression estimates account for between 50 and 80 percent of the aggregate economic and political developments in the West, which suggests that the choice settings modeled in part I were commonplace and important in Europe during the nineteenth century.[378] Evidently, relatively similar constitutional gains to trade emerged at more or less the same

[378] It bears noting, however, that the variance of the true error term is likely to be somewhat larger than the results suggest, because both the RGDP and Polity data series have been smoothed by the social scientists who assembled them to reduce measurement errors, which tends to increase intertemporal correlation within and across data series.

time throughout the West. Causality between economic and political development tends to be bidirectional in most cases as predicted.

The unexplained residuals suggest, as historians often argue that men and women of genius and luck clearly mattered in each case, and that the negotiations reflected chance events and states of mind. On the other hand, the statistical analysis of this chapter and the historical narratives of part II suggest that there was much in common. Together with the historical narratives, the statistical analysis suggests that constitutional and quaisi-constitutional bargaining produced a long series of liberal reforms during the nineteenth century. The political subset of those reforms produced what we refer to today as Western democracy.

It is interesting to note that most contemporary indexes of "institutional quality" are simply indexes of the "liberalness" of a polity's political and economic institutions. Such indices may be said to measure how far a given polity has moved from its medieval or authoritarian political and economic systems toward a liberal one (Gwartney, Lawson, and Holcombe 2006; Keefer and Knack 1995; Congleton 2007b).

Chapter 20: Ideas, Interests, and Constitutional Reform

The theory of constitutional design and reform developed in this volume explains the essential architecture of parliamentary democracy and the path of reform that produced it. It explains why policymaking authority tends to be divided, why the distribution of policymaking authority changes through time, and why this normally is done without radically changing the standing procedures for governance. It demonstrates that significant shifts of the distribution of policymaking authority within divided governments can occur peacefully and lawfully through a process analogous to exchange in markets. The analysis suggests that a series of such constitutional reforms can gradually transform a more or less authoritarian system into a parliamentary democracy.

The historical narratives of part II suggest that liberal democracy emerged in this manner. As a consequence of trends in economic and ideological interests, a series of liberal reforms were negotiated and adopted by kings and parliaments during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. These constitutional and quasi-constitutional reforms gradually produced the rules of economic and political life that we largely take for granted in the West. Indeed, those new rules can be said to have created "the West."

This concluding chapter reviews the book's main arguments and conclusions, and contrasts them with other macro-political theories and histories. It concludes by noting that the analysis of this book can also be used to understand and predict contemporary constitutional developments.

A. The Logic of Constitutional Governance and Reform

The theory of constitutional governance and reform developed in this volume is based on a theory of organizational governance. All organizations, including political ones, have to overcome internal incentive and governance problems to be viable in the short run and long run. Solving incentive problems requires "artificial" incentive systems that attract team members and align the interests of the team with the organization's (formeteur's) long term interests. Solving governance series of problems requires standing procedures for gathering information and selecting policies (internal rules) that advance organizational interests and revising those policies through time as circumstances inside and outside the organization change.

An organization's standing procedures for choosing policies can be regarded as its constitution. An organization's constitution normally specifies the persons (officeholders) that participate in policy decisions, the scope of their authority, and how particular policies are made. In small

organizations, there may be only a single person with the authority to choose policies. In larger organizations, a policymaking team is likely to choose the organization-wide policies. Such policy making teams (governments) may be subdivided in various ways, as with the king and council architecture, and authority for making policies may be divided in various ways among the team members and component institutions. All durable organizations have constitutions in this sense, although not all such constitutions are written down.

Specific implementations create "political property rights" over policy areas characterized by the distribution of policymaking authority between the king and council and the procedures through which public policies are to be adopted. These assignments of authority and procedures tend to be fairly stable through time, because the existing rules tend to advance the interests the persons with the ability to change them. At points in time when that is not true, there will be constitutional gains to trade that can be realized by reforming the "rules of the game," and reforms will be bargained over and adopted. Such constitutional reforms are commonplace in both the private and public sector, although they do not always exhibit strong trends.

Choosing Among Constitutions

Formeteurs choose from "tried and true" templates for governance, such as the king and council template, because they acknowledge their own limits at constitutional design. If a template has worked well in other organizations they are familiar with, it is likely to work for their new organization as well. The king and council template is widely used for organizational governance, because it solves a variety of informational and agency succession problems and reduces unproductive intra-organizational conflict. It is scalable in the sense that it can be used to make policy decisions in small and large organizations, within the subdivisions of a large organization, and by confederations of independent organizations. It is flexible in that it can be adjusted in various margins to take account of the talents, interests, and circumstances of formeteurs and their successors.

The knowledge limits that induce formeteurs to rely on preexisting templates for governance also imply that constitutional reforms tend to be modest and infrequent. There are costs—risks and uncertainties—associated with all reforms, and there are benefits associated with stable routines. Stable routines reduce the cost of creating and maintaining (stable and profitable) relationships with persons and groups inside and outside an organization. Nonetheless, reforms can potentially

improve organizational performance and/or increase the rewards associated with high office, because no framework for governance works perfectly in all circumstances.

Both amendment procedures and the institutionally induced interests of those holding high offices tend to favor continuity over revolution in constitutional design. Moderate reforms allow organizations to adjust to changing circumstances, while preserving most of the benefits of standing procedures and policies. Such conservative propensities are not entirely accidental; rather they are products of design, experiment, and selection. Reforms that improve an organization's survival prospects (by increasing organizational surplus or its ability to manage crises) tend to be copied by other organizations.

The policymaking procedures of durable organizations are not entirely static, but most reforms "simply" adjust a subset of the existing procedures of governance at the margin, rather than engage in whole-cloth reforms. Constitutional conservatism in this sense is both rational and institutionally induced. Nonetheless, the procedures of organizational governance can be said to improve through time, insofar as reforms help organizations to make more effective use of information, personnel, and resources.

B. Trends in Economic and Political Reform

This somewhat abstract theory of the design and evolution of organizations has surprisingly direct implications for territorial governance and its evolution. It provides an explanation for periods in which governments are more or less stable and for periods in which trends in reform exist. It also predicts that reforms are likely to occur when the economic and ideological interests represented in government change through time, given an initial distribution of political property rights. Such reforms will be most evident when there are trends in the reforms, because such trends eventually produce cumulative reforms that are noticeable to outsiders. Violence, per se, does not play a central role in the analysis, although threats of violence may be used to increase organizational stability and efficiency, by reducing the cost of aligning the interests of citizens with their governments. Threats of violence and other major crises may also induce reform, although such threats are neither necessary nor sufficient to do so.

In the late medieval period, most governments were based on more or less standard forms of the king and council template. Most regional and national governments had kings and parliaments. The parliaments (or tax councils) normally had veto power over new taxes. Most kings delegated part of their executive authority to a council or cabinet of ministers that managed the day-to-day

operations of the government. The latter suggests that there were three institutional centers of policymaking authority, but the executive council was normally controlled by the king and so could be regarded as a royal instrument rather than an independent policymaking authority. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, control over appointments to the executive council became an indicator of the balance of authority between kings and parliament.

The division of authority between kings and their parliaments and between kings and their executive councils were not entirely static during the medieval period, but did not exhibit obvious long-run trends. Parliaments occasionally traded taxes or support on issues of particular interest to kings in exchange for royal approval of policies of interest to parliament or for a bit of additional policymaking authority. Similar fiscal bargains also occasionally shifted authority to kings, especially during times of national crisis. Most such reforms tended to be small and many were often undone after a decade or two. Somewhat larger reforms occurred at times when important veto players changed, as at times of succession, although these also tended to be reversed in subsequent decades. Some kings and some parliaments were "stronger" than others. Some kings also delegated more policymaking authority to their executive councils than others. The medieval balance of authority was quite stable, because the reforms had conservative "self-correcting" tendencies. Kings were nearly always the dominant policymaker.

For example, English policymaking in 1630 was characterized by a relatively strong king and weak parliament. From 1640–1653, English policymaking was dominated by parliament. It returned to executive dominance with Cromwell's protectorate (1653–1658) and to royal dominance in 1660–1688. The Glorious Revolution of 1688 shifted significant policymaking authority back to the parliament, although the king retained the dominant authority (Morgan 2001: 310, 326, and 334). Sweden began the eighteenth century with a dominant nearly authoritarian king, followed by a period with a dominant parliament, the so-called "age of freedom" in 1719–72. Sweden ended the eighteenth century with a king-dominated government and the restoration of royal prerogatives after 1789 by Gustav III (Weibull 1993: 53, 61, and 74). The century-long moving average remained, nonetheless, at approximately the medieval norm.

The stability of medieval constitution did not imply that all persons or all members of parliament preferred the medieval order with its hierarchical society, numerous trade barriers, monopoly church, royal rituals, and magnificent buildings to other political and economic systems that they could imagine. There were nearly always persons and groups that lobbied for political, economic, and religious reforms during the medieval and early modern periods. For example, upper

middle class farmers and town merchants generally regarded themselves to be underrepresented in parliament and believed that their interests were often neglected or harmed by national policies. Many supported reforms of parliamentary procedures that would later be called liberal reforms. However, support for these reforms among those who could adopt them was not sufficiently strong or sustained for durable reforms to be adopted. King-dominant systems of divided governance with mercantilist internal and external economic regulations were relatively stable and robust for many centuries.

Clear trends in the reforms of European governance emerged in the nineteenth century when new technological and ideological trends emerged. These created new alignments of economic and ideological interests that pressed for more open economic and political systems. There were new economies of scale in production and new theories of governance and economics. Liberalism motivated a number of politically active idealists and provided useful arguments for economic pragmatists favoring such reforms. The new support for economic and political liberalization altered the balance of support and produced a long series of liberal economic and political reforms in much of Europe, North America, and in Japan. The result is often called Western democracy.

C. Contrast with Big Bang Theories of Reform

There is a sense in which Western democracy can be regarded as a revolutionary form of government. Parliaments were commonplace throughout medieval Europe, but their members were for the most part members of elite families who served in government as a birthright. Even those elected to office were often from aristocratic families. The locus of policymaking authority was centered in a single royal man or woman and his or her appointed councilors. Prior to 1700, there were no national governments whose policymakers were selected on the basis of broad suffrage. Only citizens, narrowly defined, could vote in Athens; only the wealthiest 5-10 percent of men voted in medieval cities such as Siena and Florence during their "republican" periods; only a small fraction of citizens could vote for the English House of Commons until well into the nineteenth century.

The radical departures from such long-standing forms of government have induced many scholars to propose explanations. The theories can be divided roughly into two categories: "big bang" theories and "evolutionary" theories.

The "big bang" theories of constitutional reform are based on the analysis of revolutions, constitutional conventions, and combinations of the two. Revolutions provides a possible mechanism through which "outsiders" can influence the decisions of "insiders." Constitutional conventions provide a mechanism through which a new constitution can be drafted whole cloth.

These two explanations for new constitutional regimes can be combined. A constitutional conventions might be called after a civil war or war of secession is won. Analysis of constitutional conventions can also explain why a community might want to have a constitution and some features of constitutional design, insofar as persons in the community of interest agree about useful or desirable procedures of governance. Revolutionary theories often accept such "general will" theories of constitutional design, but insist that violence or threats of violence are key to the creation and reform of government. In such models, officeholders never have interests in reform, only in continuity.

Both peaceful and violent "big bang" theories of constitutions tend to imply that (i) constitutions are developed whole cloth at times of crisis, (ii) followed by a period in which the new constitution remains entirely stable, until (iii) another major crisis and/or revolution occurs. With respect the emergence of democracy, most big-bang theories focus entirely on the extreme forms of governance, such as dictatorships and democracies. Given that focus, transitions cannot be gradual, because there are no intermediate forms of government. Such a focus also tends to imply that constitutional transitions require revolutions of one kind or another.

Simplistic big-bang explanations suggest that "the people" organize a revolution to overthrow an authoritarian regime, and, if successful, adopt a radically new democratic government by holding a national constitutional convention. (Grammar school treatments of the French and American Revolutions often adopt such narratives.[379]) More sophisticated theories acknowledge that there are several ways that an authoritarian regime can be overthrown and a new constitution implemented. Within a violent revolution model, the first step requires the organization of sufficient military power to overthrow the existing regime, which is often acknowledged to be a difficult process. Within a peaceful "revolution" model, the persons in power must be persuaded to voluntarily surrender their authority to large peaceful demonstrations, rather than use the army and police to disperse the demonstrations. Once the overthrow is accompished, the constitutional step can be accomplished in several ways. The formeteurs of revolutionary movements (revolutionary leaders) may simply impose a new (hopefully democratic) constitution on the country, or they may organize a constitutional convention that does so. The members of the constitutional convention may be appointed or elected.

[379] A useful book-length critique of such explanations for the American war of independence and the constitution of the United States is provided in Raphael (2004).

"Big band" theories of historic change are numerous and a complete survey of them is beyond the scope of the present volume.[380] Such chasm-jumping theories of democracy include historical ones by Marx (1959) and Palmer (1959), contemporary sociological and economic ones by Goldstone (1993), and rational-choice models by Acemoglu and Robinson (2000). The critical assessments of revolutionary theories developed in this book parallel those of Goldstone (1993, 2001), who argues that most revolutionary theories lack causal micro-foundations.

As a theory of the emergence of Western democracy, big bang models suffer from several defects. There is an implicit assumption that an overthrow is undertaken with the aim of liberal reform, rather than simply to take over the top offices of the existing government. There is also an implicit assumption that the governments of the revolutionary military organizations that conduct the wars or liberation include standing procedures through which those governments can be replaced by democratic ones after the war is won. Such transitions are, of course, problematic, and violent revolutions more often yield authoritarian (military) governance rather than parliamentary democracies. Democratic reforms are unlikely to be implemented after the war is won, in part, because of the constitutional conservatism of those with authority to adopt reforms. After all, their "transitional" governance must have been a reasonably effective to have won the war.

This is not to argue that there were no liberalizing civil wars or constitutional conventions in the nineteenth century. Belgium successfully seceded from the Netherlands and established a relatively liberal form of constitutional monarchy, based on the British-Dutch template. There were also large peaceful demonstrations during the mid-century that helped promote liberalization, but usually as one of many factors that induced modest reforms to be adopted, rather than a major force that induced major reforms. For example, Dutch, Danish, and Prussian adopted significant reforms in the period just after the popular demonstrations of 1848, but their constitutional negotiations and reforms were already underway at the time. Dutch and Danish reforms began a decade or two before those demonstrations. Prussia's new constitution included liberal provisions, but it did not shift very much authority from the King and his council to the new representative chamber of the new parliament. Subsequent liberal reforms were adopted in each case without further "revolutions."

It also bears noting that popular demonstrations, uprisings, and civil wars do not always produce liberalization or democracy. Peasant revolts were fairly common before the nineteenth century, but never produced parliamentary democracies. Instead, they usually elicited more repressive laws and enforcement (Tilly 2004). Germany's grand constitutional convention of 1848–9

[380] Very useful surveys of revolutionary theories are included in Goldstone (1993, 2001).

did not cause a new German constitution to be adopted. The violent revolutions of the early twentieth century (in Russia and China) produced authoritarian regimes, rather than parliamentary democracy. This can also be said of the French revolutions of the late eighteenth and mid-nineteenth centuries.[381]

Peaceful and violent big bang theories also have problems explaining the timing, and institutions of Western democracy. Authoritarian regimes (e.g. king-dominated governments) had long held power. Was repression worse in 1900 than in 1800 or 1700? Moreover, in many Western democracies kings still have a place in government and live a royal lifestyle. If the government was overthrown, why do they remain in office? There is also the matter of elections and suffrage. There were normally elections for a significant number of the members of parliament before 1900. Was this democracy or not? Why are their so many ways to elect members of parliament? Such details would naturally be of little interest if the only choice is between "dictatorship" and "democracy." After all, one or the other form of government is always in place before and after a revolution is won. Such accounts also neglect the fact that even when relatively large reforms are adopted, as in Belgium in 1830, the reforms adopted are "large" only relative to the ordinary course of reform. Most of the constitutional framework that existed before the "revolutions" remains in place.

The constitutional bargaining model developed in this volume provides a better explanation of the observed path of reform, the conservative nature of reforms adopted, and the general architecture, procedures, and continuity of Western governance. It is the intermediate forms that make modest reforms and institutional continuity possible. It also the intermediate forms that allow reforms to be voluntarily adopted by those already holding office at times when new constitutional gains to trade emerge. By ignoring the intermediate forms of governance, the big-bang theories implicitly assume away the continuum that allows gradual transitions to take place.

D. Contrast with Other Evolutionary Theories of Reform

In addition to the revolutionary theories of constitutional reform, there are also many evolutionary theories of national government. For example, most historians that focus on national histories provide a good deal of evidence that both national cultures and nation states emerge over

[381] A contributing factor for the failures of some wars of liberation is that the leaders of the revolutions have ideological reasons for rejecting the forms of governance that history has demonstrated to be viable. By rejecting templates that work, rather than simply modifying them, the probability of failure increases. As noted in chapters 2 and 3, there are good reasons for institutional conservatism.

the course of many centuries. Many economists and political scientists take such historical research seriously; and, as social scientists, rather than historians, attempt to develop theories that can account for such evolutionary tendencies. Well-known twentieth century examples include Hayek's (1948, 1973) analysis of spontaneous orders (culture and market networks) and North's (1981, 1990) analysis of the role of institutional change in economic development. Their evolutionary historical theories helped produce two Nobel prizes in economics. The approach of this book is largely compatible with their research, but focuses on formal rather than spontaneous organizations and political rather than economic institutions.[382]

Other evolutionary theories tend to be sociological, rather than economic, in nature and include political developments as simply one of many areas in which customs and institutions change through time. When done well, social historians weave together a variety of historical threads to produce a series of rich tapestries that provides a more or less coherent moving picture of the society of interest. Some, such as Tilly (2004), include roles for politically active groups, who may occasionally induce institutional reform by staging minor uprisings. Unfortunately, by analyzing the whole of society, such general histories can only include a few snippets about each development, and by stressing general tendencies they neglect the individual decisions and circumstances that produced the patterns and changes of interest. The broad brush hides nearly as much as it reveals.

Although evolutionary theories account for continuity and general trends in a manner that revolutionary theories cannot, the narratives often fail to explain why particular institutions exist, the factors that promote their stability and continuity, and the process through which those institutions are modified through time. With respect to government, for example, they may describe the general architecture of a government that exists, but not why the architecture tends to be more stable than the division of authority within it, nor how the division of authority gradually changes. Apart from Finer's (1997) three volume history, there are very few contemporary efforts to track the emergence of the rule-making bodies that we call governments.

This may be because constitutional historians have lacked a general framework for thinking about changes in the distribution of policymaking authority. Historical narratives that do not begin with the king and council template and that do not focus on constitutional bargaining cannot easily analyze shifts in governance during the medieval period, the gradual transition to parliamentary

[382] The recent book by North, Wallis, and Weingast (2009), for example, includes much that is very compatible with this volume, although it focuses more attention on economic developments than political ones, and does not really analyze the politics of institutional reform or governance except in very general (bargaining among elites) terms.

democracy that occurred in Europe and Japan during the nineteenth century, nor explain why so many democratic governments still have hereditary kings and unelected members of parliament. Similarly, rational choice models that assume officeholders have only institutionally induced interests cannnot account for all the bargaining that takes place within parliaments and between kings, cabinets, and parliaments, nor why the bargaining equilibrium changes through time.

Without taking account of the interests of formeteurs and their successors it is difficult to explain why independently governed polities often use similar constitutional architectures. Without taking account of differences in institutionally-induced interests and possibilities for constitutional exchange, such models cannot easily explain why so many democracies still have kings. Without accounting for non-institutionally-induced interests, such as may emerge from economic and ideological changes, it is also difficult to explain why no countries industrialized without democratizing and why no countries democratized without industrializing during the nineteenth century.

Industrialization, Cause or Effect?

Economic historians almost routinely argue that industrialization plays a central role in the constitutional reforms that produced liberal democracy both in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Przeworski and Limongi 1993). Such theories, however, have a difficult time accounting for differences in the timing and rate of industrialization, because technology is completely portable.

Whether economic development induces constitutional reform or constitutional reform induces industrialization is not obvious. Political decisions often determine what can and cannot be traded by determining how contractual obligations will be enforced and the subset of user-rights that can be bought and sold. Economics suggests that such political decisions can have large effects on a nation's path of economic development by affecting transaction costs, market size, and rates of technological innovation. Indeed, it is far easier to argue that national governments determine market activity than the converse, even in fairly complete models of political economy. To the best of my knowledge no other volume provides peaceful political mechanisms through which industrialization—itself largely an economic activity—may induce or contribute to constitutional reforms.

That industrialization often precedes political reform is likely to reflect the politics of policy reform, rather than economics per se. Officeholders and the persons whose interest they represent often benefit more directly from trade liberalization than from changes in parliamentary authority or

expansions of suffrage. As a consequence, it may appear that economics developments encourage political developments, although it is politics that allows economic reforms to be adopted.

The present analysis suggests that this is true not only for minor regulations and tax laws, but also for major economic policies and constitutional reforms. The politics of economic and political liberalization cannot be ignored. The technological innovations of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries produced new political alignments, decreased the costs of political interest groups, and increased preexisting support for liberal reforms. Individually, pragmatists and liberals could produce very few reforms, but acting as a coalition they were in many cases able to advance a broad liberal reform agenda. Liberalization was not adopted simply to advance liberal ideals, but also in pursuit of profits and policymaking influence. When such coalitions were not sufficient to produce reforms, the status quo remained in place as, for example, in Turkey, China, and Korea. In such places, very few liberals and economic entrepreneurs (if any) held influential offices in government.

Importance of Liberal Ideas

The present analysis differs from most economic explanations of historical developments in that it takes account of ideological as well as pragmatic interests.

Although economic interests helped push most reforms through, the overall reform agenda tended to be liberal, rather than economic. The overall pattern of reform was not a new web of rent-creating regulations and barriers to entry, but rather more open and competitive economic and political systems.

The liberal economic and political theories of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century were well suited to such ends. Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, for example, included a variety of arguments against regulations that created local monopolies and in favor of expanding national transport networks. Smith did not argue that "bigger was better," but that "more open" was better than "more closed." His analysis included warnings about cartels and corporations as well as government regulators. Contractarian and utilitarian theories of the state implicitly supported systems of government in which representation was broad and more or less proportional to population. They argued that everyone's interest should be accounted for, which required everyone's interest to be "at the table." If representation was to be fair, then representation should be distributed according to citizen-voters. Similar arguments challenged law-based preferences in economic and political life and favored civic equality.

Both contractarian and utilitarian theories were increasingly used as normative theories by educated persons in the West during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, often in combination other older norms, because the theories were taught in public and private schools, and were promoted by a variety of economic and ideological interest groups. (Religion-based normative arguments faded somewhat as state church monopolies were eliminated.) As a consequence, liberal theories influenced "insiders" as well as "outsiders," and were often used in the policy and constitutional debates within national parliaments and bureaucracies. Indeed, liberal economic and political theories were probably more widely used by officeholders, bureaucrats, and other well-educated and well-traveled persons than among the general public.

This is not to say that all educated persons were liberal idealists. In many cases, the use of liberal arguments was simply a means to an end, a rationalization for higher profits or greater political influence. However, such arguments are useful only if a subset of liberal norms have been internalized by a sufficient number of those listening to the arguments. In such cases, the use of liberal arguments can help produce decisive coalitions insofar as such coalitions are easier to assemble when there are general interests that can be advanced, rather than only narrow interests.

Liberal arguments also indirectly undermined support for the medieval balance of authority within parliaments and between the king and parliament. For example, simply shifting debates in parliament to systematic, rational, analysis of policy and institutional alternatives tends to favor reform by reducing the range of arguments that can be used to support the status quo. "Mere" appeals to custom and national traditions, become less persuasive. The shift from divine right of kings to popular sovereignty implies that institutional improvements are conceptually possible. God may make no errors in his designs, but man-made institutions are likely to be imperfect and/or unjust, and such "imperfections" might be "perfected." By undermining traditions of royal deference, the popular sovereignty rational for government authority also increased the cost of producing what Wintrobe (1998) terms "loyalty." It reduced the effectiveness of royal efforts to maintain control and reduced the moral authority of unelected chambers. Conversely, when kings and nobles come to accept popular sovereignty justifications for their offices and authority, a bit more royal deference to elected chambers of parliament and to large-scale public demonstrations in support of particular reforms naturally occurs.

Together, political, economic, and philosophical liberalism provided a rough direction for policy and constitutional reform, and a series of persuasive arguments and convenient metrics for analyzing

the relative merits of particular policies. And, it bears noting that even minor shifts in a liberal direction among policymakers can produce new gains from constitutional exchange.

Role of Interest Groups in Evolutionary Models

In evolutionary theories interest groups are often mentioned in passing as evidence that general interests have already changed, rather than as agents for change. However, only broad social movements are given much attention. In contrast, most revolutionary theories imply that interest groups are important factors in economic and political developments. For example, labor organizations are often argued to be the main source of revolutionary reforms, while organized "elites" resist or organize counter revolutions. Although not a revolutionary narrative, interest groups play a relatively important role in the analysis and historical narratives of this volume.

In contrast to revolutionary theories the peaceful, patient, persuasive activities of such groups are of greater interest than their occasional violent ones. Peaceful activities are easier to organize than violent ones, because they are (often) legal. Such activities are often more effective than militant efforts, because they do not attract repressive sanctions from the state, yet allow "outsiders" to influence the reform agendas of "insiders."

Interest groups can disseminate facts and theories to persuade those represented in government to reassess their policy goals and/or normative theories. They can organize public demonstrations of support for reform and so provide cover for advocates of reform in government and undermine public interest arguments of their opponents. If there are elections, they can also organize and increase political support for particular candidates, policies, and parties in parliament. They can also organize boycotts and strikes in support (or opposition) to policy reforms, but these tend to be costly for participants and so occur relatively infrequently, and normally are employed only after long periods of peaceful persuasion.

The influence of peaceful politically active interest groups is evident throughout the nineteenth century. Numerous ideological and economic interest groups formed and successfully lobbied for educational expansion, reduced censorship, religious toleration, economic liberalization, and constitutional reform. The success of the early interest groups often helped make other groups in support of later reforms easier to organize. For example, successful efforts to reduce censorship and restrictions on voluntary association can clearly reduce the cost of forming politically active groups. Indeed, any success demonstrates that law-abiding interest groups can affect public policy. As the elected chamber of parliament gained influence over policy formation, elections naturally became a

more important determinant of public policy. As suffrage and competition for seats in parliament increased, large-scale persuasive campaigns became important factors in national elections.

Political competition in the late nineteenth century also affected the reform agenda of organized interest groups and political parties. For example, many formerly conservative groups began to support modest liberal reforms as a method of attracting new members and retaining current members. Traditional nongovernmental organizations, such as churches and guilds, did not disappear, but they faced greater competition for voter attention and access to policymakers, which reduced their political influence relative to what it had been in years past.

In countries in which the conservative-pragmatist defenders of the status quo won most policy debates, rather than the liberal-pragmatist coalitions, the formation of interest groups was suppressed and the status quo ante was largely continued.

E. A Twenty-First Century Whiggish History?

Several colleagues have remarked on the resemblance of the theory and historical narratives developed in this volume and the optimistic "Whiggish histories" written in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by liberal historians. Although the term "Whiggish" is normally used to denigrate, rather than compliment, a line of historical research, this book agrees with many Whiggish conclusions. For example, liberal historians of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries often argued that institutions and that the reforms of institutions had important effects on economic and political developments. They also argued that reform was gradual and that there was systematic improvement of Western political and economic systems in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The historical narratives of part II suggest that there was economic and political progress in the West during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and that most of it was the result of peaceful reforms of preexisting economic and political institutions, rather than great revolutions in constitutional design motivated by internal military threats or adopted at grand constitutional conventions. A bit of direct Whiggish influence is also evident in that early twentieth century historians are cited fairly often in the text, because they devoted greater attention to institutional details than the generations of comparative historians that followed them.

It bears noting, however, that the optimism of the theory proposed and tested in the present volume is a long-run optimism that hinges on the emergence of substantial liberal reform interests. When other interests increase in importance, the course of constitutional reform can become authoritarian, rather than liberal, and so less attractive by contemporary Western sensibilities. This,

for example, occurred in Japan in the 1930s, when anti-liberals reversed a three-decade long tide of liberal political reform. Similar reversals also occurred in some periods and places within the United States when states reduced or eliminated suffrage for women (in New Jersey) and subsequently persons of non-European descent. A bit of pessimism is also introduced by the implication that popular revolutions are unlikely to be successfully organized, and when organized are unlikely to induce constitutional liberalization. Effective governments, essentially by definition, suppress revolutionary organizations, and so the threat of revolution tends to produce additional repression, rather than liberalization, within all reasonably well-run polities.

The analysis and historical studies undertaken in this book do not imply that particular events had to occur in the nineteenth century. Instead, they suggest that, given certain conditions, some constitutional and policy reforms were more likely than others. In particular, increasing acceptance of liberal economic and political theories, together with technological innovations that increases the efficient scale of production, make liberal regulatory and constitutional reforms more likely to be adopted. Whether they were adopted or not also depended on the nature of preexisting political institutions and the interests of officeholders with the ability to adopt reforms. In nineteenth century Europe, liberal constitutional reforms reflected tough opportunistic bargaining by parliaments with their sovereigns.

F. Constitutional Liberalism as Contemporary Conventional Wisdom

Overall, it seems clear that the Western transitions to parliamentary democracy were broadly similar, although they were not identical.

They were not entirely dependent on industrialization, nor entirely culture specific. Northern European societies were culturally linked in various ways through trade, history, and religion. Many of their political and economic institutions had Germanic and Latin origins in the distant past. Scandinavia and Germany, however, had never been ruled by the Romans. The British had never been part of the Hanseatic League, and the influence of the Protestant Reformation varied widely across northern Europe. There were few Lutherans in Great Britain. Similar political and economic transitions took place in Belgium during the nineteenth century, which was not Protestant, and also in Japan, a country where trade, culture, and religion were only very weakly linked to northern Europe. The transition to democracy in Europe suggests that industrialization can be a catalyst for liberal reform, but the transition of the United States suggests that it is not the only possible catalyst.

Liberalism, however, played a central role in each of the transitions. The direction of reform was provided by liberal political and economic theories. Liberal politicians and constitutional scholars such as Madison, Grey, De Geer, Thorbecke, and Ito provided much of the logic and language of the legislative and constitutional reforms adopted. Indeed, parliament's veto power over royal revenues (now largely in the form of household allowances) continues to support the contemporary balance of authority between European parliaments and their kings or queens (most of which remained sovereign well into the twentieth century, and many of which remain formally sovereign in the twenty-first century).

The polities produced by nineteenth-century reforms were not, however, the laissez-faire minimal states advocated by "doctrinaire" liberals of the mid-nineteenth century. Economic competition was limited by rules against fraudulent practices and monopoly power. Slavery and several other forms of labor "contract" were forbidden. International tariffs were low, but not as low as they had been earlier in the century. There continued to be significant government support for transport, energy, and communication infrastructures, as well as for court systems that enforced civil and criminal law. Government services included public education and social insurance. Nor were Western political systems completely "democratic" in the sense that majorities could adopt whatever policies they wished. The new governments were constrained by their constitutions through divisions of authority, constitutional courts, and civil liberties of various kinds. Most of these policies and institutions were broadly supported by mainstream liberals in 1925, and most had long been advocated by liberal interest groups.

At the time that liberal reforms were first being implemented in North America and Europe, their long-term effects were open to question. After all, the medieval systems of governance with their associated economic regulations, monopoly religions, and hereditary-based politics had produced law and order, reasonable prosperity, and significant progress. Europe had gradually passed China, Japan, and Turkey during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and had done better than most of the rest of the world for an even longer period.

The economic and political consequences of the nineteenth-century political and economic reforms must have surprised late-medieval conservatives by demonstrating that (1) prosperity could be increased and extended throughout the income distribution by freer internal and external markets, (2) that such wealth-increasing reforms could be sustained by the new broadly representative governments, and that (3) public policies tended to be more predictable and law

bound than those of the aristocratic systems they replaced, and somewhat less susceptible to political fads and deficit finance than their kings had been.

There was essentially no tradeoff between long-term growth and political liberalization in the nineteenth century. Markets and politics were simultaneously improved as institutions for promoting broadly shared interests in prosperity, equality before the law, and the provision of public services. The success of the new liberal political-economic systems relative to medieval systems accounted for much of their appeal in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, particularly among relatively pragmatic voters and government officeholders.

Liberalism and Reform in the Twentieth Century

It is interesting to note that most contemporary political and economic indices of "institutional quality" are essentially indices of the extent of political and economic liberalization. Mainstream indices of governmental quality imply that (i) the more open and democratic a nation's political institutions are, (ii) the more uniform and enforced its civil liberties are, (iii) the more independent its judiciary is, and (iv) the more literate its citizens are, the better governed are the countries of interest. Similarly, mainstream indices of the quality of economic institutions imply that: (i) the more open and competitive are the internal and external trade networks, (ii) the less arbitrary (and discretionary) is its economic regulation, and (iii) the more effectively a nation's civil law is enforced, the better are its economic institutions. Among such indices are the Worldwide Governance Indicators of the World Bank, the civil and political liberty indices of Freedom House, and the Economic Freedom index of the Heritage Foundation.

That liberal political and economic arrangements tend to increase the quality of life and have done so for more than a century has induced other countries to adopt liberal reforms and also induced a good deal of migration from "undeveloped" (illiberal) to "developed" (liberal) countries during most of the past century. Whether the connection between liberal democracy and open markets remains sufficient to produce future transitions is subject to challenge. For example, Hardin (1999) suggests that there is no necessary connection between political and economic liberalism. There is, however, evidence of similar internal liberalizing pressures in many rapidly developing countries, as in China and India, and also of the penetration of liberal economic and political ideas into the highest councils of state in those countries. If the analysis of this book is as general as the author believes, gradual liberalization is likely to continue for the next several decades in these and other countries in which liberal ideas become widely accepted and political institutions are

sufficiently flexible to allow constitutional gains to trade to be realized. In such cases, the course of reform is likely to be peaceful and lawful, although not uncontentious.

Of course to say that progress has been made is not to say that Western institutions are perfect. Efforts to further improve governance continue unabated, although gains from constitutional exchange remain few and far between. Even in more or less democratic polities, constitutional reforms can have significant effects on public policy and the quality of life. The broad consensus about the constitutional foundations of a "good society" that emerged throughout the West in the late nineteenth century did not produce completely stable institutions nor public policies, as might have been predicted (Fukuyama 1992), but they helped sustain the routines and institutions that had produced a new form of economic and political life, a form of life that most of us take for granted today. At or near the top of most contemporary lists of political "openness" are the countries analyzed in the case studies of part II: the United States, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Germany, Japan, and Sweden. The same countries also top lists that measure economic openness, average income, and longevity.

Although the liberal constitutional consensus crumbled somewhat during the half century following World War I, it reemerged in the second half of the twentieth century. Contemporary Western conservatives, moderates, liberals, and social democrats continue to accept and support representative governance, broad suffrage, and civil equality, albeit with a good deal more social insurance than accepted by most liberals (or social democrats) in 1925. The aristocratic, religious, and historical arguments used against nineteenth-century liberals have all but disappeared, along with a good deal of mysticism, traditionalism, intolerance, and cultural variation. There are relatively few advocates for government-assured national church monopolies or privileged families today. The radical departures on the left and right that produced great mid-twentieth century wars have also largely disappeared in the West and other parts of the world as well.

In these respects, it can also be argued that liberals won the late twentieth century constitutional debates as well as those of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Moreover, it is again the left liberals who may be argued to have won the major policy debates in the West during the late twentieth century. Although modern social insurance programs were started by liberal and conservative parties in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, they did not really become major programs until after World War II (Congleton and Bose 2009), but that is a subject for another book..

Appendix: Methodological Approach, Limits, and Extensions

Perfecting Parliament surveys a good deal of history and reflects many years spent reading constitutional documents, political treatises, and hundreds of books and papers written by careful historians. However, *Perfecting Parliament* is not intended to be mainly a historical work, but rather a contribution to social science. The book attempts to develop and test a particular theory of constitutional design and reform, rather than to induce patterns from past experience. This is not because induction is logically impossible or without interest. Indeed, my recognition of the importance of the king and council template was a consequence of research on Swedish constitutional history (Congleton 2001b, 2003c). Rather, it is because the main goal of this book is to advance constitutional theory.

The book develops a general theory of rule-based governance and reform. It uses that model to explain the emergence and properties of king and council–based systems of governance and peaceful transitions from authoritarian to constitutional democracy. The case studies, historical overviews, and statistical analysis were undertaken to explore the limits of that analytical approach to history. The evidence developed in part II and in chapter 19 suggest that relatively simple rational choice models can shed significant light on important episodes of Western constitutional history. Although the cannot predict every detail of the constitutional bargains adopted, the choice settings characterized by the models and prose are evidently sufficiently realistic and universal that their implications are evident in American, European and Japanese constitutional histories. The specific transitions focused on in the case studies are important ones, and the narratives suggest that a theory of constitutional reform that focuses on bargaining between parliaments and kings can shed useful light on the emergence of liberal democracy in the countries examined.

In addition to the evidence developed in this book, a good deal of other case-specific quantitative evidence also supports the contention that economic and ideological interests have influenced important policy and constitutional debates within parliaments. For example, Schönhardt-Bailey (2003, 2006) provides statistical evidence that such ideas influenced repeal of the Corn Laws (agricultural tariffs) in the United Kingdom. Aidt and Jensen (2009) provide evidence that franchise extension and the size of government were correlated for a broad cross section of European countries and in a manner that is consistent with the model of constitutional exchange developed in this volume.

A. Blunting Anticipated Criticisms: On the Scope of Historical Narratives

The historical narratives do make contributions to historical research, by providing unusually tight and focused constitutional histories for six countries. That six countries are covered rather than one or two makes it clear that constitutional negotiations were not isolated events of individual countries and that much was taking place inside parliaments and between parliaments and kings that were essentially universal in nature. That six countries were covered, rather than a dozen, allows more of the details of the reforms adopted and the contributions of particular individuals to be developed in a manner that allows readers to judge for themselves what is general and what is idiosyncratic in the constitutional reforms adopted. The level of detail provided also made the historical part of this project manageable and allows a good deal of constitutional history to be discussed within a single volume.

The historical narratives developed above are not simply tightly written summaries of existing research. Very few historical narratives devote as much attention to institutional history and institutional detail as the case studies of part II do, and those that do tend to focus on single institutions within rather short periods. No other comparative study examines as many constitutional documents as those used in the present study.

Nonetheless, several criticisms can be made regarding the scope of the historical analysis. For example, some critics might argue that the book neglects work by particular historians that might be relevant for a complete analysis of the emergence of Western democracy. A basis for this criticism clearly exists, because only a few hundred of the many thousands of references that could have been brought to bear on the subject are cited. Moreover, as true of most broad historical accounts, nearly every sentence in the historical chapters of this book could be expanded into a chapter, and nearly every section into a book in its own right. (Indeed many subsections are short summaries of such books.)

A partial defense is that the references listed in the bibliography do not include all the references consulted, and that hundreds of other references are indirectly accounted for in the secondary texts written by the historians that are cited. The latter are assumed to give accurate summaries of additional historical resources for the periods and areas analyzed. The use of both narrow and broad case studies and general histories implies that the book's historical narratives are based upon a more thorough analysis of historical details than actually undertaken by the author.

An analogous criticism could be directed at those who study institutional reform, or history in general, without taking proper account of all contemporary research in economics, statistics, and political research. There is a sense in which all historical research requires an interdisciplinary approach, because people are influenced by a variety of social, political, economic, and legal factors. Every historical analysis, thus, could be improved by taking greater account of research in other fields.

However, this conclusion also demonstrates that the usefulness of such criticism is quite limited, because it applies to every possible research project that could be undertaken by individual scholars or small teams of scholars. Complete historical or social science research in this sense is impossible! Given the breadth and depth of the available historical resources and social science research, it should also be acknowledged that both historical and social science research is always at least partly statistical in nature. To the extent that there are general patterns in history and in historical narratives, a reasonably thorough sampling of primary and secondary sources should provide a reasonably complete understanding of the material, research, and conclusions available.

Scientific and historical progress is only possible insofar as social systems can be divided into sufficiently independent and uncomplicated subsystems for a human mind to understand them, a few parts at a time.

Just as an impressionist painting is clearest when one is a bit too distant to see the individual brush strokes, and the notion of impressionism itself is clearest when one studies several such paintings; so too are constitutional developments easiest to see when one focuses on the core procedures of governance and studies several countries in which similar changes in core constitutional procedures are evident. And, just as impressionism as a genre might be missed by roaming through a great museum in a single day, or focusing exclusively on a single painting; similarities in Western transitions may easily be missed by work that focuses on the great sweep of history or that focuses entirely on the idiosyncrasies and genius of the unique men and women whose pen strokes and compromises determined the exact expression of particular constitution documents and reforms.

B. Blunting Anticipated Criticism: Limits of Rational Choice–Based Analysis

If a theory of constitutional political economy is possible, common factors must exist that influence both constitutional design and constitutional reform.

Part I of the book uses rational choice models to identify general factors that are likely to influence constitutional design and reform. The models do so in part by focusing on specific choice settings and by subjecting the models to a variety of methodological norms. A model should be logically consistent, which eliminates many intuitively plausible representations of relationships among people, markets, and political factors. To obtain clear results, a model should employ Ockham's razor to minimize the factors used in one's explanation, which requires focusing attention on "important" or "essential" factors in particular choice settings. A rational choice model should, thus, rely as much as possible on narrow self-interests as explanatory factors, not because such interests always dominate, but because they are essentially universal and likely to influence the decisions of most persons in most settings—at least at the margin. Rational choice models should also be consistent with earlier models and existing historical and statistical research on the topics of interest.

Such methodological norms have produced simple, but sophisticated, models that provide considerable insight into the operation of economic markets and political systems in the short and medium run. This book suggests that similar models can be used to help understand the factors and relationships that lead more or less self-interested men and women to adopt and reform constitutions in the long run.

It should be acknowledged, however, that the implications of rational-choice models to characterize behavior are never as precise as their associated mathematics seems to imply. For example, predicting the behavior of specific persons who are completely "rational" and well informed is difficult if individuals pursue a large number of goals in a large number of circumstances. The more complex are the goals and circumstances of individuals, the more difficult it is for social scientists to catalog them all and to take account of their associated choice-relevant tradeoffs. Even if mistakes were never made, persons behaved exactly as modeled, it would be impossible to predict individual choices perfectly without complete information about the particular aims and tradeoffs of particular individuals.[383]

One very sensible method of dealing with the multiplicity of goals and circumstances that characterize many decision settings is simply to ignore them and, instead, to focus on the subset of

[383] Rationality does not imply that outcomes are always what one might have hoped for. Gambling is not necessarily a mistake as far as the individual is concerned, although it may be. In the case of lotteries, a series of purchases may be mistaken in that it reflects a poor understanding of probability theory, but it may be entirely rational given what is known at the time the decisions were made. On the other hand, even a fair game will have losers along with winners.

goals and circumstances that can be plausibly assumed to be more or less universal and relevant for most of the decisions being analyzed. This allows a theorist to conduct "other things being equal" analyses that yield useful explanations and predictions of "typical" behavior. The neglected factors are often assumed to have little effect "at the margin," and/or are assumed to be sufficiently unsystematic that their average effect on decisions is approximately zero and so can be neglected without significant loss of explanatory power. These are stronger assumptions than necessary, but are often reasonable first approximations of the effects of simplification.

Such considerations often induce economists to assume that the persons modeled are concerned only with maximizing their own personal wealth. An interest in personal wealth is nearly universal, because most other goals require resources (wealth) to advance them. Efforts to increase wealth are consequently very likely to play a role in a wide variety of individual decisions, even if maximizing wealth is not the direct aim of many persons in the real world. Indeed, additional resources also advance biological purposes as well as idiosyncratic ones, and so a preference for greater wealth tends to be genetically and culturally reinforced. Economists and game theorists often assume that persons have such "narrow" self-interests partly to make their models tractable and in some cases because some theorists evidently believe that all the other goals are indirectly determined by such interests. It is the universality of such interests, however, rather than their narrowness, that accounts for their usefulness (Pareto 1897, Stigler and Becker 1977).

Nonetheless, the importance of personal idiosyncrasies, chance events, ideas, and errors has to be acknowledged, and such effects are evident in the historical narratives.

The more idiosyncratic the choice-relevant aims of individuals and the more important information problems and theories are, the less likely a rational choice model will explain or predict the specific decisions made, because the individual idiosyncrasies and mistakes will be relatively more important determinants of the choices made than the general factors analyzed.

For example, each of the narratives mention exceptional persons (by name) who played pivotal roles in the course of their nation's reforms: Willem I, William III, Washington, Madison, Thorbecke, DeGeer, Bismark, and Taisuke. The historical narratives also imply that slight changes in "luck" might have altered history on many occasions. The Spanish Habsburgs might have subdued the Dutch revolt in the sixteenth century. King James II might have correctly anticipated the landing point of Willem III in 1688, defeated the Dutch intervention, and continued his centralization of political authority in England and in the North American colonies. Several of the unsuccessful transitions also involved a bit of bad luck. Wilhelm II might have agreed to surrender a bit more

authority to the German parliaments of the 1890s, which might have allowed an orderly transition to parliamentary democracy in the next two or three decades, rather than a somewhat chaotic one at the end of a very costly war. The assassination of influential liberals and moderates in Japan during the early twentieth century might have failed or been prevented by minor changes in personal schedules and security.

The conclusions derived from models are necessarily somewhat imprecise and incomplete, because models always ignore idiosyncratic factors that are often significant determinants of specific decisions by individual consumers, firms, voters, and politicians. The importance of idiosyncratic factors can, of course, be accepted at the same time that systematic factors are focused on in one's analysis and historical research.

More than good or bad luck was clearly involved in the emergence of Western democracy, although idiosyncratic and chance factors cannot be ignored.

C. Predictability and Controversy in Social Science and Historical Analysis

The usefulness of models is not a result of their precision, rather it is their ability to identify key variables and to improve our understanding of key relationships among those variables. In this respect, the scientific aim of a humble model builder differs from that of the most ambitious historians. For many historians, completeness is very important, and identifying what is unique is at least as important as identifying what is general. Consequently, historians devote enormous time and attention to studying particular people and events, especially unusual ones. Such unique people and events, however, are nearly without interest for a model builder, because their main purpose is identification of a few more or less universal determinants of the phenomena of interest.

We can predict with absolute certainty that the numbers on ordinary dice can add up to no less than two and no more than twelve, but we cannot predict the result of any single roll of the dice, even though the number of factors that need to taken into account is far less than the number that need to be taken account of in most political and economic settings. Statistics, however, implies that, although little can be said about a single roll of the dice, a variety of predictions can be made about the outcomes of a series of dice rolls. Perhaps surprisingly, a series of cases in which government officials roll the dice repeatedly is more predictable than any single case.

Social scientists and statisticians can, thus, provide explanations of particular "histories" of governmental dice rolling in more or less similar circumstances, and can make predictions about as yet unrealized "histories" that would emerge in the future. A government official will roll a seven

about 1/6 of the time using unweighted dice in ordinary circumstances. A series of rolls may test and refute various possible hypotheses about dice rolling—for example, that "dice can be hot" if they are fair.

For a historian, the research question is a bit different and in many ways more interesting than that addressed by social scientists and statisticians. Having observed a particular roll of the dice, the historian wants to explain exactly how the values observed arose. Here, there are clearly proximate causes—more or less the same ones used by a physicist—and also indirect causes: the government official rolling the dice was upset, was under pressure, had been exposed to different theories of rolling dice, was affected by beliefs about divine causality, was left handed, near sighted, weak from age, lived north of the equator, etc. All these factors might affect the manner in which the dice were thrown and, therefore, would largely determine the flight of the dice actually observed. It is entirely possible that this partial list of factors might have "determined" the exact trajectory of the dice imposed by the official who controlled the dice and the numbers that appeared on top.

Such completely accurate histories may, thus, explain exactly what happened, without shedding any light on what will happen on the next roll of the dice. Although "history will repeat itself" about 1/6th of the time in this case, little of the detail that applies to a particular instance of dice rolling will be relevant for explaining the next similar event (rolling a seven), because either the underlying chain of causality is too complex to be fully understood or truly stochastic phenomena occur.

This is not to say that social science is only about prediction, or that history is only about explanation, because the persons who engage in these enterprises are often themselves interested in both questions to varying degrees, and properly so. Social science provides a lens through which particular events can be made sense of, and historical research can stimulate new hypotheses to be tested, as well as provide facts that can be used to test existing hypotheses. Such "convex combinations" of research interests produce a more useful and compact body of knowledge for fellow travelers, scholars, and practitioners than would have been produced by methodological "purists."

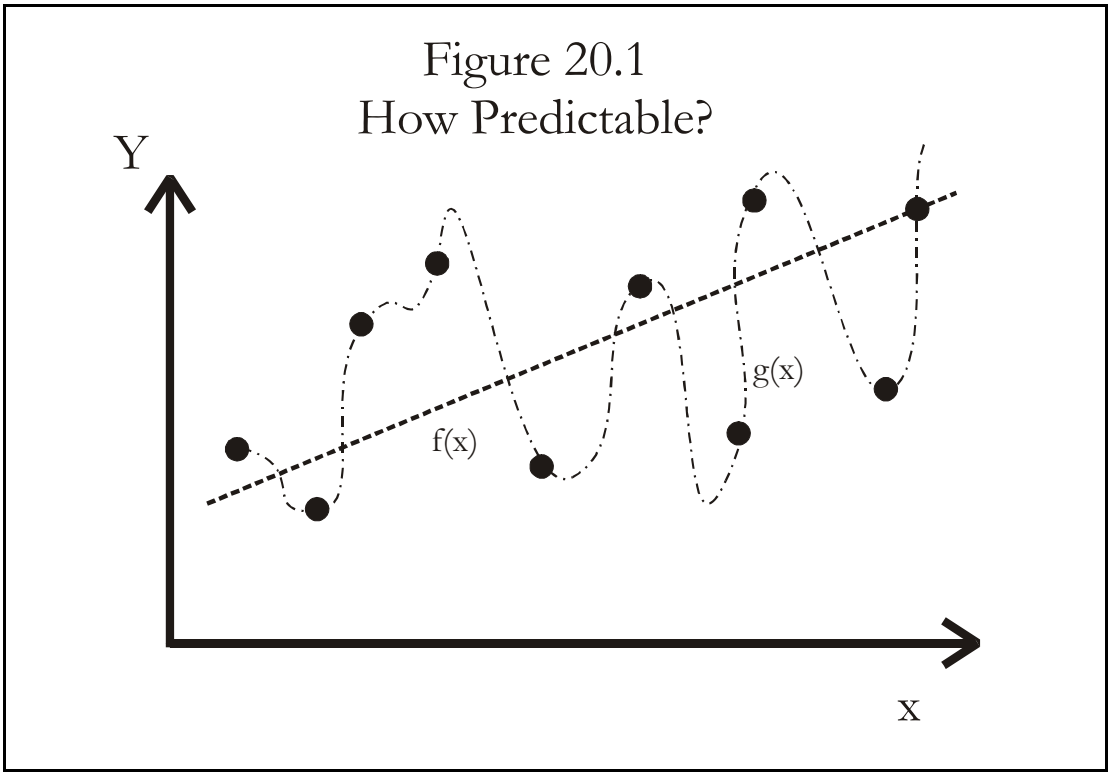
Moreover, in cases in which there are few determining factors, the explanations of historians and theories of social scientists tend to be very similar. The light went on because a person flipped the wall switch. The building survived a direct lightening strike unharmed, because it was protected by Ben Franklin's invention (the lightning rod). The battle was lost because one side was greatly outnumbered, outgunned, and caught by surprise. Prices rose in seventeenth century Spain because of the influx of gold from South America.

In cases in which causal relationships are simple, even a single instance may generalize perfectly to a wide variety of settings. In other cases in which causality is more complex, there are often many plausible claims and counter-claims. Here disagreements are commonplace across disciplines and within disciplines. This book, it is hoped, may induce a few historians to think a bit differently about special persons and events in the past, just as their work has induced this author to think more carefully about constitutional theory and practice.

Unexplained Residuals and Beliefs about Determinism

Controversy and fresh insights are not caused only by differences in methodology or research aims, as might be said about differences between social scientists and historians. Disagreements and progress within social science also occur because disagreements exist about the extent to which human behavior is predictable in general, or in particular circumstances, and therefore about the extent to which particular theories can be used to explain particular events.

To appreciate this point, consider the time series of data points depicted below in figure 20.1. For those who believe that the world is completely determined, the "finely nuanced" dashed fitted line, g(x), will be the sort of theory to which they aspire. For those who believe that the world is not so readily explained, whether because of complexity or the existence of truly random factors, the "essentialist" dotted linear line, f(x), is all that they believe can be accounted for. Disagreements of this sort may cause social scientists from the same field of research to disagree for reasons that seem similar to those discussed above, but which are subtly different. Some social scientists would insist that "we" can or will be able to predict each successive dice roll; others would regard such precision to be impossible. For the former group, a very small "error term" does not imply that other explanations or factors do not exist. For the latter group, an error term can be too small as well as too large; and, moreover, a very large "error term" does not necessarily imply that a faulty analysis has been undertaken or that a theory can be improved upon.



It seems clear that we know a good deal about social phenomena that can be generalized and a good deal that cannot be generalized. Yet, there is little systematic evidence on the "meta-questions" that might allow us to assess the degree to which present theories will explain new cases, or the extent to which new explanations and new theories will be required to understand cases not yet analyzed. Indeed, each side of the debate can point to scientific episodes in which "they" have been proven correct.

Limits of Systematic Theories of Constitutional History

With respect to the focus of this book, it is not immediately obvious how much of the rise of Western democracy can be explained by general features of the political and historical setting and how much is peculiar to the men that advocated particular constitutional designs or reforms and the circumstances in which their arguments and decisions were made.

For example, three major episodes of constitutional reform occurred in Sweden during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, although proposals for major and minor constitutional reforms were nearly continuously proposed during the entire period. Why significant new constitutional gains to trade emerged in three particular decades is not obvious. It also seems clear

that the details of reform were affected by the specific person's holding high offices and unique Swedish circumstances. Nowhere else in Europe was an explicit wealth-weighted voting system adopted. However, broadly similar patterns of reform were adopted in several other European kingdoms during approximately the same time period. For example, Denmark, the Netherlands, Belgium, the United Kingdom, and Norway also adopted reforms in the nineteenth century that gradually shifted power from their kings to their parliaments and increased the importance and breadth of suffrage in elections for parliament.

How much of this pattern of reform is explainable by general economic, social, and political forces might be debated by serious and well-informed scholars for a variety of reasons. They may be interested in somewhat different aspects of history or approach it from different methodological perspectives, as noted above. This book takes an intermediate position on these issues. Social scientists who agree about the aim of research and share a common vision of human behavior may also use different methodologies and reach different conclusions, because they disagree about how predictable a series of relevant events can be.[384]

Such disputes are partly what makes research interesting for those who engage in it, because they imply that each new research project can potentially generate new and useful results in even long-standing areas of research. New explanatory factors are constantly being "discovered" by determinists, at the same time that previously accepted explanatory factors are "disposed "of by skeptics.

D. Similarities of Scientific and Constitutional Revisions

Political constitutions are the durable rules through which ordinary day-to-day and year-to-year public and decade-to-decade policy decisions are made. In this, constitutions can be said to be the "natural laws" of the political game in a particular place at a particular time.

A constitution must be taken as given for purposes of ordinary legislation if it is to determine the process through which policies are adopted. Without standing procedures, conflict over

[384] For example, social scientists tend to be more or less interested in historical detail according to their beliefs about the underlying predictability of the events being analyzed, because this affects beliefs about what can be learned from different kinds of data. For example, the returns from charting the course of deliberations within the chambers in which constitutional reforms are adopted would be considered to be larger or smaller according to whether the scientists in question believed that such behavior was more or less predictable. If not much is truly predictable, a good deal of historical data is simply random noise, rather than part of the underlying causal chain.

decisionmaking procedures would dominate, and "governments" would consist of disorganized groups engaged in intense fighting over their organization's (potential) surplus. Without standing procedures for making policies, the organization's expected surplus tends to be dissipated in costly disputes, as in rent-seeking games.[385] It is therefore completely reasonable to assume that stable decisionmaking rules and constraints are in place when analyzing the kinds of policies that a government is likely to adopt in a given year or decade.

Constitutions, unlike star systems but like astronomical theories, can be revised and copied, which implies that understanding contemporary constitutional designs requires a theory of constitutional reform as well as a static theory of constitutions, just as a theory of science requires a theory of refinement and innovation.

Most constitutions include formal and informal procedures for changing the rules of the game, because most constitutional designers believe that some flexibility is necessary for their constitutions to be robust and, thus, durable rules for making rules. By including procedures of amendment, constitutional designers acknowledge the limits of their own ability to foresee future conditions and the fact that even very good constitutions are somewhat context specific. The norms of scientific work are similarly modest, in that no answer or theory is to be taken to be exempt from challenge and revision.

The procedures specified for constitutional amendments are normally designed to be more demanding than those required for ordinary legislation and tend to require more repeated reviews of proposals and/or greater supermajorities. This suggests that most constitutional designers believe that stability is of greater importance than flexibility at the margin. The rules of the game have to be stable enough to determine day-to-day politics, but allow for occasional improvements. The more closely one examines any nation's constitutional history, the more evident are the nearly continuous efforts to advance and oppose reforms of standing procedures and constraints; however relatively few reform proposals gain sufficient support to be adopted (Rasch and Congleton 2006).

The institutions of science and scholarship reflects similar tradeoffs between stability and flexibility. Education requires stability in the facts and explanations of relationships among facts if knowledge is to be transmitted to students and other scholars. On the other hand, orthodox theories are subject to nearly constant challenges, particularly at their various frontiers, and are gradually

[385] See Congleton, Hillman, and Konrad 2008 for an extensive overview of the rent-seeking literature. See Hillman and Katz (1987) for a model of intra-organizational rent-seeking.

revised as a consequence of those challenges. As in governance, a series of minor reforms can have important effects on mainstream historical and scientific theories.

As a consequence, both constitutional liberalization and paradigm shifts are often most evident many years after they have occurred, as proponents of older institutions and theories gradually accept new evidence, and as older ideas and persons in senior positions at major institutions are gradually replaced by a new generations of ideas and men and women.

E. Liberalism, Reform, and the Use of Scientific Methodology

It is interesting to note that the methodology and domain of modern science emerged at roughly the same time as Western political and economic systems. Indeed, it can be argued that contemporary science was partly a product of the same reforms. Liberalism played a significant role in determining the broad outlines of science as it emerged from the nineteenth century. Conversely, scientific attitudes also affected the penetration of liberal ideas.

Liberalism included a number of hypotheses about how individuals could achieve improve themselves and society. Economic liberals argued that monopolies reduced economic income and national wealth. Political liberals argued that more representative, but rule-bound, governments provide better public policies, more liberty, more tolerance, and broader opportunities. Insofar as liberal policies produced the hypothesized results, the theory was affirmed, and became more widely accepted. Similar norms were clearly evident among the scientists and engineers of the nineteenth century, who believed both in scientific progress and empirical research.

Although many liberals acknowledged limits in a person's or society's ability to determine what the "best" policies are, they generally agreed that a scientific approach was better than an unthinking adherence to traditional ways of doing things. Support for the deduction-experimental approach was itself partly empirical. Technological progress tended to support the contention that improvements were possible, insofar as the new modes of transportation, communication, and farming were widely considered superior to horseback, letters, and traditional life in farm villages. The countries that allowed these new technologies to be employed grew more rapidly than the countries that maintained their medieval institutions, and the nation states that allowed and/or supported industrialization tended to be militarily more powerful as well. Good things followed from the better understanding of animals, plans, minerals, and energy produced through scientific methodology.

The revised economic rules also encouraged people to experiment with new technologies and new lifestyles. Many people moved from farms and villages to new towns and expanding cities,

where their occupations and lifestyles could be pursued that were very different from those of their parents and grandparents. Their new lives were not all together better, nor all together worse, but they chose them over their traditional alternatives. Liberal theories helped explain (and justify) their new more market-oriented, more urban lifestyles. Liberal political theories helped to explain how better public policies could be adopted, and new organizations helped the new middle class participate in local and national politics.[386]

As internal trade barriers were dismantled, transport costs were reduced, and public education expanded, new economic organizations were created and older ones expanded. Specialization inside firms and among firms increased, which created new higher paying jobs for middle managers, engineers, accountants, and lawyers, at the same time that it produced a large number of less skilled jobs paying somewhat more than subsistence wages. Higher wage rates for work in the new firms and factories were possible, because of the greater productivity of the new methods of organizing production. Employment, of course, was voluntary and the new economic organizations had to attract labor from other long-standing enterprises.

The higher wage rates induced migration from the countryside to cities, and the increased use of money wages by the new enterprises created a variety of commercial opportunities for independent shop keepers and tradesmen in the areas around the new factories. As a consequence, older cities expanded, and new towns and cities emerged around the sites of new factories and mines. New towns also emerged at the various transport nodes of the expanded highway, canal and railroad systems for similar reasons. Persons working at firms or living in communities that have (or were believed to have) significant competitive advantages tend to favor fewer laws regulating access to internal and external markets. Many such persons also favored political reforms, because the new urban centers were widely believed to be underrepresented in parliament.

Commercialization and industrialization also affected the national government's interest in expert knowledge and in technological advances that could spur economic development. Taking advantage of the new technologies often required answers to new questions, as well as new public policies. This increased the informational advantages of representative parliaments, the bureaucracy,

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[386] The books of scholars indirectly affect mainstream thought and government policy by strengthening arguments in a manner that affects public discourse and also the development of public school and university curriculums. See Levy and Peart (2005) for an interesting overview of debates among liberal and conservative intellectuals in England during the nineteenth century on such matters as natural hierarchy, racism, and eugenics. See Schonhardt-Bailey (2006) for an exhaustive analysis of English parliamentary debates concerning free trade in the 1830s and 1840s.

and organized economic interest groups and indirectly increased their influence over domestic and trade policies relative to the sovereign. It also increased the demand for experts that could provide advice about public finance, the organization of government, and make use of the new technologies of transportation, communication, and warfare. Better trained bureaucrats were needed.

New polytechnic universities were founded, and scientists and other scholars hired. At the new universities, both science and science students were produced at "knowledge factories," where middle class students could obtain advanced technical and scientific training in relatively large, standardized, classes at a reduced (and subsidized) price.

Technological, economic, and political developments also created a variety of new phenomena to be interpreted and understood. Efforts to provide answers gradually produced new more specialized scientific fields of research, including the "new" social sciences, which largely emerged as distinct fields of research in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The rapid technological and scientific advance made possible by reforms that encouraged innovation and the educational investments of the nineteenth century continued throughout the twentieth century. The list of significant innovations in agriculture, mining, materials, machines, electronics, and organizations is nearly endless.

In this manner, liberalism opened and widened the doors of science in much the same manner that it opened politics and economics: by reducing entry barriers, exploiting economies of scale, and increasing specialization.

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