

## Mapping the Red Threat: The Politics of Exclusion in Leipzig Before 1914

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**ABSTRACT.** Long before Adolf Hitler's appearance clouded democracy's prospects in Germany, election battles had provided a means to disadvantage "enemies of the Reich" in the polling booth. Such battles were waged not only during election campaigns but also when new voting laws were legislated and district boundaries were redrawn. Maps produced during the Imperial era informed voters, statesmen, and social scientists how the principle of the fair and equal vote was compromised at the subnational level, and new maps offer historians an opportunity to consider struggles for influence and power in visual terms. This article argues that local, regional, and national suffrages need to be considered together and in terms of their reciprocal effects. On the one hand, focusing on overlaps and spillovers between electoral politics at different tiers of governance can illuminate the perceptions and attitudes that are constitutive of electoral culture. On the other hand, using cartography to supplement statistical analysis can make election battles more accessible to nonspecialist audiences. Combining these approaches allows us to rethink strategies of political exclusion in Imperial Germany's coexisting suffrage regimes. Focusing on Leipzig and its powerful Social Democratic organization opens a window on larger issues about how Germans conceived questions of political fairness in a democratizing age.

Schon lange Zeit bevor Hitler auftauchte und die Zukunftsaussichten der Demokratie in Deutschland verdüsterte, hatten heftige Auseinandersetzungen über den Ablauf der Wahlen es ermöglicht, die sogenannten „Reichsfeinde“ bei den Wahlen zu benachteiligen. Solche Auseinandersetzungen wurden nicht nur während der eigentlichen Wahlkämpfe geführt, sondern auch wenn neue Wahlgesetze beschlossen und Wahlbezirke neu festgelegt wurden. Während des Kaiserreichs erstellte Karten informierten Wähler, Staatsmänner und Sozialwissenschaftler darüber, wie das Prinzip der fairen und gleichberechtigten Wahl auf der subnationalen Ebene kompromittiert wurde, und neue Karten bieten Historikern nun die Möglichkeit diese Machtkämpfe visuell zu betrachten. Dieser Artikel argumentiert, dass das lokale, regionale und nationale Wahlrecht zusammen und hinsichtlich seiner Wechselwirkung aufeinander betrachtet werden muss. Indem der Fokus auf Überschneidungen zwischen Wahlpolitiken unterschiedlicher Regierungsebenen gesetzt wird, können einerseits die Wahrnehmungen und Einstellungen beleuchtet werden, die der Wahlkultur zugrunde lagen. Andererseits kann das Thema Wahlkämpfe durch die Verwendung von Kartographie in Ergänzung zur statistischen Analyse auch Nichtspezialisten nähergebracht werden. Die Verbindung dieser Ansätze gestattet es uns die Strategien politischer Exklusion auf den im Kaiserreich koexistierenden Wahlebenen zu überdenken. Das Beispiel Leipzig mit seiner mächtigen sozialdemokratischen Organisation bietet dabei einen Blick auf übergreifende Themen wie etwa die deutschen Vorstellungen von politischer Fairness im Zeitalter der Demokratisierung.

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“THE Ministry of the Interior has no use for the map you are offering.”<sup>1</sup> This was the dismissive reply that Saxony’s suffrage expert Georg Heink sent to Richard Liesche, owner of the Graser Verlag in March 1909. On a base map showing the smallest towns and villages in the Kingdom of Saxony—Imperial Germany’s third-largest federal state after Prussia and Bavaria—Liesche’s publishing house had superimposed two sets of colored lines (fig. 1). The first set was in blue, depicting the borders of Saxony’s twenty-three Reichstag districts.<sup>2</sup> Each district was marked with a Roman numeral, also in blue, including XII for Leipzig-City and XIII for Leipzig-County.<sup>3</sup> The second set of lines was in red, depicting the ninety-one Landtag districts that Heink had just drawn, or redrawn, as part of Saxony’s suffrage reform passed earlier in 1909. Each of Saxony’s forty-eight rural Landtag districts was designated by a large Arabic numeral in red, including the twenty-second and twenty-third rural districts outside Leipzig. Each of the kingdom’s urban Landtag districts was underlined in red and had a smaller Arabic numeral.<sup>4</sup> Because the use of colored ink added significantly to the cost of producing this map, Liesche hoped the Saxon government would agree to buy three hundred copies. No deal, replied Heink. But in the margin of Liesche’s begging letter, Heink wondered what Graser’s print run would be.<sup>5</sup>

Heink had reason to worry about a popular outcry should Graser’s map reach working-class voters or be used in socialist efforts to enlighten them about their voting rights. Those voters had just been subjected to an audacious gerrymander of Saxony’s Landtag districts.<sup>6</sup> The architect and draftsman of that gerrymander was Georg Heink himself. But Leipzig voters had been subject to gerrymanders before. As readers will learn below, suffrage reformers had sought to minimize Social Democratic gains in Leipzig’s municipal assembly in 1894 and in the Saxon Landtag in 1896. Such antisocialists pursued a strategy similar to the one Republicans deployed against their Democratic Party rivals in the United States starting in 2010: identify local legislatures where a majority can be obtained or safeguarded; use that majority to redraw the geographical boundaries of electoral districts in a partisan way;

<sup>1</sup>Sächsisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Dresden (hereafter SHStAD), Saxon Ministerium des Innern (hereafter MdI), Nr. 5489, Georg Heink, draft reply to Richard Liesche, March 27, 1909.

<sup>2</sup>There were 397 districts in the Reich as a whole.

<sup>3</sup>Leipzig-City, geographically compact, included Leipzig’s urban core and some of its inner suburbs. Graser’s map did not attempt to show its jagged outline (which may be seen in figure 3, discussed later), opting for a circle instead. Leipzig-County, a much larger area surrounding the city, included most of the Leipzig administrative district (*Amtshauptmannschaft*).

<sup>4</sup>As will be explained below, between two and fifteen towns might be stitched together into a single urban (*städtisch*) district, of which there were twenty-four in Saxony (1868–1909). On figure 1, which shows redrawn Landtag districts after 1909, the towns of Markranstädt, Taucha, and Brandis (near Leipzig) and Borna (further south) were just some of the towns that constituted the 12th urban district of Borna. Graser’s map left unlabeled the 20 big-city (*großstädtisch*) districts: after 1909 these were allotted to Dresden (7), Leipzig (7), Chemnitz (4), Plauen (1), and Zwickau (1).

<sup>5</sup>SHStAD, MdI, Nr. 5489, Georg Heink, marginalia on Richard Liesche to MdI, March 25, 1909.

<sup>6</sup>For a very brief visual explanation of gerrymandering, see Christopher Ingraham, “This Is the Best Explanation of Gerrymandering You Will Ever See: How to Steal an Election; A Visual Guide,” Wonkblog, *Washington Post*, March 1, 2015, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2015/03/01/this-is-the-best-explanation-of-gerrymandering-you-will-ever-see/>. See also Mark Monmonier, *Bushmanders and Bullwinkles: How Politicians Manipulate Electronic Maps and Census Data to Win Elections* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000); and, more generally, Jeremy Black, *Maps and Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997).



**Fig. 1.** Grasers Karte von Sachsen mit Angabe der Landtags- u. Reichstagswahlkreise (Annaberg: Graser Verlag, n.d. [ca. 1911]), detail. 1:320,000.

then secure more victories and initiate more gerrymanders, to sap the opponent's strength for the foreseeable future.<sup>7</sup> The manipulation of voting laws in Germany before 1914 depended more on what the British called “fancy franchises”—class-based and plural voting systems—than on the redrawing of district boundaries. But usually suffrage reform and redistricting occurred at the same time and with the same antisocialist intent.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup>David Daley, *Ratf\*\*cked: The True Story Behind the Secret Plan to Steal America's Democracy* (New York, W. W. Norton, 2016), xiv.

<sup>8</sup>The Saxon suffrage reforms of 1868, 1894 (Leipzig), 1896, and 1909 are discussed below.



The likelihood that working-class voters in 1909 would compare the size and shape of Saxony's Reichstag and Landtag districts was small. Socialist functionaries in Saxony, however, did have the time and inclination to think about what those intersecting blue and red lines really meant. Some veterans of election battles in Saxony also saw the opportunity to explain to their followers how the outcome of elections fought under the Reichstag's universal manhood suffrage differed so fundamentally from elections fought under the more complicated voting systems for Saxon Landtag elections and for Leipzig's municipal assembly.<sup>9</sup>

*Graser's Karte* offered contemporaries—and now offers historians—an opportunity to consider the ramifications of German battles for influence and power in three different political cultures. The balance of this article argues that local, regional, and national suffrages need to be considered together and in terms of their reciprocal effects to get at certain developments central to the processes of political modernization. Examining overlaps and spillovers between electoral politics at different tiers of governance can illuminate the perceptions and attitudes that are constitutive of electoral culture.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, supplementing statistical analysis of election returns with maps (such as Graser's) that depict changing district boundaries can make election battles—over suffrage laws and during election campaigns—more accessible to nonspecialist audiences. Focusing on Leipzig, its powerful Social Democratic organization, and the attempts of bourgeois elites to defend “their” city from the “red threat” is only one way to explore these larger issues—but it provides a new perspective on how Germans conceived questions of political fairness in a democratizing age.

Bismarck's unexpected decision in 1866–1867 to introduce universal manhood suffrage for Reichstag elections has been well studied as a prerequisite for a genuinely national electorate and for the development of mass parties.<sup>11</sup> By contrast, historians have only recently turned their attention to three other concurrent developments that, like the mass press, helped establish “the circuitry of national knowledge.”<sup>12</sup> In the last third of the nineteenth century, statistics emerged as a “science of nationality.” Mapping made the cultural nation visible for the first time. And radical nationalists sought to define the location of Germany itself, its language frontiers, and ethnic groups that belonged to the cultural nation or lay beyond it. As shown by later efforts to map German population policy in the Weimar and Nazi eras, neither statistics nor mapping was politically neutral: scientific legitimacy served

<sup>9</sup>Most cities had a bicameral system in which the municipal assembly (Stadtverordnetenkollegium) was the lower chamber and the city council (Stadtrat) was the upper chamber. I refer to members of these chambers as assemblymen and counselors.

<sup>10</sup>See Thomas Kühne, “Wahlrecht – Wahlverhalten – Wahlkultur. Tradition und Innovation in der historischen Wahlforschung,” *Archiv für Sozialgeschichte* 33 (1993): 481–547; Kühne, *Dreiklassenwahlrecht und Wahlkultur in Preußen 1867–1914* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1994).

<sup>11</sup>For further references, see James Retallack, “The Authoritarian State and the Political Mass Market,” in *Imperial Germany Revisited: Continuing Debates and New Perspectives*, ed. Sven Oliver Müller and Cornelius Torp (New York: Berghahn, 2011), 83–96.

<sup>12</sup>The phrase comes from a recent study on which this paragraph draws: Jason D. Hansen, *Mapping the Germans: Statistical Science, Cartography, and the Visualization of the German Nation, 1848–1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015). See also Morgane Labbé, “Die Grenzen der deutschen Nation. Raum der Karte, Statistik, Erzählung,” in *Die Grenze als Raum, Erfahrung und Konstruktion*, ed. François Etienne, Jörg Seifarth, and Bernhard Struck (Frankfurt am Main: Campus, 2007), 293–320; Hedwig Richter, “Wahlen und Statistik. Preußen und die USA im 19. Jahrhundert,” in *Kultur und Praxis der Wahlen. Eine Geschichte der modernen Demokratie*, ed. Hedwig Richter and Hubertus Buchstein (Wiesbaden: Springer, 2017), 315–336.

political legitimacy, and democratized access to information went hand in hand with efforts to impose a particular ideological reading on results.<sup>13</sup> This article does not pursue these particular lines of inquiry; but census results were crucial to the biologization of the nation and to the construction—not just the tallying—of election results.<sup>14</sup> By studying election returns and cartography together, one gains a better sense of the social, ideological, and spatial categories in which Germans understood and endorsed lines of solidarity and exclusion.

Among the best studies of Imperial German elections, scarcely a map is to be found.<sup>15</sup> The same is true of the most important works on subnational suffrage laws (for the parliaments of Germany's federal states) and for recent studies of Leipzig's working classes and its bourgeoisie.<sup>16</sup> Cartography cannot illuminate everything that historians find interesting about "the ambiguities of place,"<sup>17</sup> but contributions to the Historischer Atlas von Sachsen project show how much can be done.<sup>18</sup> For example, by mapping "party bastions" from one election to the next, and by mapping the size of electorates in Saxony's most urbanized and industrialized districts, Wolfgang Schröder and Simone Lässig have shown how certain groups of voters came into political proximity with other groups and how electoral unfairness was

<sup>13</sup>See, e.g., Guntrum Henrik Herb, *Under the Map of Germany: Nationalism and Propaganda, 1918–1945* (London: Routledge, 1997).

<sup>14</sup>The importance of census data was evident in the pioneering chapters on Prussian and Saxon Landtag voting in Gerhard A. Ritter, *Wahlgeschichtliches Arbeitsbuch. Materialien zur Statistik des Kaiserreichs 1871–1918* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1980), 132–49, 163–82.

<sup>15</sup>These studies include, by publication date: Stanley Suval, *Electoral Politics in Wilhelmine Germany* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985); Karl Rohe, *Wahlen und Wählertraditionen in Deutschland* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1992) (which has one map); Brett Fairbairn, *Democracy in the Undemocratic State: The German Reichstag Elections of 1898 and 1903* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997); Jonathan Sperber, *The Kaiser's Voters: Electors and Elections in Imperial Germany* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Margaret Lavinia Anderson, *Practicing Democracy: Elections and Political Culture in Imperial Germany* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000); Carl-Wilhelm Reibel, *Handbuch der Reichstagswahlen 1890–1918. Bündnisse, Ergebnisse, Kandidaten*, 2 vols. (Düsseldorf: Droste, 2007). By contrast, the maps outshine the analysis in Jürgen Schmädke, *Wählerbewegung im Wilhelminischen Deutschland*, 2 vols. (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1994).

<sup>16</sup>See Kühne, *Dreiklassenwahlrecht*; Simone Lässig, *Wahlrechtskampf und Wahlreform in Sachsen (1895–1909)* (Weimar: Böhlau, 1996). On Leipzig, see Thomas Adam, *Arbeitermilieu und Arbeiterbewegung in Leipzig 1871–1933* (Weimar: Böhlau, 1999); Michael Schäfer, *Bürgertum in der Krise. Städtische Mittelklassen in Edinburgh und Leipzig 1890 bis 1930* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2003); Sean Dobson, *Authority and Upheaval in Leipzig, 1910–1920* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001). To be fair, the latter has an unidentified map of Leipzig printed inside its front and back covers. A similar adornment is found in Gerhard A. Ritter, ed., *Wahlen und Wahlkämpfe in Deutschland* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1997). Using bourgeoisie for *Bürgertum* and burgher for *Bürger* is an inadequate but necessary shorthand.

<sup>17</sup>See David Blackbourn and James Retallack, introduction to *Localism, Landscape, and the Ambiguities of Place: German-Speaking Central Europe, 1860–1930*, ed. David Blackbourn and James Retallack (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007). See also the chapters by Celia Applegate, Thomas Kühne, Helmut Walser Smith, and Thomas Mergel in part 1 of *Saxony in German History: Culture, Society, and Politics, 1830–1933*, ed. James Retallack (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000), 33–95.

<sup>18</sup>Wolfgang Schröder, *Landtagswahlen im Königreich Sachsen 1869–1895/1896. Beiheft zur Karte D IV 3, Atlas zur Geschichte und Landeskunde von Sachsen* (Leipzig: Verlag der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig und Landesvermessungsamt Sachsen, 2004) (hereafter cited as SLTW); Simone Lässig, *Reichstagswahlen im Königreich Sachsen 1871–1912. Beiheft zur Karte D IV 2, Atlas zur Geschichte und Landeskunde von Sachsen* (Leipzig: Verlag der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig und Landesvermessungsamt Sachsen, 1998) (hereafter cited as LRTW). I am deeply indebted to both authors for permission to use their publications and maps, as I am to Jana Moser, former director of the Arbeitsstelle Historischer Atlas von Sachsen in Dresden. For more on this project, see <https://www.saw-leipzig.de/de/projekte/historischer-atlas-von-sachsen-atlas-zur-geschichte-und-landeskunde-von-sachsen>.

distributed.<sup>19</sup> No multiple regression analysis and no cartographic expertise is needed to read from this atlas how social differentiation and political polarization shaped battles for power.<sup>20</sup>

If interest in German elections peaked around 2000, scholarly attention to Germany's working classes and its labor movement had already begun to decline in the 1980s, victim to new interest in the *Bürgertum*.<sup>21</sup> Relations between working-class and bourgeois Germans remains a worthy object of study. Before 1914 many German burghers saw the German Social Democratic Party (SPD) as a revolutionary party, in theory and in practice.<sup>22</sup> The “red threat” was considered to be both existential and territorial: socialists were closing in on social, political, and cultural terrain that had to be defended. Such bourgeois fears were especially visible in Leipzig. As the city expanded with the incorporation of working-class suburbs, the possibility of socialists sitting in Leipzig's municipal assembly, or representing the city in the Saxon Landtag and the German Reichstag, was perceived by Leipzig burghers as a challenge: it required a hardheaded response. The degree to which Social Democratic incursions endangered the politics of notables depended on Leipzigers' “space of experience” and their “horizon of expectation.”<sup>23</sup> The SPD's steady accretion of élan and electoral success evoked reactions that could be dramatic (as in calls for a coup d'état) or pragmatic (as in careful administrative reform). Responses to the rise of Social Democracy sometimes felt like the collision of tectonic plates, whose geological outlines bear a resemblance to the jagged boundaries of electoral districts,<sup>24</sup> but the subterranean movement of large masses was the underlying cause of change. As I have argued elsewhere, the course of Germany's political democratization could be slowed, stopped, and even reversed on a local scale, whereas “social democratization”—the fundamental politicization of society—was relentless.<sup>25</sup>

### The Advance of Social Democracy, 1866–1890

Leipzig and Saxony were cradles of Germany's Social Democratic movement in the 1860s. August Bebel and Wilhelm Liebknecht made Saxony their early lobbying ground, not just in the mid-1860s but extending through the next twenty-five years, until, as SPD chairman Paul Singer put it, they had to leave the Saxon “frog pond” in 1890 and lead their party

<sup>19</sup>In Saxony's 13th Reichstag district of Leipzig–County, it took five times as many votes to elect one Reichstag deputy in 1912 as it did in the 9th Reichstag district of Freiberg. The Social Democrats' hold on Leipzig–County was so secure that they urged those supporters who could do so to relocate to the twelfth electoral district, Leipzig–City, before general elections to help defeat National Liberals there.

<sup>20</sup>Party bastions, which are shown for the period 1871–1912 on maps in LRTW, 52–58, are defined as Reichstag districts where the winning candidate received at least 60 percent of the popular vote on the first ballot.

<sup>21</sup>For works reflecting the high point of interest in the SPD's electoral fortunes, see Peter Steinbach, “Die Entwicklung der deutschen Sozialdemokratie im Kaiserreich im Spiegel der historischen Wahlforschung,” and Gerhard A. Ritter, “Das Wahlrecht und die Wählerschaft der Sozialdemokratie im Königreich Sachsen 1867–1914,” in *Der Aufstieg der deutschen Arbeiterbewegung*, ed. Gerhard A. Ritter (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1990), 1–36, 49–101.

<sup>22</sup>For practical reasons I use SPD as a shorthand for the socialist parties that bore different names before 1891.

<sup>23</sup>See Reinhart Koselleck, *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), esp. 259–61.

<sup>24</sup>See, e.g., figure 9, discussed below.

<sup>25</sup>This is a central argument of James Retallack, *Red Saxony: Election Battles and the Spectre of Democracy in Germany, 1860–1918* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017). On *Fundamentalpolitisierung*, see Gustav Radbruch, “Die politischen Parteien im System des deutschen Verfassungsrechts,” in *Handbuch des Deutschen Staatsrechts*, ed. Gerhard Anschütz and Richard Thoma (Tübingen: Mohr, 1930), 1:285–294, 289.

from Berlin.<sup>26</sup> The year 1890, however, represented no caesura in the processes of industrialization and urbanization that had made Saxony particularly fertile ground for Social Democracy.

In Imperial Germany and in Saxony, the SPD fared very differently in national, regional, and local elections.<sup>27</sup> The moment at which Social Democracy came to be seen as a serious electoral threat depended largely on the breadth of the suffrage for parliaments at each tier of governance.<sup>28</sup> Between 1867 and 1890, German burghers first took notice of SPD successes in Reichstag elections, which were fought on the basis of universal manhood suffrage. From the late 1870s onward, the party achieved breakthroughs in Saxon Landtag elections, for which a three-mark tax threshold was the principal impediment to the enfranchisement of workers. And by 1890, Social Democrats were finding ways to gain the local citizenship (*Bürgerrecht*) needed to vote in Leipzig municipal elections. The balance of this section compares the growth of Saxon Social Democracy in national, state, and local elections up to 1890. It aims to show why Leipzig's city fathers and other burghers felt a growing sense of unease about the "red threat" and why they were ready, after 1890, to gerrymander Leipzig's districts for both Landtag and municipal elections.

### *National Elections*

Elections to the North German Reichstag were first held in February and August 1867. At this time—in fact, until the empire's collapse in 1918—Saxony was allocated twenty-three Reichstag mandates. In the February election, Bebel and Liebknecht won the Reichstag districts of Glauchau–Meerane and Stollberg–Schneeberg–Löbnitz.<sup>29</sup> They were the only socialists Saxon voters sent to Berlin. After August 1867, a total of five Saxon Social Democrats sat in the Reichstag, among a national delegation (*Fraktion*) of only six deputies. In March 1871, under the influence of German victories over France, the Social Democratic delegation was reduced to two deputies again (both from Saxony). This setback was soon reversed. In the Reichstag elections of January 1874, Saxon socialists won six of twenty-three Reichstag seats in the kingdom, with over 35 percent of the popular vote (compared to 7 percent in the Reich). All six seats were clustered in the densely populated region around Chemnitz, where industry had spilled out into towns and villages (see [fig. 2](#)). August Bebel tallied an astounding 80 percent of the vote in the district of Glauchau–Meerane.

Even under the Anti-Socialist Law (1878–1890), Saxon SPD fortunes in Reichstag elections continued to rise, as [table 1](#) shows.<sup>30</sup> By 1884, in the Reich as a whole, the party had

<sup>26</sup> Paul Singer to Friedrich Engels, May 13, 1890, cited in *Wilhelm Liebknecht: Briefwechsel mit Karl Marx und Friedrich Engels*, ed. Georg Eckert (The Hague: Mouton & Co., 1963), 370 n. 2.

<sup>27</sup> Gerhard A. Ritter appreciated the importance of this distinction in "Wahlen und Wahlpolitik im Königreich Sachsen 1867–1914," in *Sachsen im Kaiserreich. Politik, Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft im Umbruch*, ed. Simone Lässig and Karl Heinrich Pohl (Dresden: Sächsische Landeszentrale für politische Bildung, 1997), 27–86. See also Simone Lässig, Karl Heinrich Pohl, and James Retallack, eds., *Modernisierung und Region im wilhelminischen Deutschland. Wahlen, Wahlrecht und Politische Kultur*, 2nd ed. (Bielefeld: Verlag für Regionalgeschichte, 1998).

<sup>28</sup> This is not to discount the importance of membership in the party, the Free Trade Unions, and Social Democratic cultural associations.

<sup>29</sup> Klaus Erich Pollmann, *Parlamentarismus im Norddeutschen Bund 1867–1870* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1985), 545; Pollmann, "Arbeiterwahlen im Norddeutschen Bund 1867–1870," *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 15, no. 2 (1989): 164–95.

<sup>30</sup> See "Anti-Socialist Law (October 21, 1878)," in *Forging an Empire: Bismarckian Germany (1866–1890)*, ed. James Retallack, vol. 4 of the digital history anthology *German History in Documents and Images*, German Historical Institute, Washington, DC, [http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub\\_document.cfm?document\\_id=1843](http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_document.cfm?document_id=1843).



**Fig. 2.** Reichstag districts in Saxony, 1867–1918. Adapted from Philologisch-historische Klasse der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig in cooperation with the Landesvermessungsamt Sachsen, eds., *Reichstagswahlen im Königreich Sachsen 1871–1912. Karte D IV 2, Atlas zur Geschichte und Landeskunde von Sachsen* (Dresden: Landesvermessungsamt Sachsen, 1997). Used by permission.

**Table 1.** Social Democratic votes and seats won, Saxony and the Reich, 1871–1890

Reichstag Election Year	Votes Won				Seats Won			
	Saxony		Reich		Saxony (23)		Reich (397)	
	(no.)	(%)	(no.)	(%)	(no.)	(%)	(no.)	(%)
1871*	42,000	17.6	1,24,000	3.2	2	8.7	2	0.5
1874	92,000	35.8	3,52,000	6.8	6	26.1	9	2.3
1877	1,24,000	38.0	4,93,000	9.1	7	30.4	12	3.0
1878	1,28,000	37.6	4,37,000	7.6	6	26.1	9	2.3
1881	88,000	28.2	3,12,000	6.1	4	17.4	12	3.0
1884	1,28,000	35.3	5,50,000	9.7	5	21.7	24	6.0
1887	1,49,000	28.7	7,63,000	10.1	0	0.0	11	2.8
1890	2,41,000	42.1	14,27,000	19.7	6	26.1	35	8.8

Notes: Vote totals have been rounded. \*In 1871, without Alsace-Lorraine, 382 seats were contested; thereafter, 397 seats.

Sources: [Eugen Würzburger], “Die Wahlen zum Deutschen Reichstag im Königreich Sachsen von 1871 bis 1907,” *Zeitschrift des K. Sächsischen Statistischen Landesamtes* 54, no. 2 (1908): 171–80, 173; Gerhard A. Ritter, “Das Wahlrecht und die Wählerschaft der Sozialdemokratie im Königreich Sachsen 1867–1914,” in *Der Aufstieg der deutschen Arbeiterbewegung*, ed. Gerhard A. Ritter (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1990), 49–101, 63. Some figures calculated by the author.



largely recouped its losses in the elections of 1878 and 1881. In and around Leipzig, the party's showing in Reichstag elections was mixed. The electoral district of Leipzig-City was consistently won by a National Liberal notable.<sup>31</sup> By contrast, Social Democratic candidates gradually came to dominate Reichstag elections in the surrounding district of Leipzig-County. Table 2 shows the dominance of the National Liberals and Social Democrats in these two Reichstag districts.

The Saxon SPD suffered a rout in the elections of 1887, when the Conservatives, Free Conservatives, and National Liberals rallied to Bismarck's national *Kartell* of "state-supporting parties"—also known in Saxony as the "parties of order." Bismarck used a war scare against France to whip up the electorate, and high turnout benefited these right-wing parties. The *Kartell* reduced the number of Saxon SPD seats from five to zero. In the Reichstag constituency of Leipzig-County, a National Liberal victory in 1887 bucked the trend of growing SPD strength. Figure 3 shows areas of SPD strength (in red) in the parts of Leipzig-County that lay closest to Leipzig's city center. Most red patches are within the red circle that marks a distance of five kilometers from Leipzig's central market square.<sup>32</sup> The socialist incumbent in February 1887 was Louis Viereck, an editor of Social Democratic newspapers and journals (most of which were banned in the 1880s).<sup>33</sup> Viereck almost carried the day. On the first ballot he won 19,327 Reichstag votes. The National Liberal candidate was Ferdinand Goetz, a popular physician in Leipzig. He polled strongly in areas beyond those working-class suburbs, which are shown in blue and green. This gave him a total of 20,039 votes and a narrow victory.

Leipzig's burghers were worried by the narrowness of Goetz's victory and what it portended. Among those suburbs in Leipzig-County that were soon to be incorporated into Leipzig-City, Viereck outpolled Goetz in 1887 by 15,700 to 11,121 votes.<sup>34</sup> In 1890, the National Liberals in Saxony saw their share of the statewide vote shrink from over 31 percent in 1887 to less than 20 percent; their number of seats fell from ten to just three, though they held Leipzig-City. These losses shocked Saxon National Liberals: it made them even more willing than they were already to subordinate themselves to the dominant Conservatives in the kingdom. By contrast, in 1890 the Saxon SPD was again on the march. Its candidates won a far higher proportion of Reichstag ballots in Saxony (42 percent) than the party's average in the Reich (20 percent).<sup>35</sup> The SPD now held six Saxon seats in the Reichstag. These countervailing developments led Saxon National Liberals to consider how to defend their bastion of influence in Leipzig not only in Reichstag contests but also in Landtag and municipal elections.

<sup>31</sup> Winning National Liberal candidates in Leipzig-City included Deputy Mayor Eduard Stephani, future Lord Mayor Carl Tröndlin, and, after 1893, Leipzig's chief statistician and chairman of the Pan-German League, Dr. Ernst Hasse.

<sup>32</sup> Suburbs lying outside this circle were not incorporated in 1889–92.

<sup>33</sup> Viereck was rumored to be the illegitimate son of Kaiser Wilhelm I; he was banished from Berlin in 1879 under §28 of the Anti-Socialist Law; and late in 1887 he was expelled from the SPD after a conflict with party leaders. Wilhelm Heinz Schröder, *Sozialdemokratische Parlamentarier in den Deutschen Reichs- und Landtagen 1867–1933* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1995), 781.

<sup>34</sup> These latter figures are taken from Adam, *Arbeitermilieu und Arbeiterbewegung*, 286.

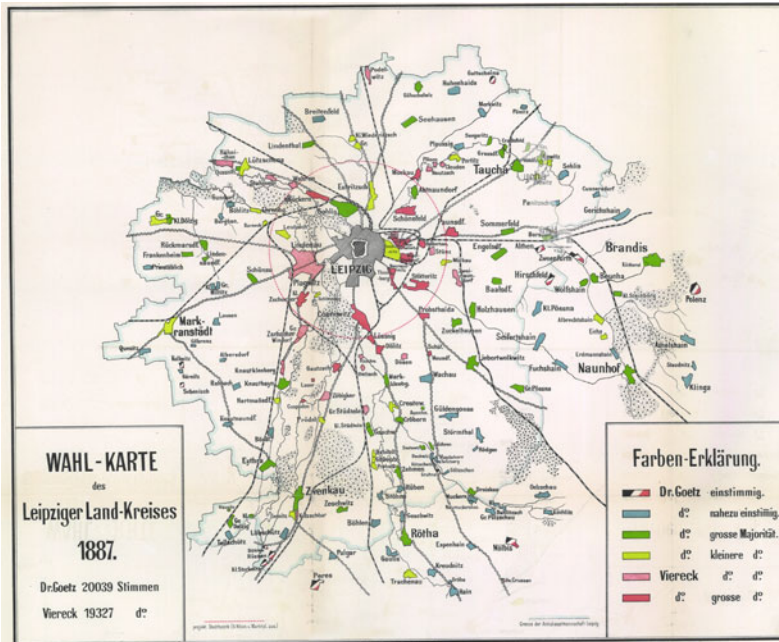
<sup>35</sup> Figures cited in the text have been rounded.

**Table 2.** National Liberal and Social Democratic strength in Leipzig-City and Leipzig-County, 1871–1890

Reichstag Election Year	Eligible Electors	Votes cast in Leipzig-City				Winning Party	Eligible Electors	Votes cast in Leipzig-County				Winning Party
		National Liberal		Social Democratic				National Liberal		Social Democratic		
		(no.)	(%)	(no.)	(%)			(no.)	(%)	(no.)	(%)	
1871	19,113	7,314	74.2	2,477	25.1	NLP	23,399	5,800	64.3	2,903	32.3	NLP
1874	22,811	9,224	70.6	3,651	27.9	NLP	28,325	3,458	28.9	4,627	38.6	SPD
1877	25,840	10,776	60.6	5,250	29.2	NLP	32,738	4,502	24.0	9,420	50.2	Freisinn
1878	27,019	11,940	58.8	5,822	28.7	NLP	34,793	–	–	11,253	45.4	RFKP
1881	29,695	8,804	40.4	6,482	29.5	NLP	37,203	–	–	10,503	48.0	RFKP
1884	32,334	12,566	51.2	9,676	39.4	NLP	40,710	–	–	15,233	54.8	SPD
1887	34,718	19,520	62.2	10,087	32.4	NLP	45,939	20,039	50.6	19,327	48.8	NLP
1890	36,366	15,518	48.1	12,921	40.0	NLP	55,536	18,214	36.9	30,127	61.0	SPD

Notes: Votes cast in main election only, not in runoff ballots or in by-elections. Percentages shown are percentages of actual valid votes cast. NLP: National Liberal Party. RFKP: Imperial and Free Conservative Party. The winner labeled “Freisinn” in 1877 was a candidate of the left-liberal Radical Party. Highlighted cells refer to the contest between Ferdinand Goetz and Louis Viereck in 1887.

Source: [Eugen Würzburger], “Die Wahlen zum Deutschen Reichstag im Königreich Sachsen von 1871 bis 1907,” *Zeitschrift des K. Sächsischen Statistischen Landesamtes* 54, no. 2 (1908): 176–77.



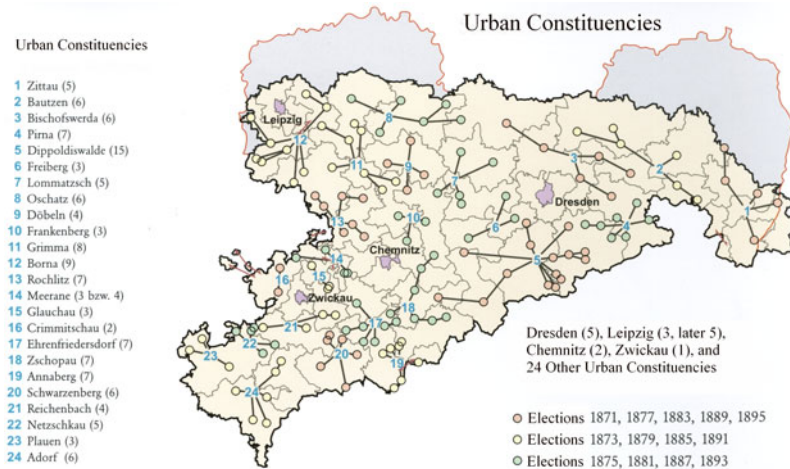
**Fig. 3.** National Liberalism and Social Democracy in Leipzig-County, 1887. Das Wahl-Comité der vereinigten Ordnungs-Parteien für Leipzig-Land, *Wahl des Herrn Dr. med. Ferdinand Goetz für den 13. sächsischen Wahlkreis (Leipzig-Land) betr.* (Leipzig, n.d. [May 1887]), back matter.

### State Elections

Social Democratic success came more slowly in Saxon Landtag elections than in Reichstag elections—but sooner than in other federal states. Saxony’s three-mark tax threshold for enfranchisement was the principal impediment to Social Democratic voters.<sup>36</sup> It had been legislated as part of a major reform of the Saxon Landtag suffrage in 1868, which did away with representation according to social estate. But a tax threshold was not the only way the framers of Saxony’s 1868 suffrage sought to contain the effects of social democratization.

Some of these ways can best be appreciated by looking at maps (figs. 4–5). Since deputies were elected for six-year terms, only one-third of Landtag districts were contested every two years. For example, the twenty-six districts contested in 1871 were not contested again until 1877. Moreover, the districts in which elections were held in any given year were not contiguous but scattered randomly across the kingdom. These two stipulations contributed to the localization—and thus the containment—of political opposition. No electoral call to arms, however contentious or impassioned, could produce a groundswell of support in all parts of the kingdom, let alone an electoral landslide for one party. If a Landtag election heated up locally, voters in a neighboring district might have to wait four years for their turn to cast

<sup>36</sup>In the 1860s, relatively few workers paid the necessary 3 marks in annual taxes, which corresponded to an annual income of 600–700 marks. But implementation of a major tax reform on Jan. 1, 1879, combined with inflation and wage increases, put a much higher proportion of workers, especially skilled workers and miners, over this tax threshold. “Here we’ve practically arrived at the universal suffrage,” complained Zwickau’s regional governor during the autumn Landtag election campaign in 1879. SLTW, 47.



**Fig. 4.** Urban districts for Saxon Landtag elections, 1868–1909. The figures in parentheses after the name of each district indicate the number of towns in the district. Adapted from Philologisch-historische Klasse der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig in cooperation with the Landesvermessungsamt Sachsen, eds., *Landtagswahlen im Königreich Sachsen 1869–1895/1896. Karte D IV 3, Atlas zur Geschichte und Landeskunde von Sachsen* (Dresden: Landesvermessungsamt Sachsen, 2002). Used by permission.

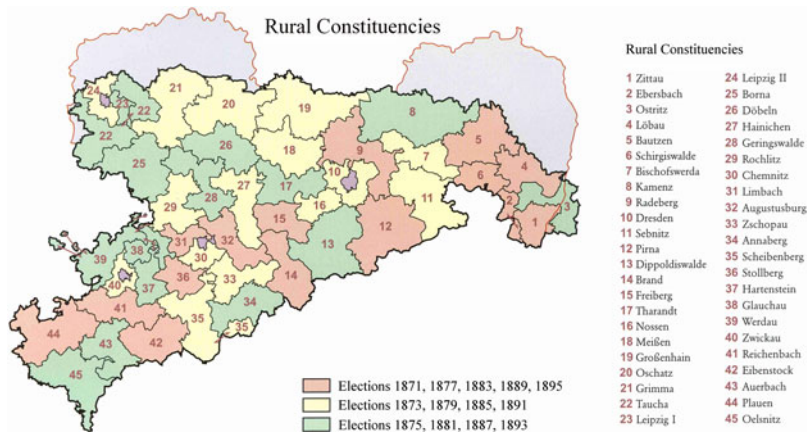
a ballot. Moreover, at least two-thirds of Landtag seats would always be held by incumbents: as the framers of the 1868 suffrage noted with satisfaction, incumbents could be counted on to smooth the business of legislation and ensure its cautious consideration.<sup>37</sup>

Maps can also help illustrate how workers in Saxony's towns and cities were disadvantaged compared to farmers in the countryside. The 1868 suffrage reform did away with Saxony's estate-bound suffrage, but it differentiated between the thirty-five urban and forty-five rural districts. This distinction was muddled somewhat because urban districts were divided into two subgroups: big-city districts (eleven) and other urban districts (twenty-four). As a result, election returns were tabulated under three rubrics. Nevertheless, the language of the law and common parlance distinguished between urban (*städtisch*) districts and those "in the flat country" (*auf dem platten Land*). Each of the twenty-four urban districts (not counting the big-city ones) wrenched Saxon towns out of their geographical hinterland and linked them together as one electoral unit. The lines on figure 4 linking them together are historical abstractions: they only denote which cities constituted one electoral district. Because each urban district was to include about thirty thousand inhabitants (and thus about three thousand enfranchised electors), the number of towns and cities strung together to form a district varied according to the density of the local population.<sup>38</sup> The sixteenth urban district of Crimmitschau included just two

<sup>37</sup>On the 1868 suffrage, see James Retallack, "Suffrage Reform, Corporatist Society, and the Authoritarian State: Saxon Transitions in the 1860s," in *Saxony in German History*, ed. James Retallack, 215–34; Retallack, *Red Saxony*, chap. 2.

<sup>38</sup>SLTW, 11, 104; Wolfgang Schröder, introduction to *Sächsische Parlamentarier 1869–1918*, ed. Elvira Döschner and Wolfgang Schröder (Düsseldorf: Droste, 2001), 1–218. Here and elsewhere I refer to electors as persons who were *stimmberchtigt*—enfranchised for elections and thus *potential* voters. They should not be confused with delegates (*Wahlmänner*) who, in indirect voting systems, stood between voters (*Urwähler*) and elected deputies (*Abgeordneten*).





**Fig. 5.** Rural districts for Saxon Landtag elections, 1868–1909. Adapted from Philologisch-historische Klasse der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig in cooperation with the Landesvermessungsamt Sachsen, eds., *Landtagswahlen im Königreich Sachsen 1869–1895/1896. Karte D IV 3, Atlas zur Geschichte und Landeskunde von Sachsen* (Dresden: Landesvermessungsamt Sachsen, 2002). Used by permission. (The digits for the sixteenth and seventeenth districts were transposed in the original legend.)

cities—Crimmitschau and nearby Werdau—because population density in that region of southwestern Saxony was so high. The opposite extreme prevailed in the mountainous Erzgebirge region southwest of Dresden. In the fifth urban district of Dippoldiswalde, a population of 24,063 inhabitants (1867) lived in no fewer than fifteen towns: these stretched across an area fifty kilometers wide. Figure 4 shows the towns that comprised each urban district floating like islands in (or above) a sea of rural districts. Rural districts were constructed in a more familiar way, as shown in figure 5, but they could include as many as 132 localities.

Voters in both urban and rural Landtag districts proved susceptible to conservative administrators, police, and newspaper editors at the grass-roots level—just as the government intended—and they were difficult to mobilize for a particular cause. When notables in six or seven towns all sought to send a representative of their own locality to the Landtag—for example, to lobby for a branch railway line—and when candidates had to travel great distances to present themselves to voters, the development of integrated party organizations at the district level was slowed. This stipulation had its natural complement in the Landtag itself: seats were allocated by lot, so that members of a party delegation did not sit together. The government’s goal was to hold back the development of cohesive party structures, especially for those parties likely to oppose the state and existing social relations.

When the Social Democrats first broke through the tax threshold and other electoral barriers in the Landtag campaign of 1877, they won seats not in Saxony’s big cities but in rural districts. Table 3 shows that socialist breakthroughs in Saxony’s big cities came later.

Saxony’s rural districts were not rural in the classic sense; they were dotted with industrial towns and villages that were inhabited by workers, miners, and other likely supporters of Social Democracy. In 1877 Wilhelm Liebknecht was elected in the thirty-sixth rural district that included the Lugau-Oelsnitz coal mining region.<sup>39</sup> It fell within the seventeenth

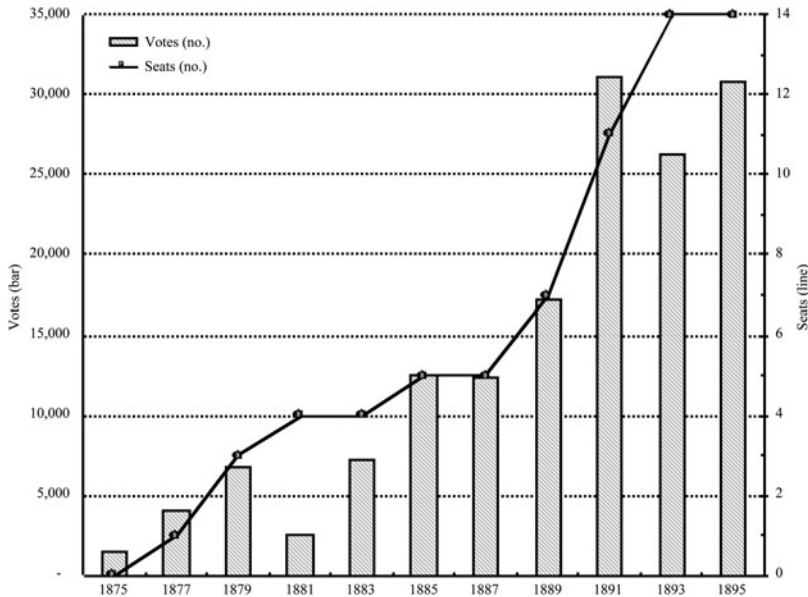
<sup>39</sup>Liebknecht’s election was annulled, but he was soon replaced by the socialist lawyer Otto Freytag.

**Table 3.** Social Democratic deputies in the Saxon Landtag, 1877–1887

District (no. and name)	Deputy name	Proportion of population engaged in				1877	1879	1881	1883	1885	1887
		Agriculture (%)	Industry (%)	Commerce (%)	Personal Service (%)						
Rural											
23. Leipzig (I)	August Bebel	7.6	42.4	17.8	24.8	Freisinn	Freisinn	SPD	SPD	SPD	SPD
24. Leipzig (II)	Wilhelm Liebknecht	9.5	40.9	13.5	29.3	Freisinn	SPD	SPD	SPD	NL	NL
30. Chemnitz	Friedrich Geyer	10.4	76.0	5.1	4.4	NL	Cons	Cons	Cons	SPD	SPD
36. Stollberg	Liebknecht (annulled)	15.2	68.8	4.2	5.4	(SPD)	SPD	SPD	SPD	Cons	Cons
	Otto Freytag (1877)										
40. Zwickau	Ludwig Puttrich	12.1	73.6	5.4	5.1	Cons	SPD	SPD	SPD	SPD	SPD
	Wilhelm Stolle										
Big City											
Chemnitz 2	Georg von Vollmar	0.5	66.5	18.1	2.1	NL	NL	NL	SPD	SPD	SPD
Dresden 4	August Kaden	1.1	37.1	20.1	11.8	Cons	Cons	Cons	Cons	SPD	SPD
Social Democratic Landtag caucus:						1	3	4	4	5	5

Notes: SPD: Socialist Workers' Party of Germany; NL: National Liberal Party. District occupational profiles as of 1871: agriculture includes agriculture and forestry; industry includes mining, industry, and construction; commerce includes trade and transportation; other categories (e.g., army) were not included. Occupational profiles for the electoral districts of Chemnitz 2 and Dresden 4 are for the entire city.

Sources: Elvira Döscher and Wolfgang Schröder, eds., *Sächsische Parlamentarier 1869–1918* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 2001), 199–211; Wolfgang Schröder, *Landtagswahlen im Königreich Sachsen 1869–1895/1896. Beiheft zur Karte D IV 3, Atlas zur Geschichte und Landeskunde von Sachsen* (Leipzig: Verlag der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig und Landesvermessungsamt Sachsen, 2004), tables 12, 20, 21.



**Fig. 6.** Social Democratic votes and seats in the Saxon Landtag, 1875–1895. Drawn from [Eugen Würzburger], “Die Wahlen für die Zweite Kammer der Ständeversammlung von 1869 bis 1896,” *Zeitschrift des K. Sächsischen Statistischen Landesamtes* 51 (1905): 1–12.

Reichstag district of Stollberg-Schneeberg-Lößnitz, which Liebknecht had first won in 1867. Saxon burghers understood that Social Democrats elected in districts with similar socio-economic profiles would be hard to defeat in future elections. The expansion of Saxony’s Landtag electorate was worrying too.<sup>40</sup> Whereas barely 10 percent of the total Saxon population was eligible to vote in Landtag elections in 1869, this figure had risen to over 14 percent by 1895—though it was still less than the proportion of Germans eligible to vote in Reichstag elections (21 percent). Thanks to this expansion and rising turnout rates among workers, by the early 1890s about thirty thousand Saxons were casting their Landtag ballots for a Social Democrat every two years (see [fig. 6.](#))

### Local Elections

It remains to consider the advance of Social Democracy in local parliaments—in Leipzig and its environs. Social Democrats had been winning election to rural councils (*Gemeinderäte*) in Leipzig’s hinterland since the late 1860s. Between 1869 and 1875, Social Democrats were elected to local councils in Pieschen, Plagwitz, Lindenau, Reudnitz, and Stötteritz. The first Social Democrat entered Schönefeld’s local council in 1876. By 1880, seventy-six socialists sat in twenty-five such councils, and their number grew during the 1880s.<sup>41</sup> In his overviews of the socialist movement written in June and December 1880, Berlin Police Director

<sup>40</sup>Whereas Saxony’s population grew by 152 percent between 1869 and 1895 (from 2,476,000 to 3,755,000), the number of eligible Landtag electors grew by 219 percent (from 244,600 to 536,000).

<sup>41</sup>See Fritz Staude, *Sie waren stärker. Der Kampf der Leipziger Sozialdemokratie in der Zeit des Sozialistengesetzes 1878–1890* (Leipzig: VEB Bibliographisches Institut, 1969), 112–17, 200.

Guido Madai referred to the SPD's "still undiminished strength" in Leipzig's suburbs and the future danger of renewed cooperation between left liberals and socialists.<sup>42</sup> Police directors in Leipzig and Berlin and Saxony's minister of the interior cited complaints about Social Democratic agitation lodged by members of rural councils outside Leipzig when they imposed the Lesser State of Siege on Leipzig in June 1881.<sup>43</sup>

In the 1880s, leaders of Saxony's "parties of order" realized that local politics offered another opportunity to revise the electoral rules of the game. Citizens in the Leipzig suburbs of Lindenau and Gohlis set the ball rolling with petitions to the Saxon Landtag advocating suffrage reform for elections to rural councils. Authorities and councilors in other localities soon joined the chorus. They claimed that young adults in rural communities were exercising their right to vote in order to advance "special interests" contrary to the public welfare. In 1886, on the initiative of the Saxon government, Landtag legislation amended the rules for elections to rural councils: it raised the voting age from twenty-one to twenty-five, and it lengthened the local residency requirement from one year to two. At the same time an exhaustive questionnaire was introduced for those wishing to apply for local citizenship. August Bebel protested against these revisions, but the five Social Democrats in the Landtag could not prevent the bill from passing on April 24, 1886. Homeowners (*Ansässige*) already enjoyed special representation in local assemblies. By the early 1890s, Social Democrats who won a majority in a local Saxon election had learned to anticipate—though they could not avoid—the usual bourgeois response: between an election in November or December and the formal induction of new deputies in January, local suffrages were often revised to prevent Social Democratic victories in the future.

From 1867 until 1890, elections at the national, state, and municipal levels were mainly fought independently of one another. But gradually the SPD's successes began to resonate more broadly. By 1890, what might have been a purely administrative matter—the expansion of Leipzig's city limits—compelled Leipzig burghers to consider a coordinated political response to the socialist danger.

### Creating "New Leipzig" and Gerrymandering its Landtag Representation

In the late 1880s, Leipzig's city fathers decided to incorporate seventeen suburbs into their city limits. The scale of these incorporations (*Eingemeindungen*) was unequaled in the Kaiserreich. Accomplished within a short period of time (1889–1892), the city's expansion had far-reaching social, economic, and political ramifications. Leipzig's population rose from about 170,000 in 1885 to 400,000 in 1895. This placed it among Germany's largest metropolises.<sup>44</sup> We know a good deal about the contentiousness of this decision, its impact on Leipzig's development, and its role in the history of the labor movement's three pillars (the party, the free trade unions,

<sup>42</sup>Guido Madai, "Übersicht," June 10, 1880, in *Dokumente aus geheimen Archiven*, ed. Dieter Fricke and Rudolf Knaack, vol. 1, 1878–1889 (Weimar: H. Böhlau, 1983), 52; Bundesarchiv, Abteilungen Potsdam (now Berlin), Reichskanzlei Nr. 646/6, Madai, "Uebersicht," Dec. 31, 1880.

<sup>43</sup>*Kleiner Belagerungszustand*, §28 of the Anti-Socialist Law. See "Anti-Socialist Law (October 21, 1878)," in Retallack, *Forging an Empire*.

<sup>44</sup>As a direct result of the incorporations of 1889–92, 142,881 inhabitants were added to Leipzig's population—an increase of almost 84 percent. Georg Wächter, "Die Sächsische Städte im 19. Jahrhundert," *Zeitschrift des K. Sächsischen Statistischen Bureaus* 47 (1901): 203. After further incorporations, Leipzig vied with Munich to be Germany's third-largest city after Berlin and Hamburg.



and cultural associations).<sup>45</sup> What remains unexplored is the political calculus that determined how Leipzig was gerrymandered and the electoral outcomes that illustrated the effects of exclusionary practices. In both cases, historical cartography offers illumination.

In the autumn of 1889, negotiations were still underway between representatives of the suburbs seeking incorporation into Leipzig and those authorities who would decide which lobbying efforts succeeded. Depending on which suburbs were still in play, Leipzig's chief statistician, Ernst Hasse, was asked to draw up a series of statistical tables that provided a political prognosis of future voting when Leipzig's three Landtag districts became five (see [figs. 7 and 8](#)). The boundaries of the three existing districts were to be revised substantially. At the same time, some electors from outside the city were to be allocated to one of the existing districts or to one of the new ones.<sup>46</sup> The long process of redistricting was not completed until an acrimonious debate had erupted on the floor of the Landtag in 1890 and enabling legislation was passed in 1892.

Ernst Hasse was well aware that members of Leipzig's city council would scrutinize his statistical forecasts with one question in mind: How would voters cast their ballots in the city's five electoral districts after 1892? (The ministry of the interior was interested in the same question.) For his forecast and his proposal for redrawing Leipzig's Landtag districts, Hasse examined the proportion of socialist and nonsocialist votes cast in each neighborhood and suburb for the Reichstag election of February 1887 and for the most recent Landtag elections (1885, 1887, 1889). Reflecting the dichotomous thinking that attended many discussions of Social Democracy, Hasse differentiated between voters "loyal to the Reich" (*reichstreu*) and those voters—implicitly disloyal—who supported Social Democrats or left liberals.<sup>47</sup> He then grouped the neighborhoods into five electoral districts according to what he felt was the most natural, the most equitable, and the most advantageous arrangement.<sup>48</sup> [Table 4](#) provides a composite picture of Hasse's calculations and proposals. (It has been simplified and rearranged to correspond to the final allocation of neighborhoods in 1892.)

Hasse was trying to draft a "safe" reform that would prevent Social Democrats from winning too many Leipzig seats. Much of his accompanying report hid the political fist in the administrative glove.<sup>49</sup> Passages such as the following make clear what Hasse intended

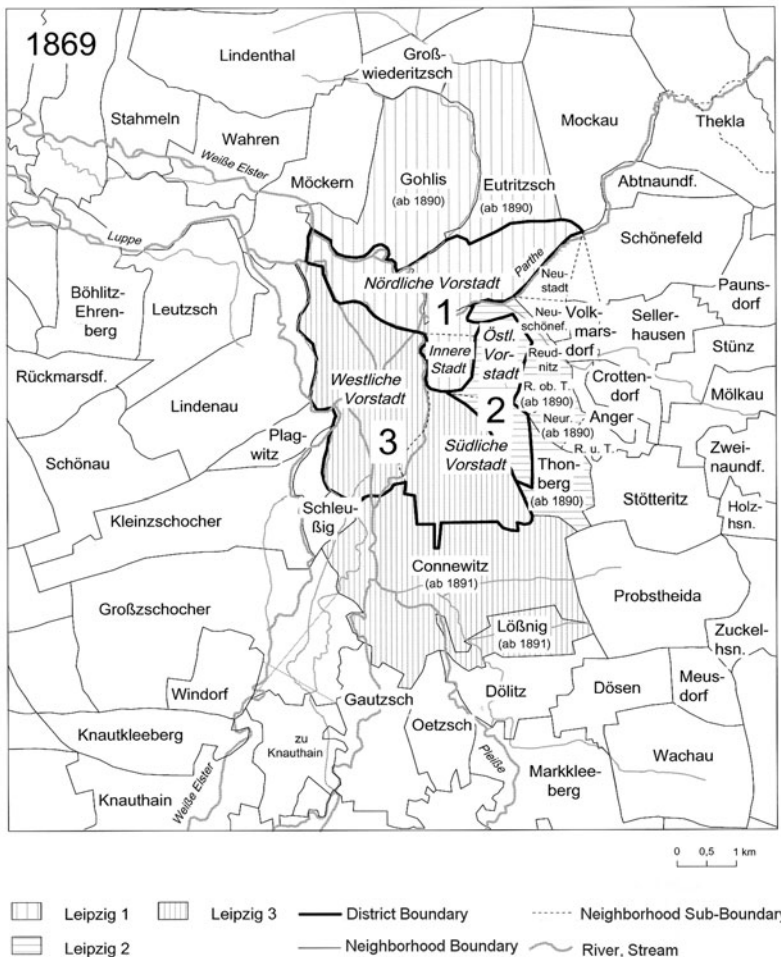
<sup>45</sup>I can cite here only part of a copious scholarly literature on *Kommunalpolitik* in Imperial Germany. On Leipzig, see Karin Pontow, "Bourgeoise Kommunalpolitik und Eingemeindungsfrage in Leipzig im letzten Viertel des 19. Jahrhunderts," *Jahrbuch für Regionalgeschichte* 8 (1981): 84–106; Karl Czok, "Die Stellung der Leipziger Sozialdemokratie zur Kommunalpolitik in der ersten Hälfte der neunziger Jahre des 19. Jahrhunderts," *Arbeitsberichte zur Geschichte der Stadt Leipzig* 11, Heft 1, Nr. 24 (1973): 5–54; Adam, *Arbeitermilieu und Arbeiterbewegung*, esp. 285–303; Michael Schäfer, "Bürgertum, Arbeiterschaft und städtische Selbstverwaltung zwischen Jahrhundertwende und 1920er Jahren im deutsch-britischen Vergleich," *Mitteilungsblatt des Instituts zur Erforschung der europäischen Arbeiterbewegung* 20 (1998): 178–232; Schäfer, "Die Burg und die Bürger. Stadtbürgerliche Herrschaft und kommunale Selbstverwaltung in Leipzig 1889–1929," in *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft in Sachsen im 20. Jahrhundert*, ed. Werner Bramke and Ulrich Heß (Leipzig: Leipziger Universitätsverlag, 1998), 269–92; Schäfer, *Bürgertum in der Krise*, 38–77.

<sup>46</sup>Electors for Leipzig's new Landtag districts were drawn from those previously casting ballots in the Saxon Landtag's twenty-third and twenty-fourth rural districts (see [fig. 5](#)).

<sup>47</sup>SHStAD, Mdl, Nr. 5413, Ernst Hasse to Rath der Stadt Leipzig, October 17, 1889. At this time Saxony had rival Progressive (*fortschrittlich*) and Radical (*freisinnig*) left-liberal parties.

<sup>48</sup>With his bureaucratic language, Hasse admitted no contradiction between equitable and partisan redistricting.

<sup>49</sup>SHStAD, Mdl, Nr. 5413, Ernst Hasse to Rath der Stadt Leipzig, October 17, 1889. In a cover letter to the Saxon Ministerium des Innern, Leipzig Lord Mayor Otto Georgi forwarded Hasse's proposal but did not comment on it. *Ibid.*, Oct. 31, 1889.



**Fig. 7.** Saxon Landtag districts in Leipzig, 1869–1892. Adapted from Wolfgang Schröder, *Landtagswahlen im Königreich Sachsen 1869–1895/1896. Beiheft zur Karte D IV 3, Atlas zur Geschichte und Landeskunde von Sachsen* (Leipzig: Verlag der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig und Landesvermessungsamt Sachsen, 2004), 21. Used by permission.

to achieve with his gerrymander—and what he knew Leipzig’s city fathers wanted to hear: “Concerning the likely political effect of leaving aside [the suburbs] of Stötteritz, Probstheida, Leutzsch, Möckern, Mockau, and Schönefeld, it can only be positive. ... With [non-incorporation of] these localities, only 964 loyal [*reichstreu*] voters, but 2,127 Social Democratic and Radical voters, are omitted from the city’s electoral districts—and [yet] not so many of the latter type that the future of the rural 21st, 22nd, and 25th electoral districts are endangered.”<sup>50</sup>

<sup>50</sup>SHStAD, Mdl, Nr. 5413, Ernst Hasse to Rath der Stadt Leipzig, October 17, 1889. It had recently been decided that the six suburbs Hasse mentioned would not be incorporated. Hasse’s reference to the rural



**Fig. 8.** Saxon Landtag districts in Leipzig, 1892–1909. Adapted from Wolfgang Schröder, *Landtagswahlen im Königreich Sachsen 1869–1895/1896. Beiheft zur Karte D IV 3, Atlas zur Geschichte und Landeskunde von Sachsen* (Leipzig: Verlag der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig und Landesvermessungsamt Sachsen, 2004), 22. Used by permission.

By comparing [table 4](#) with [figure 8](#), one can see which neighborhoods—strongly socialist or not—were allocated to which electoral districts. Even without knowing how voters in Leipzig districts 1–5 would cast their ballots after redistricting, it is clear that Hasse performed the classic gerrymander trick of “packing” the enemy’s voters into one district, which would then be sacrificed in order to win neighboring districts.

Based on 1887 Reichstag voting, Hasse’s proposal foresaw that only 35 percent of voters in Leipzig 1 would vote socialist. Between 40 and 50 percent of voters in Leipzig 2, 3, and 5

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twenty-first, twenty-second, and twenty-fifth electoral districts was an error, as Leipzig was surrounded by the twenty-second, twenty-third, and twenty-fourth rural districts.

**Table 4.** Ernst Hasse, “Proposal for creating five new urban Landtag districts” for Leipzig, 1889

New / (Old) Electoral District	Neighborhood / Suburb (year of incorporation)	Inhabitants (1 Dec. 1885) (no.)	Proportion of “Disloyal” Voters	
			Reichstag 1887 SPD & Freisinn (%)	Landtag 1885/87/89 SPD only (%)
1	2	3	4	5
<b>Leipzig 1</b>	<b>Innere Stadt</b>			
(Leipzig 1)	[Innere Stadt]	20,016	33	0.5
(Leipzig 1)	[Inn. u. Äußere Nordvorstadt]	17,414	33	
(24th rural)	Gohlis (1890)	12,990	36	24
(24th rural)	Eutritzsch (1890)	7,665	45	46
	<b>Total</b>	<b>63,085</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Leipzig 2</b>	<b>Ostvorstadt</b>			
(Leipzig 1, 2)	Ostvorstadt	44,800	36	31
(23rd rural)	Reudnitz (1889)*	19,019	47	47
(23rd rural)	Anger-Crottendorf (1889)**	4,631	72	76
	<b>Total</b>	<b>68,460</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Leipzig 3</b>	<b>Südvorstadt</b>			
(Leipzig 1, 2)	[Südvorstadt]	46,623	44	36
(24th rural)	Connewitz (1891)	7,756	69	77
(24th rural)	Lößnig (1891)	500	76	70
	<b>Total</b>	<b>54,879</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Leipzig 4</b>	<b>[Ost]</b>			
(23rd rural)	Volkmarsdorf (1890)	12,741	73	76
(23rd rural)	Neuschönefeld (1890)	6,164	59	59
(23rd rural)	Neustadt (1890)	7,691	52	47
(23rd rural)	Sellerhausen (1890)	4,899	79	85
(23rd rural)	Neusellerhausen (1892)	1,809	70	77
(23rd rural)	Neureudnitz (1890)	1,743	78	83
(24th rural)	Thonberg (1890)***	3,749	70	73
	<b>Total</b>	<b>38,796</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>Leipzig 5</b>	<b>Westvorstadt</b>			
(Leipzig 3)	[Westvorstadt] / Westen	36,489	32	25
(24th rural)	Kleinzschocher (1891)	4,404	79	82
(24th rural)	Schleußig (1891)	871	47	57
(24th rural)	Plagwitz (1891)	9,230	54	52
(24th rural)	Lindenau (1891)	15,383	54	42
	<b>Total</b>	<b>66,377</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>Neu-Leipzig</b>	<b>2,91,587</b>	<b>45.7</b>	<b>41.0</b>

Notes: Despite disparities, the proportions of “disloyal” voters in Reichstag and Landtag elections, shown in cols. 4 and 5, are similar. \*After Hasse’s tables were prepared in October 1889, Reudnitz oberen Teils was included in Leipzig 2 and Reudnitz unteren Teils in Leipzig 4. \*\*Anger-Crottendorf was moved to Leipzig 4. \*\*\*Thonberg was also moved to Leipzig 4. See [fig. 8](#) to locate each neighborhood among the districts redrawn as Leipzig 1–5 (1892–1909).

Sources: Sächsisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Dresden, Saxon Ministerium des Innern, Nr. 5413, Ernst Hasse, Direktor des Statistischen Amtes, to Rath der Stadt Leipzig, Oct. 17, 1889, table 19, “Der politische Character der Leipziger Stadttheile und Vororte,” and table 23, “Vorschlag zur Bildung von 5 neuen städtischen Landtagswahlkreisen auf Grund der Beschlüsse vom 5. Oktober 1889.” For column 5 only: Wolfgang Schröder, *Landtagswahlen im Königreich Sachsen 1869–1895/1896. Beiheft zur Karte D IV 3, Atlas zur Geschichte und Landeskunde von Sachsen* (Leipzig: Verlag der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig und Landesvermessungsamt Sachsen, 2004), 80, table 9. Some figures calculated by the author. I am grateful to Gavin Wiens for scanning these tables for me.



would do the same. Hasse allocated working-class suburbs with a high proportion of socialist voters mainly (though not exclusively) to Leipzig 4. Because the number of inhabitants in the new district of Leipzig 4 was lower than in the other districts, Hasse theoretically could have packed even more working-class neighborhoods into it. He appears to have been undecided for some time how many such neighborhoods to include in Leipzig 2 and Leipzig 4. In any case, according to Reichstag and Landtag voting patterns, Hasse could expect that voters in Leipzig 4 would provide over 65 percent support to socialist candidates in the future. Overall, Hasse and members of Leipzig's city council hoped that, after redistricting, a candidate of the Saxon "parties of order" would win four of Leipzig's five Landtag districts—even though the total number of votes for socialist candidates across the newly enlarged city would likely exceed 45 percent. There is no evidence that this disparity troubled Hasse or Leipzig's bourgeois elite.<sup>51</sup>

Hasse's plan worked. Only the two partial Landtag elections of 1893 and 1895 occurred before the introduction of Saxony's three-class Landtag suffrage in 1896, which reshuffled the deck (see below). In 1893, voters in Leipzig 3, 4, and 5 were called to the polls. In Leipzig 3 a Conservative eked out a victory over an SPD candidate (see table 5 for vote totals). In Leipzig 5 another Conservative beat another Social Democrat by a slightly larger margin. No candidate contested the heavily working-class district of Leipzig 4 for the Saxon "parties of order" that year. Such a candidate would have been a sacrificial lamb, given Social Democratic strength in this district. Instead, the Conservatives and National Liberals nominated a candidate of the antisemitic German Social Party. At this time both parties were engaged in a fierce battle with radical antisemites for the votes of lower-middle-class Saxons. The independent antisemites had just "stolen" six Reichstag seats from the Conservatives in the Reichstag election of June 1893. In the Leipzig Landtag vote later that year, the independent antisemite lost massively to a Social Democrat. More than two thousand of the SPD votes that Hasse had packed into Leipzig 4 were not needed to defeat the antisemite there. This pattern was repeated in 1895, when voters in Leipzig 2 and Leipzig 4 (again) went to the polls. Leipzig 2 produced a National Liberal victory over a socialist. Leipzig 4 again saw a Social Democrat defeat an antisemite—this time representing the German Reform Party—by over two thousand votes.

Looking ahead briefly to 1897–1907, when an indirect, three-class voting system prevailed for Saxon Landtag elections, Social Democrats stood almost no chance of getting elected: only one SPD candidate carried the day over the course of six partial elections.<sup>52</sup> Delegates (*Wahlmänner*) elected by the first and second voting classes always outvoted those elected by the third. But Saxony's statisticians continued to survey the proportion of socialist and nonsocialist votes cast by ordinary voters (*Urwähler*). Tellingly, they ignored distinctions among Saxony's "parties of order": their published tables tallied only "social-democratic" and "non-social-democratic" votes. Table 5 compares the SPD's fortunes in

<sup>51</sup>See Leo Ludwig-Wolf, "Leipzig," in *Verfassungs- und Verwaltungsorganisation der Städte*, vol. 4, no. 1, *Königreich Sachsen* (hereafter cited as *VfS Sachsen*), Schriften des Vereins für Socialpolitik 120, no. 1 (Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot, 1905; repr., Vaduz: Topos Verlag, 1990), 123–61.

<sup>52</sup>In 1905, Hermann Goldstein won election in Saxony's thirty-seventh rural district (Hartenstein). On the suffrage reform of 1896, see James Retallack, "Anti-Socialism and Electoral Politics in Regional Perspective: The Kingdom of Saxony," in *Elections, Mass Politics, and Social Change in Modern Germany*, ed. Larry Eugene Jones and James Retallack (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 49–91, esp. 78–90; Retallack, *Red Saxony*, chap. 7; SLTW, 51–56.

**Table 5.** Socialist and nonsocialist votes won in Leipzig Landtag elections, 1891–1907

Election Year	District	Eligible Electors (no.)	Voter Turnout (%)	Votes Cast			Percentage SPD Votes* (%)
				Total (no.)	Non-SPD (no.)	SPD (no.)	
1891 / 1893 / 1895							
1891	Leipzig 1	7,737	55.3	4,276	2,868	1,398	32.8
1895	Leipzig 2	8,179	54.5	4,448	2,479	1,954	44.1
1893	Leipzig 3	8,609	66.6	5,734	2,887	2,824	49.4
1893	Leipzig 4	10,009	57.9	5,796	1,763	4,021	69.5
1895	Leipzig 4	11,230	48.1	5,406	1,434	3,889	73.1
1893	Leipzig 5	11,295	69.2	7,819	4,039	3,736	48.1
1891–5	Leipzig (1–5)**	47,050	58.8	27,683	13,707	13,801	50.2
1903 / 1905 / 1907							
1903	Leipzig 1	9,539	49.4	4,709	2,610	2,099	44.6
1907	Leipzig 2	8,653	60.4	5,229	2,867	2,362	45.2
1905	Leipzig 3	12,662	59.7	7,552	4,243	3,309	43.8
1907	Leipzig 4	15,422	64.4	9,926	4,181	5,745	57.9
1905	Leipzig 5	18,368	63.1	11,588	5,044	6,544	56.5
1903–7	Leipzig (1–5)	64,644	60.3	39,004	18,945	20,059	51.4

Notes: \*Percentage of total valid votes cast, ignoring *zersplittert* votes. \*\*This total for all elections in Leipzig (1891–95) includes the election in Leipzig 4 in 1895, when a special partial election was held to bring the new district into the six-year rhythm, but it does not include the election in Leipzig 4 in 1893.

Sources: [Eugen Würzburger], “Die Wahlen für die Zweite Kammer der Ständeversammlung von 1869 bis 1896,” *Zeitschrift des K. Sächsischen Statistischen Landesamtes* 51 (1905): 1–12, 2–4; [Eugen Würzburger], “Die Urwahlen für die zweite Kammer der Ständeversammlung in den Jahren 1903 bis 1907,” *Zeitschrift des K. Sächsischen Statistischen Landesamtes* 54 (1908): 168–71; “Die Ergänzungswahlen zur zweiten Ständekammer des Landtags in den Jahren 1903, 1905, und 1907,” *Statistisches Jahrbuch für das Königreich Sachsen* 36 (1908): 1–5. Some figures calculated by the author. Discrepancies in the sources have been reconciled as far as possible.

Leipzig’s five Landtag districts under two different suffrage regimes: the 1868 Landtag suffrage based on a tax threshold for enfranchisement (top) and the 1896 Landtag suffrage based on three-class voting (bottom).

### The “Red Threat” and Leipzig’s Municipal Assembly

If growing Social Democratic strength in Reichstag and Landtag elections worried Leipzig burghers by the early 1890s, the possible entry of the “reds” into Leipzig’s municipal assembly was a no less immediate concern. In Leipzig’s municipal elections of 1890, Social Democrats received about 20 percent of the vote. The National Liberals’ *Leipziger Tageblatt* claimed that the Social Democrats wanted to impose something akin to the Paris Commune on Leipzig.<sup>53</sup> The next four years were characterized by a concerted campaign to convince workers to apply for citizenship in Leipzig, even though local officials tried to make the application process as difficult as possible. The success of Social Democrats in elections to Leipzig’s municipal assembly rose correspondingly (see table 6).

<sup>53</sup>Reported in *Der Wähler*, Nov. 13, 1890, cited in Czok, “Stellung der Leipziger Sozialdemokratie,” 36. On the Paris Commune of 1871, which Bebel defended on the floor of the Reichstag, see John Merriman, *Massacre: The Life and Death of the Paris Commune* (New York: Basic Books, 2014).

**Table 6.** Elections to Leipzig's municipal assembly, 1889–1893

Year	Enfranchised electors	Total votes cast	Votes cast for nonsocialist parties	Votes cast for Social Democracy
1889	13,061	6,809	6,795	–
1890	17,697	11,520	9,191	2,329
1891	21,706	14,674	10,361	4,313
1892	22,245	15,245	10,341	4,904
1893	24,308	15,770	9,835	5,935

Source: Leo Ludwig-Wolf, "Leipzig," in *Verfassungs- und Verwaltungsorganisation der Städte*, vol. 4, no. 1, *Königreich Sachsen*, Schriften des Vereins für Socialpolitik 120, no. 1 (Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot, 1905; repr., Vaduz: Topos Verlag, 1990), 137. Slightly different figures are given in Friedrich Seger, *Dringliche Reformen. Einige Kapitel Leipziger Kommunalpolitik* (Leipzig: Bezirksvorstand der sozialdemokratischen Partei, 1912), 12–14.

No socialists were actually elected to Leipzig's municipal assembly in these years: because electors could vote for as many candidates from a party list as there were positions open, the party (or coalition) that won the most votes held all seats in the assembly. But Leipzig burghers feared that if this trend continued, Social Democrats would win such a majority and then "terrorize" Leipzig's parliament. To preclude this possibility, Leipzig's city council and a special Suffrage Committee proposed a new three-class voting system. Because it had become "extremely easy" to win citizenship, Leipzigers faced "the danger ... that the present election system will lead to a pure domination of the masses."<sup>54</sup> Saxony's ministry of the interior approved this legislation on November 1, 1894, after it was whipped through Leipzig's assembly in the face of Social Democratic protest rallies just in time for that year's election.<sup>55</sup> Leipzigers copied the Prussian three-class suffrage, according to which electors' achievement (*Leistung*) and their contribution to the state (in the form of taxes) could be assessed and rewarded. In the first voting class were the small percentage of Leipzigers who collectively paid in annual taxes a sum equivalent to five-twelfths of the total tax roll (for Prussian Landtag elections it was one-third). The second class of voters included about 15 percent of taxpayers. Those remaining on the list, plus all eligible non-taxpayers, constituted the third voting class—roughly 80 percent of all electors.<sup>56</sup> This system reflected popular conceptions of the state as a kind of joint-stock company, whereby votes were allocated to citizen "shareholders" on the basis of each one's "investment" in the larger enterprise of the state.<sup>57</sup>

By introducing a three-class suffrage with a direct voting procedure (unlike Prussia's indirect suffrage), the Leipzigers virtually guaranteed that some Social Democrats would enter the municipal parliament. It would be wrong, therefore, to suggest that Leipzig burghers

<sup>54</sup>Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amts, Bonn (now Berlin) (hereafter PAAAB), Sachsen Nr. 48, Bd. 18, Prussian envoy to Saxony, Count Carl von Dönhoff, to Prussian Foreign Office, Oct. 11, 1894.

<sup>55</sup>The best sources are those cited for table 6.

<sup>56</sup>According to the 1892 tax rolls, the number of electors was projected to be 1,171 in Class I, 3,552 in Class II, and 19,006 in Class III. Friedrich Seger, *Dringliche Reformen. Einige Kapitel Leipziger Kommunalpolitik* (Leipzig: Bezirksvorstand der sozialdemokratischen Partei, 1912), 15.

<sup>57</sup>See James Retallack and Thomas Adam, "Philanthropy and politische Macht in deutschen Kommunen," in "Zwischen Markt und Staat. Stifter und Stiftungen im transatlantischen Vergleich," ed. Thomas Adam and James Retallack, special issue, *Comparativ* 11, nos. 5–6 (2001): 106–38.

were resolved to prevent any representation of working-class interests. And yet, when four Social Democrats were elected from Class III and the defenders of Leipzig's new municipal suffrage claimed that all three classes of voters at least had equal weight in choosing the seventy-two municipal parliamentarians, their argument was a sham. Each vote cast in Class I carried roughly sixteen times as much weight as each vote in Class III.<sup>58</sup>

National Liberals dominated the first voting class, which included representatives of commerce, industry, and the upper reaches of the bureaucracy. Leipzig's conservative Homeowners' Association, allied with members of the lower-middle classes (*Mittelstand*) and antisemitic groups, dominated the second class. In the third class, the Social Democrats were expected to win all the seats. However, two stipulations of Leipzig's municipal suffrage reform of 1894 sought to postpone or prevent this outcome. First, seats would henceforth be contested on a two-year rhythm, not annually. Second, and more important, Leipzig was divided into four electoral districts, but only for the third voting class (fig. 9). These districts had to be drawn from scratch, and they reflected the same political calculus that had determined the boundaries of the five districts for Landtag elections drawn two years earlier.

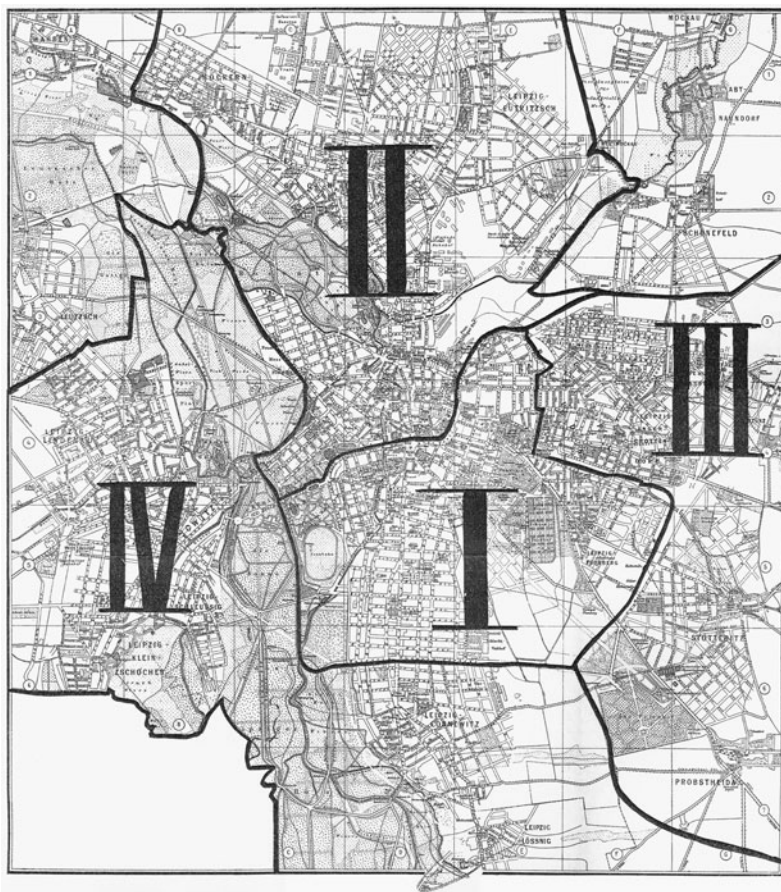
As expected, when Leipzig's new suffrage was first tested in December 1894, candidates representing the "parties of order" won Districts I and II in Class III. Social Democrats won Districts III and IV, to the east and west, each of which sent two representatives to the municipal assembly. A cry of triumph emanated from Leipzig's bourgeois press and government organs—the worst had been averted. This outcome was deemed tolerable by Leipzig's suffrage expert on the city council, Leo Ludwig-Wolf, who had led the charge for suffrage revision in 1894. Even Prussia's envoy to Saxony expressed relief: he reported to Berlin that "the elections in the first two classes constitute a counterbalance to ... the revolutionary ideal."<sup>59</sup>

To look ahead again for a moment: between 1895 and 1914, socialist candidates gradually increased their share of the vote in Districts I and II in Leipzig's third voting class. But they suffered setbacks from time to time (as in 1908), and their protests against the four-way geographical division of electors in Class III fell on deaf ears. When six more suburbs were incorporated into the city on January 1, 1910,<sup>60</sup> Districts I through IV in the third voting class were redrawn again in an attempt to prevent Social Democrats from winning all of them. By now Districts III and IV each had more electors than Districts I and II together. SPD protest meetings in favor of more equitable districting were denounced by groups of National Liberals, members of Leipzig's Homeowners' Association, and *Mittelständler*, each of which lobbied for their own preferred suffrage—including the regressive occupational suffrage. In fact, each group sought to disadvantage not only Social Democrats but also their own rivals in the first and second voting classes. When municipal elections were held in October 1910,

<sup>58</sup>See materials on suffrage reform in Stadtarchiv Leipzig, Kap. 7, Nr. 36, Bd. 1, and Kap. 35, Nr. 100, Bd. 1. See also Ludwig-Wolf, "Leipzig," esp. 137–40; Schäfer, "Die Burg und die Bürger," 273–5; Schäfer, "Bürgertum, Arbeiterschaft und städtische Selbstverwaltung"; Schäfer, *Bürgertum in der Krise*; Adam, *Arbeitermilieu und Arbeiterbewegung*, 293–98.

<sup>59</sup>SHStAD, Mdl, Nr. 5414, Stadtrat Ludwig-Wolf (Leipzig) to Geh. Reg.-Rat Bruno Oswin Merz (Mdl Dresden), Dec. 27, 1895; PAAAB, Sachsen Nr. 48, Bd. 18, Carl von Dönhoff to Prussian Foreign Office, Nov. 29, 1895. For elections in the period 1894–1912, cf. the opposing views in Seger, *Dringliche Reformen*, 15–32, and Ludwig-Wolf, "Leipzig." See also Schäfer, *Bürgertum in der Krise*.

<sup>60</sup>The six suburbs incorporated were Dölitz, Dösen, Probstheida, Stötteritz, Stünz, and Möckern. On Jan. 1, 1913, Leutzsch, Schönefeld, and Mockau were also incorporated.



**Fig. 9.** Leipzig's four electoral districts for municipal elections (class III only). This map shows district boundaries after more suburbs (e.g., Probstheida) were incorporated into Leipzig on January 1, 1910. Friedrich Seger, *Dringliche Reformen. Einige Kapitel Leipziger Kommunalpolitik* (Leipzig, 1912), back matter.

Social Democrats won 65 percent of the votes in Class III and all eight seats. At that point the “party of revolution” held almost one-third of all seats in Leipzig’s municipal assembly.<sup>61</sup>

### Where to Turn?

#### *Municipal Affairs*

In 1905, the Verein für Sozialpolitik (Association for Social Policy) published a new volume in its series on German municipal governance.<sup>62</sup> In the careful language of contemporary social science, this volume documented how the city fathers [*sic*] in Leipzig, Chemnitz,

<sup>61</sup>That is, the SPD held twenty-one of seventy-two seats. For the preceding details, see Seger, *Dringliche Reformen*, 22–29 and statistical appendix.

<sup>62</sup>*VfS Sachsen*. On the association itself, see, inter alia, Dieter Lindenlaub, *Richtungskämpfe im Verein für Sozialpolitik. Wissenschaft und Sozialpolitik im Kaiserreich* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1967).



and Dresden introduced class-based suffrages.<sup>63</sup> All three suffrage reforms were meant to limit or exclude the participation of Social Democrats in local government.

Reformers in the industrial city of Chemnitz were the first to follow Leipzig's lead. They passed a new suffrage law in 1898 based on citizenship and occupational status.<sup>64</sup> Electors were divided into six classes, which elected fifty-seven members of the municipal assembly. All citizens who earned less than 2,500 marks annually belonged to Class A.<sup>65</sup> All citizens who were required to pay fees to the old age and invalid insurance schemes belonged to Class B. Civil servants, teachers, physicians, and clergy were gathered in Class C. Class D consisted of people who engaged in trade and manufacturing and who earned more than 2,500 marks annually. Class E included all owners and shareholders of manufacturing and joint-stock enterprises if their annual incomes exceeded 2,500 marks.<sup>66</sup>

Dresden's municipal assembly followed suit in 1905. Its deputies, too, devised a voting scheme based on occupation. Electors were divided into five classes and elected a total of eighty-four representatives. Class A consisted of people without any profession (*Beruf*); Class B included those who paid fees to the old age and pension schemes; Class C comprised civil servants, priests, lawyers, physicians, and intellectuals; Class D included those who were engaged in trade and industry but were not members of the chamber of commerce, while those who did belong to the latter were included in Class E. Dresdeners added another wrinkle: their suffrage privileged those who had held local citizenship for more than ten years. Thus, every class contained two groups of electors: those who had been citizens of Dresden for more than a decade and those who had not.<sup>67</sup>

The bourgeois character of these reforms deserves emphasis. In local as in state-level politics, many Saxon burghers believed that socialists were going to infiltrate, then dominate, then tyrannize municipal parliaments. This was part of their broader outlook on the state and its representative institutions.<sup>68</sup> When Leipzig burghers claimed for themselves positions of leadership in local society, they staked their claim to disproportionate influence in elections. A typical statement reflecting this viewpoint was offered by Dr. Johannes Hübschmann, who was a Chemnitz city counselor and who wrote the chapter on Chemnitz in the volume commissioned by the Verein für Sozialpolitik. As Hübschmann put it, Chemnitz burghers believed that property and intellect should not be "sacrificed to headcounts" or the possibility that "a single party would achieve domination in the municipal parliament."<sup>69</sup> These phrases recurred often in debates about Landtag suffrage reform too. For Hübschmann, Chemnitz's occupational suffrage "enfranchise[d] the most diverse

<sup>63</sup>See Rudolf Heinze, "Dresden," in *Vjs Sachsen*, 85–122; Leo Ludwig-Wolf, "Leipzig," *ibid.*, 123–61; Johannes Hübschmann, "Chemnitz," *ibid.*, 163–79.

<sup>64</sup>Chemnitz's population in 1905 stood at 243,476 persons, of whom about 16,500 held the *Bürgerrecht*. Hübschmann, "Chemnitz," 165.

<sup>65</sup>Class A was subdivided into Classes A1 and A2 according to whether individuals earned more or less than 1,900 marks annually.

<sup>66</sup>Hübschmann, "Chemnitz," 165–69.

<sup>67</sup>Heinze, "Dresden," 115–21. Heinze, a right-wing National Liberal, served briefly as Saxony's government leader in October–November 1918.

<sup>68</sup>See Manfred Hettling and Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann, eds., *Der bürgerliche Werthimmel* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000).

<sup>69</sup>Hübschmann, "Chemnitz," 168. See also Merith Niehuss, "Strategieen zur Machterhaltung bürgerlicher Eliten am Beispiel kommunaler Wahlrechtsänderungen im ausgehenden Kaiserreich," in *Politik und Milieu*, ed. Heinrich Best (St. Katharinen: Scripta Mercaturae, 1989), 60–91.

strata of the population according to the measure of their interest in the common good and of their importance to it; it also open[ed] up to the most insightful and talented men the prospect of being elected.” Writing in 1905, Hübschmann reported that Chemnitz’s experience with the new suffrage had been “completely satisfactory.”<sup>70</sup>

### *Landtag Reform*

In the years 1905–1910, suffrage reform seemed to be on everyone’s lips. Saxon Social Democrats took to the streets of Leipzig and Dresden to demand a new suffrage for their Landtag. Prussian socialists did the same, with mounting fervor, while a transnational conversation about expanding voting rights also gathered steam. The promise of another antisocialist suffrage reform in the Saxon Landtag contributed to Leipzigers’ wait-and-see attitude at this juncture. The growth of radical nationalist associations such as the Imperial League against Social Democracy and the setback suffered by Social Democracy in the Reichstag elections of January 1907 convinced some German burghers that the “red threat” could be met by fine-tuning existing suffrage laws. Others were not so sure.

When the Saxon government announced new plans to reform the Landtag suffrage in July 1907, it faced an uphill struggle. The government’s draft bill reverted to the same kind of hybrid system that had doomed an earlier proposal in 1903–1904. This time it proposed a Landtag of eighty-two members.<sup>71</sup> Forty-two deputies would be elected by secret and direct voting, incorporating proportional representation, and with a moderate system of plural ballots whereby no voter would be accorded more than two ballots. The remaining forty deputies would be elected through the organs of local government.<sup>72</sup> In proposing this system, which included a very modest increase in the number of urban districts, the government cited the arguments of Albert Schäffle, among others. A noted sociologist and political observer, in 1890 Schäffle had argued that the representation of local interests provided a counterweight to direct and equal voting.<sup>73</sup> The preamble to the government’s proposal claimed that because municipal assemblymen and counselors had other public functions to fulfill, they were ipso facto too high-minded to indulge in partisan politics.<sup>74</sup>

Chief defender of this complicated scheme was Saxony’s government leader, Count Wilhelm von Hohenthal und Bergen. He was trying to convince National Liberals that their strength in Saxon city halls might translate into power in the Landtag. As a gesture to the Conservatives, the government offered the specious argument that the distribution of seats in a reformed Landtag should be determined not only by population (*Recht des Menschen*) but also by territory (*Recht der Fläche*). This terminology had been excoriated

<sup>70</sup>Hübschmann, “Chemnitz,” 168–69.

<sup>71</sup>*Landtags-Akten* 1907/09, Königl. Dekrete, vol. 3, pt. 1 (Dresden, 1909), Dekret Nr. 12. On the principles behind the government’s draft legislation, see SHStAD, MdI, Nr. 5455, Georg Heink’s forty-page memorandum [for government leader Count Wilhelm von Hohenthal und Bergen], Nov. 1, 1906; Österreichisches Staatsarchiv, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Vienna, Politisches Archiv, V (Sachsen), Nr. 53, “Allgemeine Begründung” in the printed “Entwurf zum Wahlgesetz für die Zweite Kammer der Ständeversammlung” [July 5, 1907] appended to a report from the acting Austrian envoy to Saxony, Baron Erwein Gudenus, to the Austrian Foreign Office, July 18, 1907.

<sup>72</sup>The local government bodies that would elect the remaining deputies were the district councils (*Bezirksverbände*), municipal assemblies, and municipal councils.

<sup>73</sup>Al[bert] Schäffle, “Die Bekämpfung der Sozialdemokratie ohne Ausnahmengesetz,” *Zeitschrift für die gesamte Staatswissenschaft* 46 (1890): 201–87, esp. 263.

<sup>74</sup>See the more detailed analysis in Retallack, *Red Saxony*, chaps. 8–10.

years earlier, in March 1890, when August Bebel spoke during a Landtag debate about adding two new Leipzig districts: he demanded that Saxony abandon the out-of-date electoral distinction between urban and rural districts, which—without geographical redistricting—had already rendered the weight of ballots cast by rural and urban voters grossly unequal.<sup>75</sup> Since 1900, the National Liberal Party in Saxony had focused on this disparity, even as its Landtag deputies moved closer to agreeing with Conservatives on plural balloting. In 1908, the government's endorsement of the principle of territoriality was a rhetorical gift to Conservative hardliners. It drew the scorn of the liberals, however. One left-liberal deputy wondered whether the Conservatives were “perhaps imagining that they were looking at the North African desert or the colony of South-West Africa. [Great amusement.] There, one could speak of a right of territoriality.” However, he added, “in an industrialized, densely populated state [such as Saxony], we cannot draw districts ... according to the number of oxen that may be roaming around on them. [Great amusement.]”<sup>76</sup>

### *Germany's Suffrage Reform Discourse*

Space permits only a general comment about the contribution of Leipzigers to these suffrage debates. As they had in the years 1894–1896, when they helped prepare the way for the regressive three-class Landtag suffrage of 1896,<sup>77</sup> prominent Leipzigers such as former mayor Otto Georgi and Regional Governor Otto von Ehrenstein came forward in 1906 with their own suffrage proposals.<sup>78</sup> Like the government's proposal, these were calibrated according to each reformer's wish to limit Social Democratic gains in state elections and his willingness to state that goal explicitly. Other voices were also raised in these years, however. They objected to the idea of weighting votes at all, let alone doing so in ways that disadvantaged Social Democrats specifically.

Max Weber is known for his impassioned attacks on Prussia's three-class suffrage; but in 1907 he inveighed against those who, like Georgi and Ehrenstein, sought to limit or exclude Social Democrats from participating fully in municipal affairs. The occasion was the annual meeting of the Verein für Sozialpolitik, which that year had chosen as its theme the constitution and administrative organization of cities. Weber was frustrated by the arguments that the conservative political economist Adolph Wagner and others had put forward. In Wagner's comments, Weber claimed he had heard “nothing other than ... the remark [that] we cannot allow the cities to fall under the influence of the lower classes.” Weber's rejoinder was blunt: “Alright, then, *why* not?” Whereas one could demand the highest qualifications of intellect and education in the selection of municipal civil servants, Weber could not see how it was possible to establish formal criteria for universally acceptable qualifications

<sup>75</sup> August Bebel, March 21, 1890, in *Mitteilungen über die Verhandlungen des ordentlichen Landtags im Königreiche Sachsen ... 1889–1890: Zweiter Kammer* (Dresden, 1890), 2:950–60.

<sup>76</sup> Oskar Günther, Nov. 30, 1908, in *Mitteilungen über die Verhandlungen des ordentlichen Landtags im Königreiche Sachsen ... 1908–1909: Zweiter Kammer* (Dresden, 1909), 5:4129.

<sup>77</sup> I am grateful to Daniel Fischer for providing me scans of material from SHStAD, MdI, Nr. 5414, which document secret discussions and correspondence among Saxon antisocialists in 1894–95.

<sup>78</sup> See Otto Georgi, *Zur Reform des Wahlrechts für die Zweite Sächsische Kammer* (Leipzig: Duncker & Humblot, 1906), 11–12, 35–37, 39–40, 42–44, 54–55, 79–81; Otto von Ehrenstein, *Das System der Verhältniswahlen in Sachsen* (Dresden: v. Zahn & Jaensch, 1906), 3, 16–20, 36–38; Ehrenstein, *Reden und Ansprachen, nebst Anhang. Ein Vorschlag zur Reform des Wahlrechts für die Sächsische Zweite Kammer* (Leipzig: Brockhaus, 1906), 211–17.

among urban electorates. “That holds for the city as for the state.” No suffrage, he declared, was capable of classifying electors in such a way that only the best informed and least partisan voters would have a voice and determine the outcome of elections. Germany’s future, he implied, would be endangered if fear-mongering and the manipulation of municipal suffrage laws continued.<sup>79</sup>

Georg Jellinek’s *General Theory of the State* (1900) had cemented the author’s international reputation as a constitutional scholar.<sup>80</sup> On March 18, 1905, Jellinek addressed Dresden’s Gehe-Stiftung, where public lectures often treated issues of municipal reform from a liberal perspective. His topic was “The Plural Suffrage and its Effects.”<sup>81</sup> Jellinek seconded complaints from National Liberals that by preserving the distinction between electors in cities and the countryside, the “plural suffrage system can be described as a rural suffrage system.” Even more pointedly, he asked his audience how the achievements of an elector should be measured: “Even someone who is twenty times as clever as someone whose talents extend to simple understanding can hardly elect a parliamentary deputy who is twenty times better. ... Just as no one can say that this girl is four times prettier than that one, so too it is impossible to convert the intellectual measure of one man into a multiple of mediocrities.” For Jellinek, an estate-bound suffrage, a plural suffrage, mandatory voting, and proportional representation were all too undemocratic—none of them should be considered for Saxony’s Landtag. Jellinek urged his audience to reject all complicated suffrages: “either one is capable of exercising a public function, or one is not. ... There is no half or one-third ability: either the voter is completely able to carry out the function conceived for him, or not at all.”<sup>82</sup> Neither Weber’s argument nor Jellinek’s, however, resonated among antisocialists in Saxony.

### Gerrymandering Leipzig for Landtag Elections, 1908–1909

Among many thick files in Saxony’s interior ministry documenting the path to Landtag suffrage reform in 1909, only two chronicled the redrawing of district boundaries as part of this reform. Conservatives successfully resisted National Liberal demands for roughly equal numbers of enfranchised electors in each urban and rural district. Only minor changes were made. Georg Heink added three new rural districts to the existing forty-five, and he shifted a few other rural boundaries as a housekeeping measure. The number of districts

<sup>79</sup>Max Weber, “Diskussionsbeitrag ... 2. Oktober 1907,” in *Wirtschaft, Staat und Sozialpolitik. Schriften und Reden 1900–1912*, ed. Wolfgang Schluchter et al., Max Weber Gesamtausgabe, Abt. I, Bd. 8 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998), 300–315 (emphasis added).

<sup>80</sup>Georg Jellinek, *Allgemeine Staatslehre*, 3rd ed. (1900; Berlin: Springer, 1929).

<sup>81</sup>At this time, a plural suffrage—rather than the government’s more complicated scheme—had emerged as the most likely common ground on which Conservatives and National Liberals could achieve a Landtag suffrage reform compromise. These parties and the government still disagreed about how many extra ballots would be awarded to enfranchised electors. It was only in the course of protracted political wrangling in 1908 and early 1909 that the new Saxon Landtag suffrage came to be premised on the awarding of up to three extra ballots to qualified electors. But in 1905 it was already clear that the criteria for such preferment would include taxable income, property ownership, professional status, and perhaps age. The issue of redistricting was even more contentious. The National Liberals wanted many more seats allocated to Saxon cities, whereas the Conservatives knew that their electoral fortunes depended on the overrepresentation of rural voters.

<sup>82</sup>For these and other points registered in his lecture, see Georg Jellinek, *Das Pluralwahlrecht und seine Wirkungen* (Dresden: v. Zahn & Jaensch, 1905), 6, 15, 29, 32, 34, 39, 43–44 (emphasis added).

allocated to Dresden and Leipzig was increased from five to seven each. Those allocated to Chemnitz doubled from two to four, and Plauen was awarded its own big-city district to match Zwickau's. These changes did not come close to producing an equitable division of Landtag seats. Voters living in the Saxon countryside still carried much more electoral weight than voters in the big cities, as they had—increasingly—since 1868.<sup>83</sup>

A more important aspect of Saxony's 1909 suffrage reform was the introduction of up to three supplementary ballots for privileged electors.<sup>84</sup> This plural ballot system has to be considered together with the redistricting of Saxony's big-city districts. Even though few civil servants besides Georg Heink were involved in both processes, these reforms were two sides of the same coin—complementary strategies to limit the number of Social Democrats in the Landtag. The property, income, education, and age thresholds that provided extra ballots were calculated and recalculated in the hope that no more than fifteen socialists would enter the new Landtag, which now comprised ninety-one seats. This goal was pursued by the National Liberal, Progressive, and Conservative parties, as it was by Heink and the director of Saxony's Royal Statistical Office, Eugen Würzburger. It was on Heink's and Würzburger's statistical forecasts that Landtag parliamentarians relied. Almost all individuals and parties privy to these negotiations knew that Social Democrats would win the support of more than 50 percent of Saxon Landtag voters. Their task, therefore, was to define criteria for awarding extra ballots and to draw up district boundaries that would transform a majority of SPD voters into a minority of SPD ballots and an even smaller minority of Landtag seats.<sup>85</sup>

How did this process unfold in Leipzig? It was possible there to create two new Landtag districts and to reshuffle the old ones in a way designed to limit Social Democratic gains. This was easier than predicting how plural voting would affect the outcome. But neither undertaking was certain to succeed. In September 1908, when suffrage reform entered its final, critical stage, City Counselor Leo Ludwig-Wolf wrote to Heink: "Here is the district arrangement you requested. Things can be changed and moved around, of course, but no matter how one does it, a positive, favorable result cannot by any means be predicted, because the whole plural suffrage system is a leap in the dark, and one has no clue what its effect will actually be. I have noted my political weather forecast with red pencil on each district numeral; but correctly or not? *Qui vivrà verra!* [Time will tell!]"<sup>86</sup> Ludwig-Wolf's red notations were on a tabular listing of his proposed electoral districts, not on a map.<sup>87</sup>

<sup>83</sup>In 1909, a total of 407,525 enfranchised electors lived in Saxony's forty-three urban districts; 365,591 electors lived in forty-eight rural districts. The disparity was greatest between Saxony's twenty big-city districts, which held on average 11,749 electors, and its forty-eight rural districts, which held on average just 7,616 electors. [Eugen Würzburger], "Die Wahlen für die Zweite Kammer der Ständeversammlung vom Oktober und November 1909, Erster Teil," *Zeitschrift des K. Sächsischen Statistischen Landesamtes* 55 (1909): 220–43, 222–23.

<sup>84</sup>On the Saxon suffrage reform of 1909, see James Retallack, "'What is to Be Done?' The Red Specter, Franchise Questions, and the Crisis of Conservative Hegemony in Saxony, 1896–1909," *Central European History* 23 (1990): 271–312; SLTW, 64–66; Lässig, *Wahlrechtskampf*.

<sup>85</sup>See Retallack, *Red Saxony*, chap. 11.

<sup>86</sup>SHStAD, Mdl, Nr. 5489, Leo Ludwig-Wolf to Georg Heink, Sept. 5, 1908. Ludwig-Wolf sent two schemes dividing Leipzig into six and seven Landtag districts; I discuss only the second of these.

<sup>87</sup>The maps accompanying documents in SHStAD, Mdl, Nr. 5489 were likely removed when the files were prepared for archival use. I am grateful to Gisela Petrasch (SHStA Dresden) and Simone Lässig (Washington, DC) for locating some for my use.



Cartography was neither Ludwig-Wolf's nor Heink's principal tool for drawing up the new Landtag districts. Heink relied on his own travels around Saxony in 1908, as well as listening to Conservative whispers in his ear.<sup>88</sup> For his part, Ludwig-Wolf guessed correctly that his city might be allocated seven districts and on that basis drew up his redistricting proposal (see table 7).

Like Ernst Hasse before him, Ludwig-Wolf tried to redraw Leipzig's Landtag districts to minimize the number of seats Social Democrats would win. He succeeded in part. Three of Leipzig's seven districts went "red" in October 1909.<sup>89</sup> Counting voters who supported Social Democratic candidates rather than the total number of ballots they cast, the SPD's margin of victory was much higher in the districts they won than was their margin of defeat in the districts they lost. This suggests that Ludwig-Wolf was able, at least in a general way, to pack Social Democratic votes into districts the "parties of order" had no hope of winning.

Otherwise Ludwig-Wolf was not concerned to smooth out differences in the number of enfranchised electors in each district.<sup>90</sup> But one would like to understand why, with his tinkering, he chose one neighborhood over the other.<sup>91</sup> Ludwig-Wolf had underlined Leipzig 2 in red, indicating to Georg Heink that it would probably be won by the SPD. Did this suggest that some rethinking was necessary? Very possibly. Ludwig-Wolf would also have studied the effect that plural voting would have on the number of ballots cast in each district (the decisive factor in deciding winners and losers), and he likely rearranged his electoral districts accordingly.

But redistricting did not affect the outcome of Landtag voting in October 1909 as much as two other factors. The first was Würzburger's and Heink's faulty estimates about how many extra ballots workers would be entitled to. When the voting was finished, Saxons discovered that a much higher proportion of working-class electors had been entitled to cast two or even three ballots than their suffrage experts had expected. Workers were eligible to cast multiple ballots principally because their income exceeded the first tax threshold or because they had reached the age of fifty. Second, between final passage of Saxony's suffrage reform in January 1909 and the Landtag election that October, the demise of the Bülow Bloc in the Reichstag drove a wedge between Conservatives and National Liberals.<sup>92</sup> National Liberals successfully painted Conservatives as self-interested agrarians out of touch with public opinion. Because of new taxes and high prices, many *Mittelstand* voters were in a foul mood, and they were inclined to support a Social Democratic candidate in order to

<sup>88</sup>See, e.g., SHStAD, MdI, Nr. 5489, Georg Heink, "Skizze zu einer Wahlkreiseinteilung im Kgr. Sachsen (bei 95 Wahlkreisen)," n.d. [ca. Sept. 8, 1908].

<sup>89</sup>These districts are identified in figure 13, discussed below.

<sup>90</sup>The sources I consulted for this article do not permit a more fine-grained analysis of Ludwig-Wolf's motivations. When I worked in Leipzig's and Dresden's city archives I was pursuing a different research agenda.

<sup>91</sup>In the course of 1908–9, Ludwig-Wolf's proposed seven districts (Leipzig 1–7) changed fundamentally before Leipzig's districts I–VII (now with Roman numerals) were finalized some months later. Whereas the neighborhoods Ludwig-Wolf put into Leipzig 3 ended up, by and large, in the final district of Leipzig V, the four large neighborhoods he initially allocated to Leipzig 2 ended up in different districts. At some point Plagwitz and Schleußig were allocated to the new Leipzig VI while Lindenau and Kleinzschoscher were allocated to Leipzig VII.

<sup>92</sup>On the Bülow Bloc, see Katherine A. Lerman, *The Chancellor as Courtier: Bernhard von Bülow and the Governance of Germany, 1900–1909* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

**Table 7.** Leo Ludwig-Wolf, proposal for Leipzig's seven Landtag districts, September 5, 1908

Proposed District 1	Neighborhood / Suburb Name 2	Population 3	Final District 4	Within Leipzig City Limits? 5
<b><u>Leipzig 1</u></b>	Leutzsch	10,000	Leipzig VII*	1 Jan. 1913
	Möckern	13,000	Leipzig II	1 Jan. 1910
	Eutritzsch	12,500	Leipzig II	yes
	Gohlis	30,115	Leipzig II	yes
	Aeuß. Nordvorst[adt]	<u>12,000</u>	Leipzig II	yes
Total	ca.	<u>75,700</u>		
<b><u>Leipzig 2</u></b> [underlined in red]	Lindenau	45,000	Leipzig VII	yes
	Plagwitz	17,000	Leipzig VI	yes
	Kl[ein-] Zschocher	16,000	Leipzig VII	yes
	Schleußig	<u>10,000</u>	Leipzig VI	yes
Total	ca.	<u>88,000</u>		
<b><u>Leipzig 3</u></b>	Südvorstadt	63,000	Leipzig V	yes
	Connewitz	15,000	Leipzig V	yes
	Lösning	700	Leipzig V	yes
	Dölitz	2,500	Leipzig V	1 Jan. 1910
	Dösen	<u>1,600</u>	Leipzig V	1 Jan. 1910
Total	ca.	<u>82,800</u>		
<b><u>Leipzig 4</u></b> [underlined in red]	Probstheida	2,000	Leipzig V	1 Jan. 1910
	Stötteritz	13,300	Leipzig IV	1 Jan. 1910
	A[nger]-Crottendorf	18,300	Leipzig IV	yes
	Sellerhausen	13,200	Leipzig IV	yes
	Stüntz	3,600	Leipzig IV*	1 Jan. 1910
	Paunsdorf	6,000	Leipzig IV*	no
	Volkmarsdorf (partial)	<u>15,000</u>	Leipzig III	yes
Total	ca.	<u>71,500</u>		
Also:	Neusellerhausen	<u>2,800</u>	Leipzig IV	yes
Total	ca.	<u>74,300</u>		
<b><u>Leipzig 5</u></b> ["?" in red]	Reudnitz	47,000	Leipzig III	yes
	Neureudnitz	2,300	Leipzig IV	yes
	Neustadt	13,000	Leipzig III	yes
[struck through]	<del>Neusellerhausen</del>	<del>2,500</del>		
	Volkmarsdorf (partial)	<u>8,200</u>	Leipzig III	yes
Total	ca.	<u>70,500</u>		
<b><u>Leipzig 6</u></b> ["?" in red]	Schönefeld	12,500	Leipzig IV	1 Jan. 1913
	Neuschönefeld	6,500	Leipzig III	yes
	Nordostvorstadt	17,500	Leipzig III, IV?	yes
	Südostvorstadt	27,000	Leipzig III, IV?	yes
	Thonberg	<u>6,500</u>	Leipzig IV	yes
Total	ca.	<u>74,000</u>		
<b><u>Leipzig 7</u></b>	Westvorstadt	44,000	Leipzig VI	yes
	Innere Stadt	17,000	Leipzig I	yes
	Inn[ere] Nordvorstadt	<u>10,600</u>	Leipzig I, II?	yes
Total	ca.	<u>71,600</u>		

Notes: Cols. 1–3 from Leo Ludwig-Wolf to Georg Heink, cols. 4–5 added by the author. \*These districts are included in Wolfgang Schröder, *Landtagswahlen im Königreich Sachsen 1869–1895/1896. Beiheft zur Karte D IV 3, Atlas zur Geschichte und Landeskunde von Sachsen* (Leipzig: Verlag der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig und Landesvermessungsamt Sachsen, 2004), 108, table 30, and in official lists, but they are (erroneously) not included among the districts found on the map (Schröder, *Landtagswahlen*, 23) from which my figures 10–13 were derived.

Source: Sächsisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Dresden, Saxon Ministerium des Innern, Nr. 5489, Leo Ludwig-Wolf, Leipzig, to Georg Heink, Dresden, Sept. 5, 1908, appendix, “Wahlkreisbildung: II. Bei Zuweisung von 7 Wahlkreisen.”

register a protest vote. Thus, workers were not as disadvantaged as the architects of Saxony's plural suffrage had intended, and the SPD's fellow travelers were more numerous than they had foreseen.

### Landtag Voting in Leipzig under the Plural Suffrage, 1909

Maps can convey statistical information about the Saxon electorate to which Ludwig-Wolf and other suffrage experts had access before the 1909 suffrage reform. In conjunction with tabulated election returns, maps can also illuminate how—and where—Saxony's new plural voting system disadvantaged Leipzig's working classes most egregiously. It is not always possible to demonstrate linkages between the gerrymandering of electoral districts and the preferment of wealth, property, and status at the polls. Nevertheless, these factors tilted the playing field against Social Democrats in ways that do not align with the principles of democracy. According to democratic criteria, the Saxon suffrage of 1909 still stood far behind the Reichstag suffrage. Moreover, it was a step backward, not forward, when compared to the relatively equitable system that had prevailed from 1868 to 1896.<sup>93</sup> If "democracy" could be found in Saxony's new election law, as some scholars have argued, it was written in disappearing ink.

Table 8 demonstrates that in Leipzig, Social Democratic candidates often reached a runoff ballot in the Landtag elections of October 1909 because competing candidates mounted by

**Table 8.** Landtag voting in Leipzig I-VII, voters and ballots cast, October 1909

Candidate name (title / occupation) ( <i>winner in italics</i> )	Party	Voters Total (%)	Voters with 1 ballot (%)	Voters with 2 ballots (%)	Voters with 3 ballots (%)	Voters with 4 ballots (%)	Ballots Total (%)
<b>Leipzig I (Innere Stadt)</b>							
Main Election							
Otto Enke (Baurat)	MVgg	25.1%	11.1%	21.8%	27.1%	40.4%	30.7%
Dr. Arthur Löbner (Hofrat)	NLP	28.7%	10.8%	23.1%	24.4%	48.8%	36.3%
Schuchardt (Gewerkschaftsbeamte)	SPD	<b>45.9%</b>	78.0%	55.1%	38.4%	10.7%	32.9%
Runoff Election							
<i>Dr. Arthur Löbner</i>	NLP	51.2%	19.3%	41.1%	57.7%	87.6%	64.5%
Schuchardt	SPD	48.9%	80.7%	58.9%	42.3%	12.4%	<b>35.5%</b>
<b>Leipzig II (Nordvorstadt)</b>							
Main Election							
Dr. med. Adolph Brückner (Sanitätsrat)	Cons	13.6%	4.5%	10.6%	14.1%	27.2%	18.4%
Georg Wappler (Kaufmann)	NLP	23.0%	8.1%	19.1%	29.6%	42.2%	30.4%
Engler (Lehrer)	Freisinn	16.7%	9.9%	18.1%	26.5%	20.4%	19.2%

*Continued*

<sup>93</sup>Compare Ritter, "Wahlen und Wahlpolitik," 83, with whom I agree on this point, and the following: Simone Lässig, *Wahlrechtskampf*, 232–47; Lässig, "Wahlrechtsreformen in den deutschen Einzelstaaten. Indikatoren für Modernisierungstendenzen und Reformfähigkeit im Kaiserreich?," in Lässig, Pohl, and Retallack, *Modernisierung und Region*, 127–69; Karl Heinrich Pohl, "Sachsen, Stresemann und die Nationalliberale Partei. Anmerkungen zur politischen Entwicklung, zum Aufstieg des industriellen Bürgertums und zur frühen Tätigkeit Stresemanns im Königreich Sachsen," *Jahrbuch zur Liberalismus-Forschung* 4 (1992): 197–216, 207.

Table 8. Continued

Candidate name (title / occupation) ( <i>winner in italics</i> )	Party	Voters Total (%)	Voters with 1 ballot (%)	Voters with 2 ballots (%)	Voters with 3 ballots (%)	Voters with 4 ballots (%)	Ballots Total (%)
Friedrich Seger (Redakteur, <i>LVZ</i> )	SPD	<b>46.7%</b>	77.4%	52.2%	29.8%	10.3%	32.1%
Runoff Election							
<i>Georg Wappler</i>	NLP	47.9%	17.5%	39.7%	63.5%	86.5%	63.0%
Friedrich Seger	SPD	52.1%	82.5%	60.3%	36.5%	13.5%	<b>37.0%</b>
<b>Leipzig III (Östliche Vorstadt)</b>							
Main Election							
Felix Höhne (Architekt)	MVgg	18.2%	7.3%	14.6%	24.1%	37.7%	24.3%
Otto Müller (Fabrikant)	NLP	21.4%	6.9%	16.3%	32.2%	46.2%	29.5%
Richard Illge (Redakteur)	SPD	<b>60.2%</b>	85.7%	69.1%	43.5%	16.1%	46.1%
Runoff Election							
Otto Müller	NLP	35.5%	10.7%	26.2%	51.8%	79.9%	49.6%
<i>Richard Illge</i>	SPD	64.5%	89.3%	73.8%	48.2%	20.1%	<b>50.4%</b>
<b>Leipzig IV (Ost)</b>							
Main Election							
Dr. Clemens Thieme (Architekt)	Cons	10.3%	5.0%	8.5%	15.1%	30.3%	14.6%
Dr. Adolf von Brause (Professor)	NLP	15.8%	5.8%	13.3%	32.5%	45.9%	23.4%
<i>Heinrich Lange</i> (Lagerhalter)	SPD	<b>73.8%</b>	89.2%	78.2%	52.4%	23.8%	<b>62.0%</b>
<b>Leipzig V (Äußere Südvorstadt)</b>							
Main Election							
Wolfgang Schnauß (Rechtsanwalt)	AS Reform	18.1%	6.6%	14.9%	21.0%	33.3%	23.7%
Dr. Johannes Rudolph (Amtsrichter)	NLP	30.4%	10.3%	23.7%	41.2%	55.7%	40.1%
Adolf Bammes (Lagerhalter)	SPD	<b>51.5%</b>	83.1%	61.4%	37.6%	10.9%	36.1%
Runoff Election							
<i>Dr. Johannes Rudolph</i>	NLP	45.8%	13.7%	34.6%	59.4%	87.6%	61.5%
Adolf Bammes	SPD	54.2%	86.3%	65.4%	40.6%	12.4%	<b>38.5%</b>
<b>Leipzig VI (Westliche Vorstadt)</b>							
Main Election							
Seifert (Kaufmann)	MVgg	18.0%	8.7%	13.6%	18.9%	27.8%	21.9%
Dr. Albert Steche (Fabrikbesitzer)	NLP	24.3%	5.7%	12.4%	23.0%	46.9%	32.8%
Dr. Barge (Oberlehrer)	Freisinn	14.6%	7.9%	15.1%	20.8%	17.4%	16.4%
Lehmann (Buchdrucker)	SPD	<b>43.1%</b>	77.8%	59.0%	37.2%	7.8%	<b>28.9%</b>
Runoff Election							
<i>Dr. Albert Steche</i>	NLP	52.8%	17.2%	35.4%	59.2%	89.41%	67.4%
Lehmann	SPD	47.2%	82.8%	64.6%	40.8%	10.6%	32.6%
<b>Leipzig VII (Südwest)</b>							
Main Election							
Jähne (Rechnungsrat)	Cons	7.8%	2.3%	7.2%	12.5%	27.8%	12.4%
Emil Nitzschke (Kaufmann)	NLP	17.3%	6.0%	16.7%	35.9%	51.0%	26.1%

Table 8. Continued

Candidate name (title / occupation) ( <i>winner in italics</i> )	Party	Voters	Voters	Voters	Voters	Voters	Ballots
		Total	with 1 ballot	with 2 ballots	with 3 ballots	with 4 ballots	Total
		(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
<i>Alfred Keimling</i> (Redakteur)	SPD	<b>74.8%</b>	91.7%	76.0%	51.6%	20.8%	<b>61.4%</b>

Note: Percentages do not add up to 100 because of rounding and omission of splintered (*zersplittert*) votes. MVgg: Saxon Mittelstand Union. The antisemite in Leipzig V represented the German Reform Party. Titles and occupations were left in the original German to avoid ambiguity.

Sources: [Eugen Würzburger], “Die Wahlen für die Zweite Kammer der Ständeversammlung vom Oktober und November 1909, Erster Teil,” *Zeitschrift des K. Sächsischen Statistischen Landesamtes* 55 (1909): 220–43, 230–31; Sächsisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Dresden, Kreishauptmannschaft Leipzig, Nr. 250, Kriminal-Kommissar Förstenberg, “Uebersicht über die politische und gewerkschaftliche Bewegung im 12. und 13. Reichstagswahlkreise im Jahre 1909” [1910]; some biographical details from Elvira Döscher and Wolfgang Schröder, eds., *Sächsische Parlamentarier 1869–1918* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 2001), passim.

the “state-supporting parties” split the nonsocialist vote.<sup>94</sup> Runoffs were necessary in five of seven Leipzig districts, invariably pitting a National Liberal against a Social Democrat.<sup>95</sup> The National Liberal candidate won in four of those five runoffs. Ludwig-Wolf left too many SPD supporters in the *Östliche Vorstadt* (Leipzig III), including some who might have been packed further east into Leipzig IV. The SPD editor Richard Illge won the close runoff contest with 50.4 percent of all ballots cast (though he won 64.5 percent of all voters). For all seven districts, highlighted cells in table 8 will help readers see how plural balloting transformed SPD majorities among voters into SPD minorities (losses) when total ballots were counted.

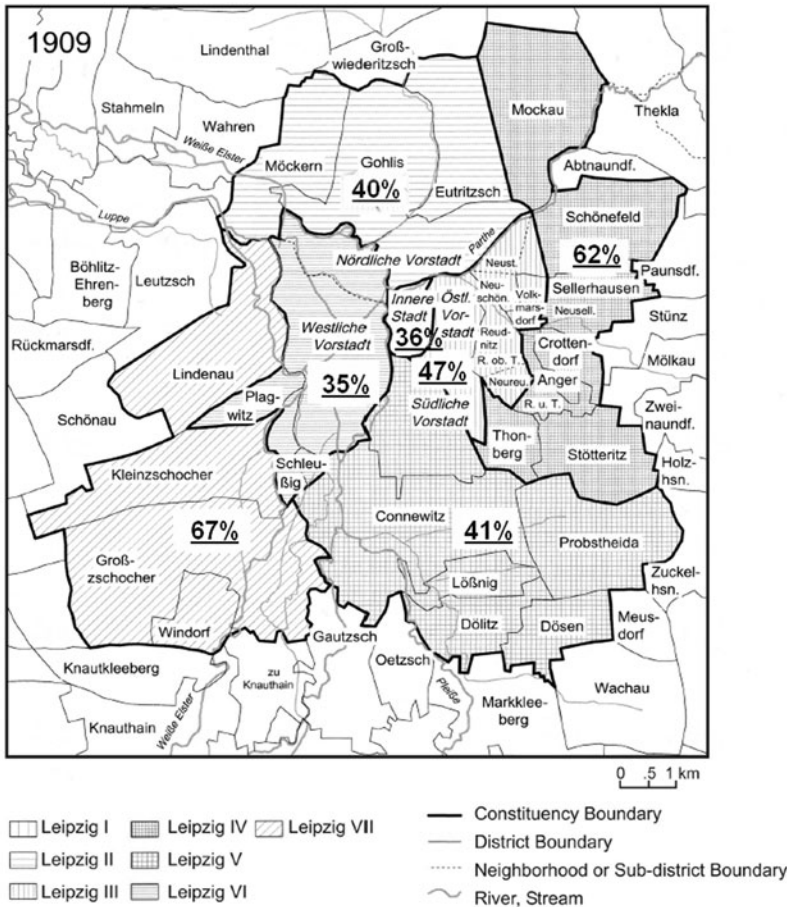
Figure 10 shows information that Leo Ludwig-Wolf would have had access to: the proportion of workers among electors in each of Leipzig’s Landtag districts. Statistical studies of Saxony’s electorate under the three-class suffrage had been published before Ludwig-Wolf began the work of redistricting in 1908. Both Ernst Hasse in 1889 and Ludwig-Wolf in 1908 ruminated on the best possible allocation of working-class neighborhoods among new electoral districts, especially but not exclusively on Leipzig’s eastern side. Yet these maps prompt conjecture that may or may not be answered by future researchers. Why, for example, were the working-class neighborhoods of Plagwitz and Schleußig included in Leipzig VI when they might have been packed into the unwinnable Leipzig VII? Is the answer that the proportion of workers in Leipzig VI overall, at 35 percent, was low enough to augur future victories for the “parties of order”?

Figures 11 and 12 should be considered in conjunction with table 8. Ignoring the percentage of ballots cast for Social Democratic candidates, figure 11 shows the percentage of voters who supported the SPD in each of Leipzig’s districts in the Landtag elections of October 1909. (Recall that a single voter might cast one, two, three, or four ballots.) The proportion of voters who supported the SPD was under 50 percent in Leipzig I, II, and VI. It lay in the mid–70 percent range in the east and west, in Leipzig IV and VII. In Leipzig III, the SPD’s 60 percent share of voters translated to only 46 percent of ballots on the main ballot, and a runoff was required. Most supporters of the *Mittelstand* candidate

<sup>94</sup>As in Reichstag elections, a runoff election was held when no candidate won an absolute majority of ballots in the main election.

<sup>95</sup>District boundaries for Leipzig I to VII are shown in figure 13, discussed below.

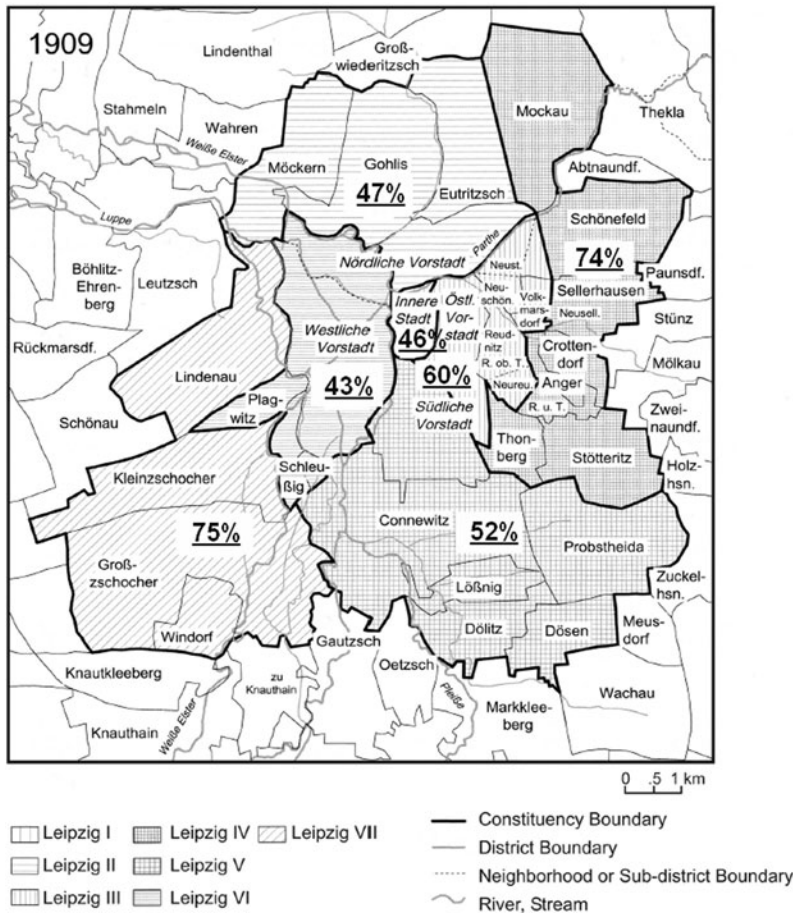




**Fig. 10.** Percentages of workers among enfranchised electors in Saxon Landtag elections in Leipzig, 1909. Adapted from Wolfgang Schröder, *Landtagswahlen im Königreich Sachsen 1869–1895/1896. Beiheft zur Karte D IV 3, Atlas zur Geschichte und Landeskunde von Sachsen* (Leipzig: Verlag der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig und Landesvermessungsamt Sachsen, 2004), 23. Used by permission. Percentages from [Eugen Würzburger], “Die Wahlen für die Zweite Kammer der Ständeversammlung vom Oktober und November 1909, Zweiter Teil,” *Zeitschrift des K. Sächsischen Statistischen Landesamtes* 58, no. 2 (1912): 263–64.

Felix Höhne on the main ballot switched their support to the NLP candidate Otto Müller in the runoff. The SPD’s Richard Illge won anyway. The opposite situation prevailed in Leipzig V. On the main ballot, the SPD candidate won the support of 52 percent of voters: an anti-semitic and a National Liberal candidate split the remaining 48 percent of voters. But the balance tipped to the National Liberal Johannes Rudolph in the runoff election. He won the support of only 46 percent of voters in that runoff, but they were more privileged voters and had more ballots to cast. This left him with almost 62 percent of total ballots in the runoff and an impressive victory in what might have been a toss-up district.

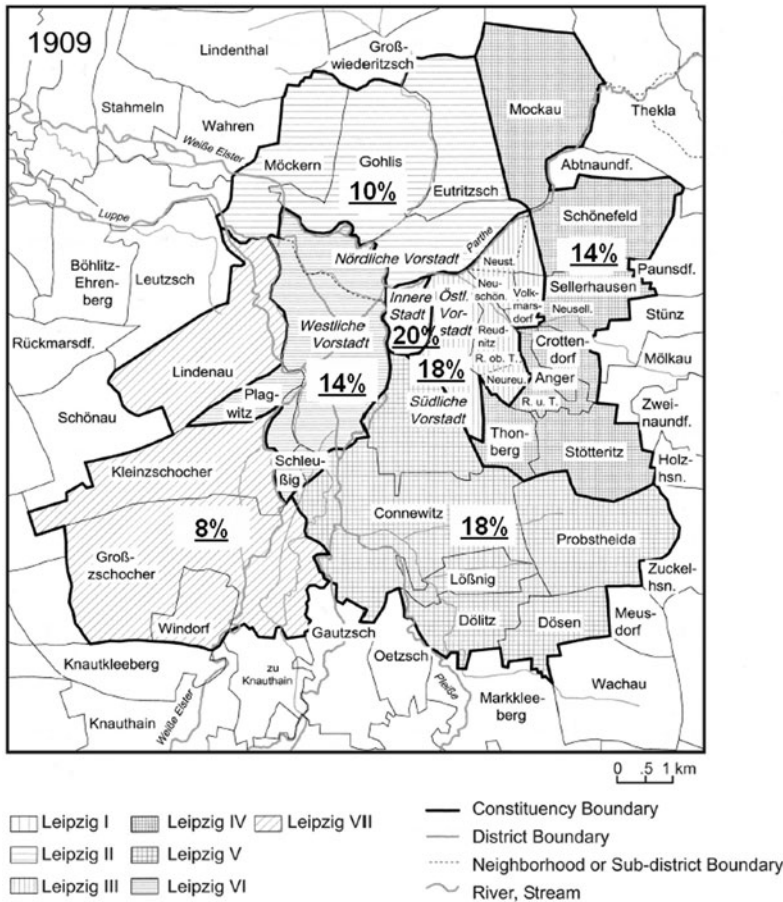
Figure 12 provides information that Ludwig-Wolf could not have known in 1908. To judge by others’ reactions to unexpected Social Democratic strength among *Mittelstand*



**Fig. 11.** Percentages of Social Democratic voters in Saxon Landtag elections in Leipzig, 1909. Adapted from Wolfgang Schröder, *Landtagswahlen im Königreich Sachsen 1869–1895/1896. Beiheft zur Karte D IV 3, Atlas zur Geschichte und Landeskunde von Sachsen* (Leipzig: Verlag der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig und Landesvermessungsamt Sachsen, 2004), 23. Used by permission. Percentages from [Eugen Würzburger], “Die Wahlen für die Zweite Kammer der Ständeversammlung vom Oktober und November 1909, Erster Teil,” *Zeitschrift des K. Sächsischen Statistischen Landesamtes* 55 (1909): 230–31.

voters in October 1909, such a map would have upset him. It is possible to determine the proportion of SPD votes that were cast by non-working-class “fellow travelers” because Saxon statisticians tracked (a) the number of enfranchised workers in each district, (b) the number of actual voters who were workers, and (c) the number of actual voters who supported the SPD. Socialist victories in Leipzig’s two eastern districts were facilitated by the support of significant proportions of voters who were not working class.<sup>96</sup> The SPD’s ability to recruit fellow travelers did not ensure a victory under Saxony’s plural suffrage,

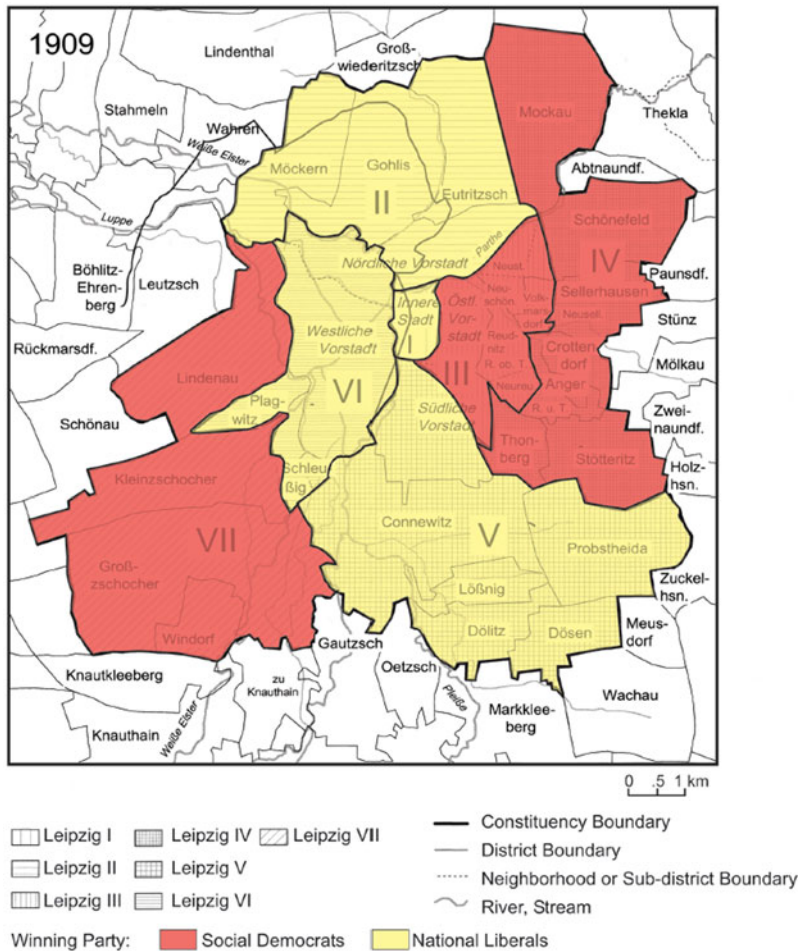
<sup>96</sup>Eighteen percent of SPD voters in Leipzig III did not belong to the working classes, and the same was true of 14 percent of SPD voters in Leipzig IV.



**Fig. 12.** Percentages of non-working-class Social Democrat voters in Saxon Landtag elections in Leipzig, 1909. Adapted from Wolfgang Schröder, *Landtagswahlen im Königreich Sachsen 1869–1895/1896. Beiheft zur Karte D IV 3, Atlas zur Geschichte und Landeskunde von Sachsen* (Leipzig: Verlag der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig und Landesvermessungsamt Sachsen, 2004), 23. Used by permission. Percentages of voters (not ballots) calculated by the author from [Eugen Würzburger], “Die Wahlen für die Zweite Kammer der Ständeversammlung vom Oktober und November 1909, Erster Teil,” *Zeitschrift des K. Sächsischen Statistischen Landesamtes (ZSSL)* 55 (1909): 230–31, and [Eugen Würzburger], “Die Wahlen für die Zweite Kammer der Ständeversammlung vom Oktober und November 1909, Zweiter Teil,” *ZSSL* 58, no. 2 (1912): 263–64.

however.<sup>97</sup> At best, the SPD’s ability to draw the support of non-working-class voters—who, in general, had more ballots to cast than workers did—only mitigated the exclusionary effect of the plural suffrage; it could not overcome it.

<sup>97</sup>Significant non-working-class support for SPD candidates was also found in districts the socialists did not win, namely, Leipzig I (20 percent), Leipzig V (18 percent), and Leipzig VI (14 percent). Along with Leipzig II (10 percent), these districts provided National Liberal candidates with their four 1909 victories in Leipzig (see fig. 13).



**Fig. 13.** Saxon Landtag elections in Leipzig, 1909. Adapted from Wolfgang Schröder, *Landtagswahlen im Königreich Sachsen 1869–1895/1896. Beiheft zur Karte D IV 3, Atlas zur Geschichte und Landeskunde von Sachsen* (Leipzig: Verlag der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig und Landesvermessungsamt Sachsen, 2004), 23. Used by permission.

As figure 13 shows, the Landtag's plural suffrage in 1909, combined with artfully drawn electoral districts, provided National Liberals with four victories (shown in yellow) and only three defeats in what had been the cradle of German Social Democracy and remained one of its heartlands. Separating areas of overwhelming socialist strength (shown in red) in Leipzig's eastern and western neighborhoods, National Liberals could plausibly claim to represent Leipzig's political backbone. Whether they had won those four districts through a fair vote—that is another matter.

## Conclusion

It was not easy for German burghers to forge mental maps of how different suffrage regimes overlapped: the simultaneity of electoral cultures at the local, regional, and national levels was



not evident in the quotidian routines of politics. But the redistricting exercises and copycat suffrage reforms examined in this article suggest that some burghers learned after 1890 how to make their influence felt—simultaneously or not—in interconnected political spheres. If statesmen and Reichstag deputies in Berlin appeared unable, as in the mid-1890s, to protect law-abiding burghers from “murderous ruffians” and other subversives—as municipal petitioners and Landtag deputies demanded—legislation to address these dangers could be enacted at lower tiers of governance. Whatever the level of politics at which such strategies were deployed, election battles over suffrage reform unfolded in German cities, states, and the Reich with ripple effects. A common denominator was the struggle to retain political legitimacy. It was waged by the authoritarian state and by social elites. Each sought to avoid drowning under the numerical weight of those who wanted a say in the exercise of power.

Local, regional, and national bastions of existing authority had to be defended with a coordinated response—or so it appeared to many German burghers before 1914. A National Liberal candidate of the “parties of order” who hoped to win election in the center of Leipzig could not rely exclusively on his local reputation: he had to seek the support of all voters “loyal to the Reich.” If there were not presently enough of them to carry the day or secure the future, then he had to strike an alliance with local antisemites, *Mittelständler*, and members of Leipzig’s Homeowners’ Association. Such alliances, based on complex political relationships and allegiances, usually rested on shifting sand. Social Democrats could not be dislodged from Leipzig’s eastern and western neighborhoods: redistricting and the introduction of a plural suffrage could only put off the day of reckoning. But the suddenness with which Saxony’s overlapping electoral cultures lurched forward (or backward)—when bourgeois civil servants redrew electoral districts or when bourgeois parliamentarians legislated unfair suffrages—ultimately had a destabilizing effect. Saxony’s “state-supporting parties” successfully wrenched Reichstag districts back from the “reds” in 1907, whereupon Kaiser Wilhelm II singled them out for praise. But Wilhelm’s chancellor, Bernhard von Bülow, wondered how much longer these parties could afford to bicker among themselves and risk competing antisocialist candidacies.<sup>98</sup> The unexpected, dismal outcome of plural Landtag voting in October 1909 and the “red” Reichstag elections of January 1912 provided an answer.<sup>99</sup>

Maps can reflect the dynamic aspects of political territoriality only approximately. They inevitably depict a moment in time. The maps included in this article show that the urban-rural divide in Imperial Germany was “constructed”: it was permeable, in flux, negotiated. The Saxon state and the parties that supported it wanted to deny that permeability when they repeatedly endorsed the black-and-white distinction between urban and rural electoral districts. By doing so they left a rich statistical artifact, allowing historians to study the social profile of electorates and the distribution of votes they cast in statistically distinct categories. In Leipzig, the lines that divided and defined the city in opposition to its environs were under duress from the 1880s onward. The daily movement of peoples between Leipzig and its outlying districts, and the need for a modern urban

<sup>98</sup>For citations and other details, see Retallack, *Red Saxony*, chap. 10.

<sup>99</sup>After the 1909 elections, the SPD delegation in Saxony’s Landtag, with 25 mandates, was only slightly smaller than those of the Conservative and National Liberal parties (28 each). After 1912, 110 of 397 mandates in the Reichstag were held by Social Democrats.



infrastructure to address their needs, forced administrators to coordinate their policies. By 1900 at the latest, the myth that German cities were merely “administered” in a nonpartisan way had been exploded. Yet suffrage experts and other urban reformers continued to pretend that they were not, in effect, excluding certain categories of people from real influence in municipal and state-level politics.

The years 1890–1896 were transformative in this process. In Leipzig, each suffrage reform followed hard upon the last. Redistricting was necessary in 1892 to add two Landtag seats to Leipzig’s previous complement. Prompt action was again needed, allegedly, to avert the possibility of socialists “conquering” Leipzig’s municipal assembly in 1894. And two years later, the crisis unleashed by a wave of anarchist murders outside Germany did not go to waste: it was used to rush through a new suffrage law to prevent Social Democrats winning “too many” Landtag seats.<sup>100</sup> Then, in 1903, the disparity between SPD fortunes in national and regional electoral cultures became clear for all to see. SPD candidates triumphed in twenty-two of Saxony’s twenty-three Reichstag districts. This bursting of the dam was described in territorial terms—as covering the land (*flächendeckend*). Such terminology underscored the fact that not a single socialist sat in the Saxon Landtag at that time.<sup>101</sup> The “frog pond” that had become the “pioneer land of reaction” in 1896 underwent metamorphosis again and emerged in 1903 as “Red Saxony.”

Yet, as we have seen, antidemocrats did not abandon the struggle to contain the “red threat” at the polls. Instead they tried harder to find “remedies” for universal manhood suffrage. At the national level, the Reichstag suffrage was never revised, but it was denounced often by right-wing politicians, and its fairness looked different depending on where you stood in the Kaiserreich. At the subnational level, gerrymandered districts and class-based voting were the norm, though they too were contested throughout the Kaiserreich. By mapping German electorates with careful attention to place and time, we can see that democracy was practiced and deferred at the same time.<sup>102</sup>

This article has suggested, lastly, that the bourgeois architects of Leipzig’s and Saxony’s suffrage reforms mapped a way forward in ways that deserve further attention. Key sources are now more accessible than they were before the fall of the Berlin Wall. They will yield their secrets reluctantly, for the internal workings of Saxony’s statistical offices and its ministry of the interior are not easy to penetrate. Privy counselors and professional statisticians such as Leo Ludwig-Wolf, Georg Heink, Ernst Hasse, and Eugen Würzburger rarely mused on the political objectives they sought. On the fairness of new suffrage regimes, they wasted not one word—at least not in print. We would like to know more about these individuals—not only as statisticians and city planners but also as members of associations with distinctively liberal reform agendas.<sup>103</sup> It is worth more than a passing note that these experts did not propose to

<sup>100</sup>For one study of the mood of crisis in 1894–95, see Eleanor L. Turk, “The Political Press and the People’s Rights: The Role of the Political Press in the Debates over the Association Right in Germany, 1894–1899” (Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin—Madison, 1975).

<sup>101</sup>Under the three-class suffrage instituted in 1896, Social Democrats exited the Landtag with each partial election, until none were left in 1901.

<sup>102</sup>The allusion here is to differences and similarities between Anderson, *Practicing Democracy*, and Retallack, *Red Saxony*. For two recent transnational perspectives, see Paul Nolte, ed., *Transatlantic Democracy in the Twentieth Century: Transfer and Transformation* (Berlin: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2016); Richter and Buchstein, eds., *Kultur und Praxis der Wahlen*.

<sup>103</sup>E.g., the Gehe-Stiftung, in which Leo Ludwig-Wolf, Theodor Petermann, Victor Böhmert, and other Saxon statisticians were active, or the Deutscher Verein für Armenpflege und Wohltätigkeit. See Danny

reduce the overall size of the electorate. The principle of universal suffrage and the habit of casting a ballot in free elections had become deeply ingrained in Germany's electoral culture—so deeply that reformers did not dare disenfranchise voters outright. But they shaped electorates and counted ballots in particular ways, and when one means failed to achieve the desired outcome, they came up with another.<sup>104</sup> We still know too little about how these individuals, and the political masters they served, conceived the bundle of rights and exclusions that shaped democratic practices and undemocratic outcomes. But their determination to defeat the “red threat”—to limit Social Democrats to a “tolerable” share of parliamentary seats because their voters were disloyal to the Reich—was unshakeable.

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Weber, *Die sächsische Landesstatistik im 19. Jahrhundert. Institutionalisierung und Professionalisierung* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2003), esp. 69–134. See also “175 Jahre amtliche Statistik in Sachsen. Festschrift,” *Statistik in Sachsen* 12, no. 1 (2006), [https://www.statistik.sachsen.de/download/300\\_Voe-Zeitschrift/zeitschrift\\_2006\\_1.pdf](https://www.statistik.sachsen.de/download/300_Voe-Zeitschrift/zeitschrift_2006_1.pdf).

<sup>104</sup>See, e.g., SHStAD, MdI, Nr. 5491, Eugen Würzburger to MdI, Jan. 8, 1909, appendix, table B (handwritten), showing the expected support for Social Democracy according to the number of ballots awarded to different groups of electors. See also SHStAD, MdI, Nr. 5455, Georg Heink's memorandum [for Hohenthal], Nov. 1, 1906, which is also discussed in Retallack, *Red Saxony*, chap. 11. There Heink wrote: “[The] disloyal population wants the general, equal, secret, and direct suffrage for male and female persons, and if it had this, it would want to reduce the voting age and would not rest until it had implemented its demands not only for elections to the Landtag but also for municipal, rural, district, and all other elections. ... Demands for the implementation of socialist principles naturally cannot be fulfilled.”