

# Democratic Contradictions in European Settler Colonies

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## Abstract

How did political institutions emerge and evolve under colonial rule? Although European settlers' strong organizational position enabled demanding representative political institutions, this article establishes core democratic contradictions in European settler oligarchies. The first hypothesis qualifies Europeans' impulse for representative institutions by positing the importance of a metropole with a representative tradition. Analyzing new data on colonial legislatures in 144 colonies between the 17th and 20th centuries shows that only British settler colonies—emanating from a metropole with representative institutions—systematically exhibited early elected legislative representation. The second hypothesis highlights a core democratic contradiction even in colonies that established early representative institutions. Extending class-based democratization theories predicts perverse institutional evolution—resisted enfranchisement and contestation backsliding—because sizable European settler minorities usually composed an entrenched landed class, rejecting the heralded Dahlian path from competitive oligarchy to full democracy. Evidence on voting restrictions and on legislature disbandment from Africa, the British Caribbean, and the U.S. South supports these implications.

**Keywords:** Democracy, Colonialism, European settlers, Institutions

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Centuries of Western European rule fundamentally shaped political and economic outcomes in most non-European countries.<sup>1</sup> One particularly important legacy was to establish the political institutions that countries inherited at independence, which often generated durable legacies after external rule ended. Although European colonization occurred in various forms, millions of European settling in North and South America, Oceania, and parts of Africa transformed the population and social structure of these colonies.<sup>2</sup> Considerable research on post-colonial legacies discusses how the strong organizational position of these European settlers enabled demanding representative political institutions,<sup>3</sup> and historical studies document that by the 18th century, European settlers elected representatives in many colonies, in some cases outpacing democracy in the metropole.<sup>4</sup> These arguments are consistent with the broader shift in the colonialism-democracy literature to focus on the importance of the people that migrated during colonial rule, which in addition to European settlers included Protestant missionaries and forced migrants.<sup>5</sup>

Despite ample research on post-colonial legacies, surprisingly little theory and systematic evidence addresses political institutions *during* colonial rule. Understanding the origins and evolution of colonial political institutions constitutes a crucial intervening factor linking varieties of colonial rule to posited post-independence legacies. Furthermore, examining colonial political institutions may provide fertile ground for assessing general theories of regime change usually tested with post-independence data.

This article contributes to opening up the black box of colonial political institutions by assessing effects of European settlers. I build on wide-ranging debates by social scientists and historians to demonstrate their core democratic contradictions. The institutional origins effects of European settlers was qualified: only among British colonies did European settlers usually create early representative institutions. Furthermore, even where European settlers created an early democratic advantage, these same Europeans faced strong

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<sup>1</sup>See, for example, De Juan and Pierskalla's 2017 recent summary of the vast literature that studies this topic.

<sup>2</sup>See, for example, Hartz 1964 and Denoon 1983.

<sup>3</sup>Hariri 2012, 2015 provides evidence for positive post-colonial democracy legacies. Many studies on colonial European settlers and economic development posit colonial political institutions as a key intervening mechanism (Acemoglu, Johnson and Robinson, 2001; Engerman and Sokoloff, 2011; Easterly and Levine, 2016).

<sup>4</sup>Greene 2010a; Markoff 1999; Narizny 2012, 345.

<sup>5</sup>Lankina and Getachew 2012; Woodberry 2012; Owolabi 2015.

incentives to resist franchise expansion. This created perverse institutional evolution and, in many colonies, undermined the earlier beneficial aspects of British rule. Emphasizing *qualifications* and *resistance* that created contradictory democratic impulses in European settler oligarchies challenges the broader thrust of the literature that proposes beneficial European settler legacies, and provides new insights into the political institutions that non-European countries inherited when they eventually gained independence.

The article first assesses the origins of colonies' representative institutions. Before World War I, elected representative institutions were the exception rather than the norm in European colonies, and only after World War II did they become nearly universal. Why did some colonies gain early representative institutions? Many arguments posit, under broad scope conditions, that European settlers tended to transplant representative political institutions early in the colonial era to protect property rights and to promote freedom within the European community,<sup>6</sup> and that large-scale European settlements broke down traditional forms of authority that hindered post-colonial democracy in many non-settler colonies.<sup>7</sup> Like much recent colonialism research, these accounts de-emphasize the importance of colonizer identity.<sup>8</sup> However, another strand of the literature emphasizes the distinctiveness and benefits of *British* colonial rule,<sup>9</sup> which dovetails with the crucial historical observation that many colonial metropolises lacked representative institutions. Despite the compelling idea that European settlers would seek to replicate political institutions from their country of origin, this impulse should not necessarily engender democracy. Why would European migrants promote representative institutions if they had no representative tradition on which to draw?

The first hypothesis posits that early representative institutions should pervade only British settler colonies. Britain's strong history of representative institutions distinguished it from other major European colonial powers.<sup>10</sup> Strikingly—given the centrality of colonial institutions to the broader debate—no existing research presents systematic data on colonial-era elected legislatures. This article introduces colonial legis-

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<sup>6</sup>Acemoglu, Johnson and Robinson 2001, 1374.

<sup>7</sup>Hariri 2012, 2015.

<sup>8</sup>Owolabi 2014 summarizes this thrust in the recent literature, and the next section provides more detail.

<sup>9</sup>Emerson 1962; Weiner 1987; Lange, Mahoney and vom Hau 2006; Fails and Kriekhaus 2010; Lee and Paine 2019.

<sup>10</sup>Although the historical literature establishes this point, much recent social scientific research on economic development focuses on Britain's economic policies rather than on its representative institutions (Lange, Mahoney and vom Hau, 2006; Fails and Kriekhaus, 2010).

lature data coded by the author for 144 Western European colonies across the entire period of European colonial rule. The evidence demonstrates a qualified European settler effect: British settler colonies—but not settler colonies outside the British empire—are associated with creating elected representative bodies before 1945. Until the mid-19th century, no non-British colony exhibited electoral representation in a colony-wide legislature, whereas electoral representation was common in British North America and the British Caribbean. British colonies profoundly differed from the Spanish and Portuguese empires across the centuries, although French settler colonies made some gains in the mid-19th century following metropolitan democratic advances.

Did early representative gains yield a smooth path to eventual democratization? To examine institutional evolution, the second part of the article engages with debates about franchise expansion. Even in British settler colonies, early political institutions represented only the white population, which in many cases composed a small fraction of the total population. Two strands of the literature yield divergent expectations for how these representative institutions should evolve. On the one hand, Robert Dahl provides an influential argument linking competitive oligarchic institutions to subsequent “polyarchy,” which many refer to simply as “full” democracy, in the sense of high contestation and high representation.<sup>11</sup> Establishing electoral competition among a small and cohesive elite—for example, European settlers—followed later by mass franchise expansion should provide a favorable path to establishing full democracy. In such cases, “the rule, the practices, and the culture of competitive politics developed first among a small elite. . . . Later, as additional social strata were admitted into politics they were more easily socialized into the norms and practices of competitive politics already developed among the elites.”<sup>12</sup> This sequencing contention corresponds with Hariri’s argument that breaking down pre-colonial authority structures and ruling directly enabled European settlers to facilitate democracy.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>Dahl 1971. Contestation is the extent to which political competition is characterized by free and fair elections. Participation distinguishes the scope of who can participate in politics, which corresponds with franchise size in polities where officials are chosen by elections.

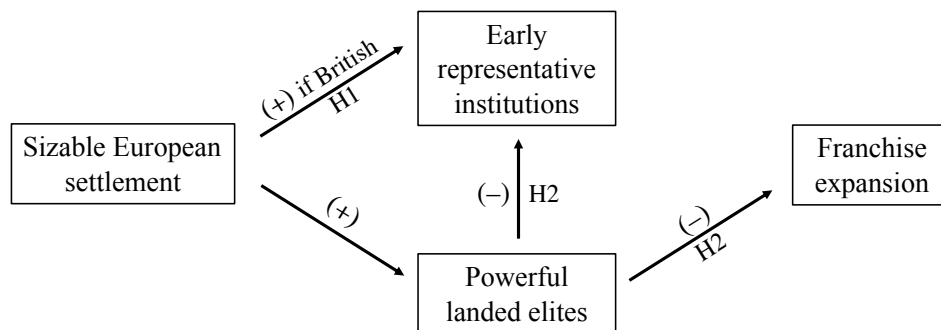
<sup>12</sup>Dahl 1971, 36. Miller 2015 provides statistical evidence for this sequencing argument from a global sample. Related, Collier 1982, 53 shows that Western European countries tended to experience a longer period between their first election (initiation of competition) and broad suffrage than did African countries, suggesting that it may help in part to account for their democratic disparities.

<sup>13</sup>Hariri 2012, 2015.

On the other hand, democratization theories focused on social classes and economic redistribution anticipate a perverse trajectory. Empirically, in most colonies with sizable and politically influential European populations, European minorities composed a landlord class that dominated large swaths of the territory’s most fertile land, sometimes organized into plantations. Privileged landed classes organized as political oligarchies should oppose widespread democratic franchises that would dilute their political and economic power. This logic features centrally in Acemoglu and Robinson’s and Boix’s models of franchise expansion,<sup>14</sup> and much of the related class-based democratization literature.<sup>15</sup>

The second hypothesis draws on these class-based insights to posit that sizable European settler minorities should resist franchise expansion for the non-white majority, which should also undermine representative institutions. I examine three regions that contain most sizable European minority colonies with early representative institutions—Africa and the British Caribbean—or tenuous majorities, as in the U.S. South. I analyze separate time periods for each to concentrate on pivotal times in which a previously dominant white oligarchy faced a challenge from non-whites. This occurred after World War II amid the continent-wide “wind of change” in Africa, the decades following the British-mandated end of slavery in 1833 in the British Caribbean, and following the end of the Civil War in the United States. Analyzing franchise size data from Africa, legislative disbandment data from the Caribbean, and voting restriction data from the United States, along with accompanying qualitative evidence of mechanisms from these world regions, demonstrates that ascendant but challenged white oligarchies exerted major resistance that sought to prevent expanding the franchise to non-whites, and that these actions also negatively affected representative institutions. Figure 1 summarizes the two hypotheses.

**Figure 1: Theoretical Hypotheses**



<sup>14</sup>Acemoglu and Robinson 2006; Boix 2003.

<sup>15</sup>Moore 1966; Rueschemeyer, Stephens and Stephens 1992; Collier 1999.

These findings carry important implications for understanding colonial-era institutions, for testing general theories of democratization, and for comprehending post-colonial legacies. Collectively, evidence for the two hypotheses demonstrates core democratic contradictions in European settler colonies. Only British settler colonies systematically created early representative institutions, and even these colonies generally exhibited significant impediments to expanding the franchise because of vested class interests. The evidence for the institutional evolution hypothesis supports mechanisms from class-based theories of democratization, as opposed to early settler colonies following the heralded Dahlian path from competitive oligarchy to polyarchy. This evidence also circumscribes the beneficial British legacy posited by the institutional origins hypothesis and expounded in considerable colonialism research. Although British settlers promoted early representation, they also resisted franchise expansion even at the cost of worsening the quality of their representation institutions. A brief analysis of post-colonial legacies in the conclusion shows that these contradictory democratic tensions usually prevented European settlers from clearly bequeathing beneficial democratic legacies. Among 34 countries that had large colonial European populations, only four historically exceptional “neo-Britains” and three Caribbean states exhibit (1) early creation of elected representative bodies, (2) no large-scale settler resistance during the colonial period to franchise expansion (either legislative disbandment or a major liberation war), and (3) democratic rule at independence. Even exceptions to the overall pattern contain elements of the common theme: democratic contradictions. For example, the United States combines a long history of competitive elections and high constraints on the executive with an equally long history of enslaving or politically marginalizing non-whites. “[A] nation born in contradiction, liberty in a land of slavery . . . will fight, forever, over the meaning of its history.”<sup>16</sup>

## 1 Theory

Implanting early representative institutions required a group willing and able to lobby for such reforms. Whereas European settlers tended to exhibit economic and political clout wherever they settled in large numbers, many originated from metropolises that did not themselves contain representative institutions. Only European settlers emanating from a home country with a representative tradition should promote early electoral institutions which, empirically, distinguished Britain from other major colonizers (Hypothesis 1).

Regarding institutional evolution, even in settler colonies that established early representative institutions,

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<sup>16</sup>Lepore 2018, 786.

class-based theories of political transitions suggest an important impediment to maintaining representative institutions and broadening the franchise to create a “full” democracy: large-scale resistance by European landed interests to perpetuate their political power, carrying negative implications for both democratic participation and contestation (Hypothesis 2). This contrasts with Dahl’s argument that elites with a history of limited representative institutions should peacefully incorporate the masses into the polity,<sup>17</sup> and highlights a core democratic contradiction in European settler colonies.

## **1.1 Institutional Origins: Metropolitan Political Institutions**

Before World War I, elected representative institutions were the exception rather than the norm in European colonies, and only after World War II did they become nearly universal. Why did some colonies gain early representative institutions? Existing research stresses European settlers’ strong organizational position that enabled them to demand political representation.<sup>18</sup> Considerable evidence, summarized below, indeed establishes the dominant economic and often political position that European settlers commanded, in contrast to non-whites subjugated in the colonial order and thought unfit to rule themselves by European officials.

However, only European settlers that descended from a metropole that itself had a representative tradition should create early representative institutions. The general logic for the qualified institutional origins hypothesis is straightforward: international powers with more liberal domestic political institutions are more likely to promote liberal institutions elsewhere, and domestic elites’ stances toward democracy promotion depend on their relationship with liberal polities. Much existing research on this topic focuses on post-Cold War actions by the United States and European Union to promote democracy in the ex-communist world and elsewhere, in contrast to authoritarian powers such as China and Russia that either do not make electoral institutions a precondition for support, or actively oppose democratic institutions. The beliefs and incentives of citizens within target countries should also matter. For example, Levitsky and Way argue that countries with high “Western linkage” are likely to democratize because economic, cultural, and communication ties among citizens to Western countries create greater desire for democratic institutions.<sup>19</sup> Although their theory does not require elites in non-Western countries to emigrate from the West to hold these preferences for

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<sup>17</sup>Dahl 1971.

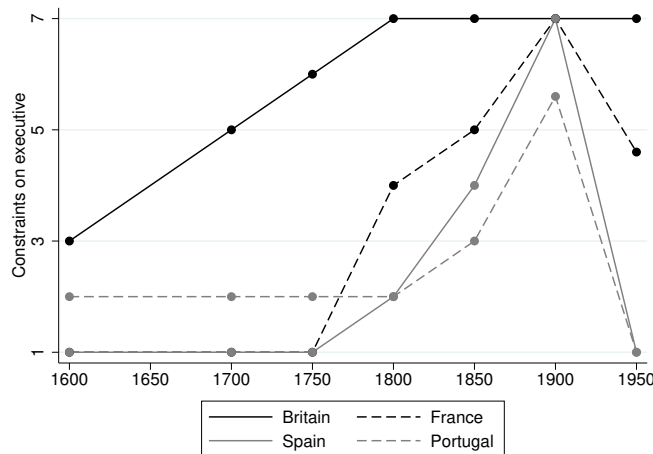
<sup>18</sup>Acemoglu, Johnson and Robinson 2001; Hariri 2012, 2015.

<sup>19</sup>Levitsky and Way 2010.

democratic institutions, such elites are akin to European settlers in the present setting because these actors' relationship with liberal institutions causes them to demand electoral reforms.

Emphasizing the importance of colonizer representative tradition largely distinguishes England/Britain. Across several centuries of colonial rule, the British metropole and its settlers exhibited a stronger representative tradition than other colonizers. Figure 2 depicts constraints on the executive for the four major Western European colonizers (Britain, France, Portugal, and Spain) over 50-year intervals between 1600 and 1950. The data draw from the Polity IV dataset and from Acemoglu et al.<sup>20</sup> Each data point takes the average of 20-year windows before and after the stated year.<sup>21</sup> Smoothing the data enables viewing snapshots of differences in metropolitan executive constraints across European empires over time without depicting sharp fluctuations in democratic constraints at various periods (for example, the struggle between the Crown and Parliament in England during most of the 17th century).

**Figure 2: Metropolitan Executive Constraints in Half-Century Snapshots**



The first notable trend in Figure 2 is that Britain became increasingly democratic during the first major periods of imperial expansion and contraction, which Abernethy dates respectively between 1415 to 1773 and 1775 to 1824.<sup>22</sup> Narizny compares estates in medieval and early modern Europe and concludes: “Only in England did a medieval assembly evolve into a representative parliament with sovereign authority over the crown, and only in England was liberal protodemocracy a stable equilibrium.”<sup>23</sup> Especially after the Glorious Revolution in 1688, Britain exhibited parliamentary constraints on the monarch unmatched by

<sup>20</sup>Marshall and Gurr 2014; Acemoglu, Johnson and Robinson 2005.

<sup>21</sup>This coding procedure follows Acemoglu, Johnson and Robinson 2005.

<sup>22</sup>Abernethy 2000. Figure 3 provides graphical evidence of these waves.

<sup>23</sup>Narizny 2012, 359.



other major colonizers,<sup>24</sup> and British settlers strongly imbued representative norms.<sup>25</sup> By contrast, the Spanish monarch retained absolute powers until the Napoleonic Wars, which caused it to lose most of its American colonies.<sup>26</sup> Collectively, the British and Spanish American empires accounted for almost every colony with a sizable European population during this period.

Britain also differed from other European powers with settler colonies during the second major waves of expansion (1824 to 1912) and contraction (1940 to 1980).<sup>27</sup> The major migration of Portuguese settlers to Angola and Mozambique starting in the 1930s began during the Salazar dictatorship,<sup>28</sup> which had the lowest possible Polity IV executive constraints score. France represents a mixed case. It exhibited high executive constraints between 1877 and 1939, and again between 1947 and 1957. However, unlike Britain, France exhibited prolonged struggles between authoritarian and democratic forces throughout the 19th century, and again in the 20th century during World War II and with the establishment of the Fifth Republic. Even during democratic periods, Spruyt compares France's unstable politics to Britain's stability.<sup>29</sup> Elected officials in France's Fourth Republic were susceptible to special interest pressures, such as European settlers and the military, due to unstable governments and weak party discipline.<sup>30</sup> Furthermore, Britain and France practiced different colonial governing philosophies. Although some scholars have exaggerated the differences between Britain's indirect rule policies and France's preferences for more centralized control, variance in delegation practices did meaningfully affect prospects for institutional transplantation.<sup>31</sup> For example, France "tightly controlled" European settlement in French Algeria and "the Algerian enterprise received much greater governmental supervision and the population was subject to a greater degree of regulation, unthinkable in a contemporary British colony."<sup>32</sup>

Overall, these differences spanning centuries implied that colonial officials and settlers in the British empire had a stronger representative tradition on which to draw, yielding the following hypothesis:

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<sup>24</sup>The historical literature establishes this point. See, for example, Finer's 1997, 1375-1427 survey history of empires and North and Weingast's 1989 seminal work on institutions in early modern England.

<sup>25</sup>Greene 2010*a*.

<sup>26</sup>Elliott 2007, 319.

<sup>27</sup>Abernethy 2000.

<sup>28</sup>Duffy 1962, 144-146.

<sup>29</sup>Spruyt 2005.

<sup>30</sup>Spruyt 2005, 101.

<sup>31</sup>Collier 1982, 83-87.

<sup>32</sup>Christopher 1984, 130.

**Hypothesis 1** (Institutional origins). *Colonies with a sizable European settler population should be more likely than non-settler colonies to have elected political representation, but only if the metropole has a representative tradition.*

Hypothesis 1 relates to broader debates about the importance of colonizer identity and metropolitan institutions. Research specifically on European settlers usually de-emphasizes the importance of colonizer identity,<sup>33</sup> which echoes broader shifts in the colonialism-democracy literature.<sup>34</sup> These accounts instead argue that selection effects explain away any British colonial distinction. For example, Acemoglu et al. claim, “it appears that British colonies are found to perform substantially better in other studies in large part because Britain colonized places where [large-scale European] settlements were possible, and this made British colonies inherit better institutions.”<sup>35</sup> Hariri argues that British and Spanish settlers drew from similar legacies because neither metropole was fully democratic in the 18th century,<sup>36</sup> and argues that Spanish American settlers created “a system of comprehensive checks and balances” during the colonial era that “facilitated the spread of early representative institutions.”<sup>37</sup> Similarly, Woodberry argues: “Some scholars suggest that British colonialism fostered democracy . . . but this may be because [Protestant missionaries] had greater influence in British colonies.”<sup>38</sup>

By contrast, several existing studies on economic development also argue that the beneficial effects of European settlers are limited to British colonies,<sup>39</sup> but the present argument emphasizes distinct considerations—focused on political institutions—about British colonialism. Lange et al. expound the distinction between British liberal economic institutions and Spanish mercantilist institutions,<sup>40</sup> and Mahoney compares differences in mercantile and liberal Spanish economic institutions over time. However, the more theoretically relevant focus for studying democracy concerns differences in Britain’s and Spain’s *political* institutions.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>33</sup>Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson 2001, 1388; Engermann and Sokoloff 2011, 44-46, 218; Hariri 2012, 474.

<sup>34</sup>Lankina and Getachew 2012; Woodberry 2012; Owolabi 2014.

<sup>35</sup>Acemoglu, Johnson and Robinson 2001, 1388.

<sup>36</sup>Hariri 2012, 474.

<sup>37</sup>Hariri 2012, 474.

<sup>38</sup>Woodberry 2012, 254.

<sup>39</sup>Lange, Mahoney and vom Hau 2006; Mahoney 2010; Fails and Kriekhaus 2010.

<sup>40</sup>Lange, Mahoney and vom Hau 2006.

<sup>41</sup>Mahoney 2010 also posits that colonizer institutions interact with the intensity of colonial rule, and predicts that either high intensity colonial rule coupled with liberal economic institutions, or low intensity

Fails and Kriekhaus appeal to a broader range of factors that distinguished British settlers, but also argue that British settlement is essentially a binary variable that differentiates only the neo-Britains from the remainder of the empire.<sup>42</sup> However, Britain colonized numerous territories in the Caribbean with smaller British populations that nonetheless drew from a similar representative tradition as contemporaneous North American settlers,<sup>43</sup> and Hypothesis 1 also applies to these colonies.

## **1.2 Institutional Evolution: Landed Oligarchs and Resisted Franchise Expansion**

Did early representative gains yield a smooth path to eventual democratization? Applying mechanisms from class-based theories of democratization and democratic consolidation to settler colonies demonstrates the strong incentives that landed European elites faced to expanding political participation. Landed elites feature centrally in class-based theories of democratization and democratic consolidation, which have a long history in political science. Moore famously proposed “no bourgeoisie, no democracy,” which recent research expounds.<sup>44</sup> Others focus on either the working class,<sup>45</sup> or the interplay between the working class and political elites.<sup>46</sup> Regardless of the specific actor posited to promote democracy, class-based theories agree that landowning agricultural elites should repressively resist franchise expansion, especially in circumstances of high land inequality. Boix and Acemoglu and Robinson posit one plausible mechanism.<sup>47</sup> Their theories examine how an elite minority and the masses strategically interact. The masses may pose a revolutionary threat because of their numerical clout, which enables them to achieve concessions from the political/economic elite. However, elites that control political power amid high economic inequality face incentives to repress rather than to expand the franchise to include the masses—who would redistribute considerable income from the elites to themselves. Landlords particularly fear majority rule because land is colonial rule paired with mercantile institutions, promotes high development. Although the former conjunction is roughly equivalent to the present assertion that sizable European populations coupled with British rule promotes early representative institutions, there is no similar implication that small European populations paired with non-British rule also promotes early contestation.

<sup>42</sup>Fails and Kriekhaus 2010, 494-5.

<sup>43</sup>Greene 2010*b*.

<sup>44</sup>Moore 1966; Ansell and Samuels 2014.

<sup>45</sup>Rueschemeyer, Stephens and Stephens 1992.

<sup>46</sup>Collier 1999.

<sup>47</sup>Boix 2003; Acemoglu and Robinson 2006.

a non-mobile asset that is easy to redistribute.<sup>48</sup>

Existing theories focus on landowning elites' incentives to prevent franchise expansion, therefore examining democratic *participation* rather than contestation. However, two mechanisms can account for why actions to resist broad political participation should also undermine representative institutions. First, it may be possible for elites to delegate authority to an authoritarian strongman that can better counteract any threat from below—hence accepting lower contestation to maintain low participation—or to otherwise undermine competitive institutions to maintain power. For example, Slater argues that serious threats from below cause elites to replace democratic representation with authoritarian “protection pact” institutions that can better counteract the threat, as in post-colonial Malaysia and Singapore.<sup>49</sup> Second, anti-enfranchisement repression should foster more extreme opposition leaders. Shadmehr shows that higher repression deters moderates from participating in organized anti-government movements because they are less willing to pay the associated participation costs.<sup>50</sup> Related, repression should also raise the likelihood of fostering extremist opposition leaders that have a comparative advantage in coercion rather than in electoral participation,<sup>51</sup> perhaps in the form of revolutionary vanguard parties.

The conditions under which class-based theories expect democratic resistance closely match empirical conditions in colonies with a sizable European minority, most of which exhibited evidence of highly unequal land distribution patterns between Europeans and non-Europeans, as documented below. Although European settlers also controlled assets besides land, many of these colonies were founded by displacing natives from their land or by settling forced migrants onto European-controlled plantations—therefore making land a crucial source of economic and political power for Europeans. Paine discusses how European land control

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<sup>48</sup>Boix 2003; Acemoglu and Robinson 2006, 287-320. Albertus 2015 instead argues that autocracies are more likely than democracies to implement land reform because democratic institutions provide more pivot points that landed elites can target to undermine land reform. However, in the present substantive context—colonial Africa and the colonial Caribbean—European settlers expected to lose their political influence under majority rule. Therefore, these cases lie outside the scope conditions of Albertus' 2015 argument.

<sup>49</sup>Slater 2010.

<sup>50</sup>Shadmehr 2015.

<sup>51</sup>This relates to Przeworski's 1991 argument that self-enforcing democracy is possible only if both parties prefer to accept election results rather than to fight.

in African settler colonies created broad interests against majority rule even among non-farming whites.<sup>52</sup> Through land and other sources of power, colonial European settlers wielded considerable political influence either by lobbying the metropole or by directly controlling the state, and therefore could achieve their preferred economic policies such as controlling the best land and distorting the labor market.

There are two additional scope conditions for when European settlers should engage in widespread resistance to majority electoral rule. First, resistance should occur only if European settlers were politically powerful. Their power could diminish over time, as documented below for the British Caribbean. Second, only intermediate-sized European settlements created high levels of land and of income inequality. Although large settler majorities should still face incentives to exclude non-whites from political participation, they should not need to use heavy repression to achieve this outcome. Lack of a sizable threat from below should lessen repression incentives, compared to settler minority colonies.<sup>53</sup> Therefore, the overall relationship between European population share and incentives to exercise heavy repression should be non-monotonic. Empirically, whereas European population share was less than one-quarter in almost all colonies, in the few colonies where Europeans formed a preponderant majority group, inequality tended to be low because everyone was relatively wealthy.<sup>54</sup> Among British colonies, this refers to most colonies that composed the four “neo-Britains” after independence: Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United States (see Table 2 for European population share data).<sup>55</sup> The one exception among the neo-Britains is the U.S. South, which largely fits the scope conditions in which elites should exhibit large-scale resistance toward franchise expansion, and is discussed below. Overall, these considerations imply:

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<sup>52</sup>Paine 2018.

<sup>53</sup>This does not necessarily imply that European settlers will share power with non-whites, only that they can subjugate non-whites with less repressive means than in colonies where non-whites composed a large population majority.

<sup>54</sup>Angeles 2007 provides statistical evidence for this non-monotonic relationship between size of the European settler population and economic inequality, and Engerman and Sokoloff 2011 provide evidence from the Americas.

<sup>55</sup>Although the native populations in North America and Oceania were smaller and less densely populated than in many parts of the world, aggressive European expansion early in the colonial period and natives’ lack of immunity against European diseases—resulting in genocide-magnitude population declines—enabled Europeans’ numerical preponderance.

**Hypothesis 2** (Institutional evolution). *In the presence of threats from below, politically dominant sizable European settler minorities should:*

- *More frequently pursue large-scale resistance to enfranchising non-whites, compared to non-settler territories or territories with large settler majorities.*
- *These actions should hinder political contestation and participation.*

Although strategies to defend elite privileges are central to class-based theories, existing colonialism research mentions this mechanism only in passing. Fails and Krieckhaus argue that British colonies besides the neo-Britains did not exhibit meaningful variation in settler population size, and therefore medium-size British settler colonies should not differ from colonies largely devoid of European settlement. However, they also briefly mention that small Spanish settlements could have caused worse outcomes than colonies without settlement by creating an interest group that favors extractive economic institutions, which resembles the present argument.<sup>56</sup> Mahoney and Lange et al. distinguish British from Spanish colonies based on a liberal/mercantile distinction, but differences in economic institutions are less important for explaining democratic trajectories.<sup>57</sup> Mercantile policies might contribute to creating “entrenched actors who benefit from state privileges,”<sup>58</sup> but many British colonies in the Caribbean and in southern Africa contained a similarly privileged European elite despite pursuing different overall economic policies than imperial Spain.

Hypothesis 2 is also theoretically intriguing because, juxtaposed with Hypothesis 1, it shows how an explanatory factor can yield divergent implications for different components of democracy, a largely novel consideration among existing colonialism research. Much research on European settlement focuses on the distinct outcome of economic development, and studies specifically on democracy tend not to disaggregate its components. Although Acemoglu et al. and Hariri discuss one positive effect of European settlement on democratic contestation,<sup>59</sup> neither they nor their critics scrutinize how entrenched settler oligarchies’ incentives to restrict franchise expansion can undermine earlier contestation gains.

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<sup>56</sup>Fails and Krieckhaus 2010, 492. Also see Engerman and Sokoloff’s 2011 argument about Spanish institutions.

<sup>57</sup>Mahoney 2010; Lange, Mahoney and vom Hau 2006.

<sup>58</sup>Lange, Mahoney and vom Hau 2006, 1419.

<sup>59</sup>Acemoglu, Johnson and Robinson 2001; Hariri 2012, 2015.

## 2 Assessing Institutional Origins

Did most varieties of European settler colonies experience early representative institutions, or was this largely limited to British colonies? Analyzing newly compiled data on elected colonial legislatures from the 17th to 20th centuries supports Hypothesis 1. Statistically, British settler colonies—but not settler colonies outside the British empire—are associated with elected legislatures before 1945.

### 2.1 Data

This section briefly describes the data for Figure 3 and Table 1, and Appendix Section A.1 provides more detail. Table A.1 lists every territory in the sample, years of colonial rule and independence, years with a colonial legislature, score on the settlers variable, and colonizer. Table A.2 provides summary statistics.

**Sample.** The sample consists of a panel of 144 former Western European colonies, starting in 1600.<sup>60</sup> It includes numerous small islands in the Caribbean and Pacific, including several present-day dependencies. Due to data availability constraints, in most cases the units correspond to modern-day countries, with exceptions for Spanish American countries in which the post-colonial countries did not correspond with colonial units, and six ex-British countries that combined multiple colonies at independence or after a lengthy period of existing as distinct colonies (six in Australia, four in Canada, four in South Africa, two in St. Kitts and Nevis, two in Trinidad and Tobago, 13 in the United States). Temporally, the sample only includes years under colonial rule.

**Elected representative body.** This article introduces self-collected data on elections for a colony-wide representative body for each colony. An accompanying coding document provides extensive details and sources used to code this variable. The nature of elected representative bodies differed widely across empires and over time within empires. In some cases these bodies possessed extensive legislative powers and were fully elected, such as assemblies and senates in British America in the 17th century. In other cases, the legislature was less powerful than the colonial executive and at least one—but not all—members were elected, as with many legislative councils in the British empire from the 19th century onward. For British legislative councils and for related bodies in other empires, the coding requirement is that at least one member was

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<sup>60</sup>There were no colonial legislatures before the 17th century.

elected, as opposed to requiring that all members or even a majority were elected. For example, St. Lucia gained its first legislative council in the 1830s, but it lacked any elected members until 1924, and therefore the first elected representative year for St. Lucia is coded as 1924. Representative bodies in other empires, such as the *Delegations Financieres* introduced in Algeria in 1898 or the *Volksraad* introduced in Indonesia in 1916, lacked formal legislative powers and were purely advisory, but meet the criteria of an elected representative body.<sup>61</sup> Finally, the “colony-wide” criterion excludes local bodies such as town councils in Spanish America (*cabildos*; see below for more detail) or municipal councils. It also excludes elections to an empire-wide legislature, which France introduced in 1789 and allowed intermittently throughout the 19th century, because these did not grant colonial citizens or subjects voice over their own governance. In most colonies prior to World War II, the population percentage that could vote (if any) was very small.

The new dataset documents elective colonial representative bodies across a broader sample and time period, and provides more extensive documentation, than existing datasets. Most standard democracy datasets only provide post-independence data. Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) provides data on franchise size in colonies in the 20th century,<sup>62</sup> but lacks earlier data or coverage for many smaller countries. A recent expansion to V-Dem extends back to 1789, but Historical V-Dem only covers countries that gained independence before 1900—therefore excluding the bulk of the Western European colonial world. Fifty-seven colonies in the present sample gained elective representation prior to 1900, including 30 prior to 1789. The Political Institutions and Political Events (PIPE) dataset also provides some information on legislative elections, but only exhibits widespread coverage of years under colonial rule after 1945.<sup>63</sup>

***European settlers.*** The main European settlers variable indicates whether the territory contained a European population share of at least 5% at any point in the colony’s history.<sup>64</sup> Several considerations motivate using this simple binary measure: the panel spans a very long time period, some countries fluctuated considerably in European population share over time, and data on colonial European populations is inherently uncertain further back in time. Although 5% may appear a low threshold, the many cases discussed below show that

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<sup>61</sup>This coding decision biases against the main findings because purely advisory bodies were more likely to arise in non-British colonies.

<sup>62</sup>Coppedge 2018.

<sup>63</sup>Przeworski 2013.

<sup>64</sup>These data draw from Easterly and Levine 2016, Owolabi 2015, and other sources (Appendix Section A.1).



even colonies with relatively small European minorities fit the scope conditions of the theory for politically powerful European settlers. However, to show that the results do not depend on a particular population threshold, robustness checks analyze a logged continuous European population share variable that varies throughout the colony's history.

***Colonizer identity.*** Colonizer identity is based on the final Western European country that colonized the territory, and the sample excludes all years prior to the final colonizer gaining control (Appendix Section A.1). For example, Britain gained control of Mauritius during the Napoleonic Wars. The sample includes Mauritius as a British colony from 1814 until independence, but excludes Mauritius before 1814.

## 2.2 Main Patterns

Figure 3 shows the percentage of colonies with an elected representative body between 1600 and 1959, disaggregated by settler/non and British/non. Panel A codes a colony-year as 1 if the colony ever had an elected colonial legislature, and 0 otherwise. Because the dependent variable is whether a territory has *ever* had a legislature, percentage dips occur either because new territories in a category became colonies and did not immediately gain elected representation, or because colonies with a legislature gained independence.<sup>65</sup> The cutoff year for Panel A is 1959. The percentages are exceedingly difficult to interpret after 1959 because the number of colonies dropped precipitously in the 1960s, generating rapid fluctuation in the sample. Panel B shows how the sample changes over time by presenting the number of colonies by category through 2000.

Analyzing three distinct periods in Figure 3 yields the main takeaways.

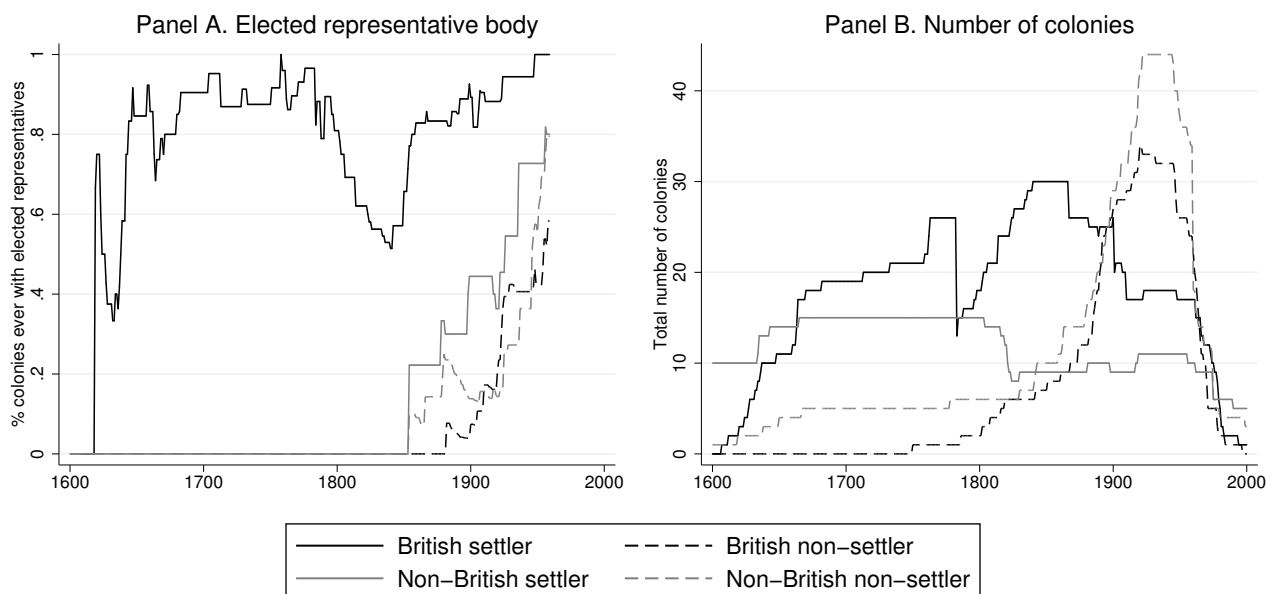
***Early colonies.*** Until the mid-19th century, elected representative bodies were exclusive to British settler colonies. All colonies founded by English settlers in North America and the Caribbean, and some colonies founded by British conquest, created elected legislatures shortly after colonization. Starting in the 1840s, similar political developments occurred in Oceania and in southern Africa. Greene discusses New World colonies and shows evidence that, for Englishmen, liberty was “not just a condition enforced by law, but the very essence of their national identity.”<sup>66</sup> Settlers' colonial assemblies consciously sought to replicate

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<sup>65</sup>The next section discusses British Caribbean colonies that ended elected representation in late 19th century.

<sup>66</sup>Greene 2010a, 3-4.

**Figure 3: Elected Colonial Representation Bodies Since the 17th Century**



the English House of Commons and to obtain corresponding political privileges.<sup>67</sup> British North American colonies largely controlled their internal affairs, and their legislatures even outpaced the English House of Commons in terms of autonomy due to their “continuous and continuing British connection and the tremendous impact of the British constitution upon their own perception of the constitutional order.”<sup>68</sup> Even in smaller Caribbean islands with less ability to resist metropolitan British encroachment, legislatures exerted considerable autonomy, fully controlling finances and exercising extensive executive powers.<sup>69</sup>

These British institutions contrasted sharply with the “despotisms” of 18th-century Spanish, Portuguese, and French American empires.<sup>70</sup> Finer quotes Adam Smith’s *Wealth of Nations*, written in 1776: “In everything except their foreign trade, the liberty of the English colonists to manage their own affairs in their own way is complete . . . The absolute governments of Spain, Portugal, and France, on the contrary, take place in their colonies.”<sup>71</sup> Spain, which possessed most of the remaining American colonies at the time, practiced direct authoritarian rule. The Spanish crown did not legally allow colonial officials to perform any executive

<sup>67</sup>Greene 2010a, 7.

<sup>68</sup>Finer 1997, 1403.

<sup>69</sup>Green 1976, 68.

<sup>70</sup>Greene 2010a, 10.

<sup>71</sup>Finer 1997, 1383.

or legislative functions. “Formal power was not shared by anyone outside the immediate Council and the king,”<sup>72</sup> local officials functioned solely as judiciaries, and no colony-wide parliamentary bodies were established.<sup>73</sup> The one institution with some popular participation existed at the local level: *cabildos*, or town councils. However, shortly after towns were formed, the Spanish Crown typically diminished the power of *cabildos* and sold the office to raise revenues.<sup>74</sup> “As a repository of people’s liberty, a training school for the democratic system to be set up after independence, the *cabildo* possessed no potency at all. It had little or no freedom in action or responsibility in government. Its weakness was not a recent development at the turn of the nineteenth century. On the contrary, the institution had been in a state of collapse for generations.”<sup>75</sup> The first and only attempt to promote general elections occurred in 1809 in response to turmoil in Spain caused by the Napoleonic wars, but even these elections were to an empire-wide assembly in Spain rather than to local legislatures—and colonial representatives were never seated in the *Junta Central*.<sup>76</sup>

These differences also highlight the importance of colonizer identity relative to natural endowments.<sup>77</sup> At the turn of the 19th century, elected legislatures pervaded British territories regardless of whether the territory was suitable for small-scale farming (colonies in the northern United States and Canada) or for sugar plantations (much of the Caribbean), and the exceptions arose because of shifts in British colonial policy (see below). Spain imposed similar authoritarian institutions across South America, Central America, and the Caribbean despite varying endowments, as did France among its Caribbean sugar colonies and Quebec prior to 1763.<sup>78</sup>

**Late 19th century.** Several settler colonies, even outside the British empire, gained electoral representation starting in the mid-19th century. Shortly after the 1848 revolution in France and the establishment of the Second Republic, Guadeloupe, Martinique, and non-settler Reunion each created a *conseil general*, followed several decades later by French Guyana and non-settler Senegal.<sup>79</sup> Whites in Algeria gained rep-

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<sup>72</sup>Hanson 1974, 202.

<sup>73</sup>Morse 1964, 144.

<sup>74</sup>Finer 1997, 1387.

<sup>75</sup>Haring 1947, 177-178.

<sup>76</sup>Posada-Carbó 1996, 4, 42.

<sup>77</sup>For example, Engerman and Sokoloff 2011.

<sup>78</sup>Narizny 2012, 360.

<sup>79</sup>This is consistent with Owolabi’s 2015 argument about colonizers granting legal rights equivalent to those in the metropole earlier in forced settlement colonies.

resentation at the end of the 19th century. However, French Morocco never gained a legislature, nor did authoritarian-ruled Portuguese settler colonies in Africa prior to 1945. Furthermore, Emerson qualifies the relevance of legislatures in centrally ruled French colonies: “Despite the revolutionary tradition of liberty and equality, the French colonies offered little in the way of democratic institutions . . . At best the French created advisory councils of a dubiously representative kind with some financial and administrative powers but little general legislative competence,” a pattern that persisted even after World War II and is consistent with France’s stronger propensity toward direct colonial rule.<sup>80</sup> During the last decades of the 19th century, amid debates about administrative issue in Algeria, France’s primary settler colony: “There was no question of self-government at all—no thought that the French colonies should follow the English in going from oligarchic to representative and then to responsible government.” Even electoral reforms implemented in 1898 “did not envisage anything in the nature of the English autonomy or self-government: it simply meant the development by French officials as before, but in the new direction of the colony’s own interests,” as opposed to the earlier policy of controlling Algeria “from Paris and on exclusively French models.”<sup>81</sup>

*Post-World War I.* By the 1930s, many non-settler colonies had established elected legislatures, such as India (1910), Nigeria (1923), and Mali (1925). However, only in the decades after World War II did other types of colonies catch up to British settler colonies, as France introduced legislative elections across its Sub-Saharan African colonies in the 1940s and 1950s, Britain gradually decolonized its entire empire, and even Portugal belatedly attempted to gain African support of the colonial project in the early 1970s.<sup>82</sup>

### **2.3 Statistical Evidence: British Settler Colonies and Early Elected Representation**

Table 1 statistically assesses correlates of early elected representation under colonial rule. It uses the same data as in Figure 3 but the sample ends in 1945, the beginning of the terminal colonial period, to correspond with early elected representation. The table presents estimates from a series of logit models with standard errors clustered by colony. The dependent variable captures election onset, equaling 0 in all years under colonial rule but before the first year with elected representatives, 1 in the first election year, and is set to missing in all subsequent years. Every specification contains cubic polynomials that count years since colonial rule began, and a fixed effect for early colonial onset (pre-1850) following arguments from Aber-

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<sup>80</sup>Emerson 1962, 232. Also see Delivagnette 1970, 263.

<sup>81</sup>Roberts 1963, 182-185.

<sup>82</sup>Lee and Paine 2019 discuss this period in more detail.

nethy (2000), Olsson (2009), and others that the nature of colonial rule changed over time and most empires shifted from mercantile- to imperial-based colonial rule during the mid-19th century.

Column 1 uses the binary settlers indicator for whether the colony ever had a European population share of at least 5%, and interacts it with British colonialism. Column 2 controls for four alternative explanations from the literature: population density in 1500, a territory's history of statehood in 1500, a forced settlement colony indicator, and colonial Protestant missionary population. Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson argue that Europeans faced difficulties settling en masse in territories with higher population density,<sup>83</sup> and Hariri argues that territories with a longer history of statehood were better able to resist European encroachment.<sup>84</sup> Related, Mahoney evaluates the effect of complexity of the indigenous society on varieties of colonialism within the Spanish Empire.<sup>85</sup> Owolabi and Woodberry each focus on other colonial-era actors argued to promote democracy, forced settlers and Protestant missionaries, respectively.<sup>86</sup> Owolabi's indicator for large forced settlement population is nearly synonymous with plantation colonies, and therefore also operationalizes Engerman and Sokoloff's argument that land endowments favorable for plantation-type agriculture generated large slave populations and high inequality.<sup>87</sup> As noted above, many of these authors explicitly argue against any Britain effect, and therefore controlling for these factors addresses the most important confounding concerns identified in the literature.<sup>88</sup> Column 3 replaces the British colonial rule indicator with an indicator for high metropolitan constraints on the executive,<sup>89</sup> and Column 4 adds the four covariates. Column 5 replaces the European settlers indicator with the continuous measure of European population share, and Column 6 adds covariates.

Table 1 robustly supports Hypothesis 1. In all columns, the marginal effect estimate for European settlers is positive and statistically significant among British colonies or colonies whose metropole has high exec-

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<sup>83</sup>Acemoglu, Johnson and Robinson 2002.

<sup>84</sup>Hariri 2012, 2015.

<sup>85</sup>Mahoney 2010.

<sup>86</sup>Owolabi (2015), Woodberry (2012).

<sup>87</sup>Engerman and Sokoloff 2011.

<sup>88</sup>Appendix Section A.1 provides coding details.

<sup>89</sup>Coded from Acemoglu, Johnson and Robinson 2005 and Polity IV (Marshall and Gurr, 2014). Although they provide an ordinal constraints on the executive variable, separation issues in the logit models arising from the interaction terms make the results easier to interpret when defining high constraints as a score between 4 and 7, and low constraints between 1 and (less than) 4.

**Table 1: Correlates of Elected Representative Bodies: Colonial Rule 1600–1945**

	DV: Onset of elected representative body					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Settler colony (5% threshold)	-0.561 (0.641)	-0.286 (0.652)	-0.167 (1.157)	-0.0266 (1.268)		
British colony	0.229 (0.364)	0.212 (0.379)			4.015*** (0.705)	4.017*** (0.772)
Settler*British colony	3.356*** (0.693)	3.350*** (0.693)				
Metro. exec. constraints			1.800* (0.929)	1.875* (1.011)		
Settler*Metro. exec. constraints			1.952 (1.197)	2.088 (1.294)		
ln(Colonial European pop. %)					-0.123 (0.113)	-0.109 (0.114)
ln(Eu. pop. %)*British colony					0.634*** (0.144)	0.631*** (0.156)
Pre-1850 colonization	-1.674*** (0.320)	-1.725*** (0.328)	-0.715*** (0.267)	-0.853*** (0.280)	-1.218*** (0.389)	-1.230*** (0.417)
ln(Pop. density in 1500)		0.00530 (0.0252)		-0.0177 (0.0262)		0.0159 (0.0286)
State antiquity index in 1500		0.522 (0.524)		-0.0434 (0.453)		0.508 (0.578)
Forced settlement colony		-0.638* (0.331)		-0.974*** (0.341)		0.0662 (0.294)
Protestant missionaries in 1923		0.121* (0.0675)		0.136** (0.0577)		0.0296 (0.0807)
Colony-years	10,538	10,538	10,538	10,538	10,538	10,538
Time controls?	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
	Marginal effect estimates					
Settler colony   British rule	0.0543*** (0.0160)	0.0592*** (0.0159)				
Settler colony   High metro. exec. const.			0.0215*** (0.00505)	0.0247*** (0.00534)		
ln(Eu. pop. %)   British rule					0.00632*** (0.00156)	0.00646*** (0.00195)
Settler colony   Non-British rule	-0.00128 (0.00132)	-0.000621 (0.00134)				
Settler colony   Low metro. exec. const.			-0.000114 (0.000806)	-1.50e-05 (0.000716)		
ln(Eu. pop. %)   Non-British rule					-0.000325 (0.000288)	-0.000284 (0.000291)

Notes: Table 1 summarizes a series of logit regressions by presenting coefficient estimates, and colony-clustered robust standard error estimates in parentheses using two-sided hypothesis tests. The bottom part of the table presents the marginal effect estimates and corresponding standard error estimates for the European settlers variables under various values of conditioning variables. \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*  $p < 0.1$ .

utive constraints, but not among non-British colonies or low metropolitan executive constraint colonies. In Column 1, the predicted failure rate is 34 times higher for British settler colonies than for non-British settler colonies, 15 times higher than for British non-settler colonies, and 19 times higher than for non-British non-settler colonies. The appendix shows qualitatively similar results when altering the original models to end the sample in 1918 as an alternative conceptualization of early electoral representation (Table A.3), or

excluding the 24 colonial units within the four neo-Britains (Table A.4). I also considered whether historical population density or state antiquity can explain variation in adopting elections among British settler colonies, given Mahoney's (2010) argument that the complexity of the pre-colonial society affected the mode of colonial rule and Gerring et al.'s (2011) evidence that Britain tended to more directly rule territories with a shorter history as a centralized state. However, in contrast to the Spanish American cases that Mahoney analyzes and the sample of 20th century British colonies that Gerring et al. examine (which excludes many of the British settler colonies in the present sample), there is very little variation in pre-colonial complexity among British settler colonies in Table 1. All of the British settler colonies except Belize lacked any history of statehood above the local level in 1500, and all but Belize had no greater than the median level of population density in the sample in 1500.

Finally, Appendix Section A.3 disaggregates British settler colonies. An important distinction is whether British settlement or conquest founded the colony. Whereas legal precedents enabled British inhabitants of settled colonies all the political rights of British subjects, the metropole exercised discretion regarding whether to extend rights to conquered colonies. Furthermore, whereas by definition settled colonies consisted of British settlers, many conquered colonies contained sizable non-British European populations upon British conquest. Appendix Table A.5 shows that British settled colonies indeed gained elected representation earlier than British conquest colonies with sizable settler populations, although both are statistically significantly different than British non-settler colonies.

### **3 Assessing Institutional Evolution**

Although pro-settler arguments about early representative institutions apply only to British colonies, this does not rule out the possibility of European settlers regularly bequeathing democratic institutions at independence across the vast British empire, or among other colonies with early representative institutions. However, this section analyzes institutional evolution in settler colonies and demonstrates that politically influential landed classes usually resisted franchise expansion to a rising non-white majority, consistent with Hypothesis 2. It analyzes three regions that contain most colonies with relatively early representative institutions and sizable European minorities—Africa and the British Caribbean—or tenuous majorities—the U.S. South (see Table 2). It analyzes separate time periods for each to concentrate on pivotal periods in which a previously dominant white oligarchy faced a challenge from non-whites. Analyzing quantitative evidence to

demonstrate key patterns, and qualitative evidence of mechanisms, from each region supports the theoretical expectation of resisted enfranchisement by ascendant but challenged settler oligarchies. Appendix Section B.2 analyzes informative null cases: British Caribbean colonies after World War I.

**Table 2: European Population Percent in British (and Select Other) Settler Colonies**

<b>Secure majority (&gt;80%) – Neo-Britains</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>9 original U.S. colonies</i>: New Hampshire (100%), Massachusetts (99%), New York (99%), Connecticut (98%), Maryland (80%), Pennsylvania (98%), Rhode Island (98%), New Jersey (97%), Delaware (83%)</li> <li>• <i>10 newer U.S. states</i>: Illinois (100%), Iowa (100%), Maine (100%), Vermont (100%), Wisconsin (100%), Indiana (99%), Michigan (99%), Ohio (99%), Missouri (95%), Kentucky (87%)</li> <li>• <i>Canada</i>: New Brunswick (100%), Nova Scotia (100%), Ontario (99%), Quebec (99%)</li> <li>• <i>Australia</i>: South Australia (99%), Tasmania (99%), Victoria (99%), New South Wales (98%), Western Australia (95%), Queensland (91%)</li> <li>• <i>New Zealand</i> (96%)</li> </ul>
<b>Large minority or tenuous majority (25%-80%) – U.S. South</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>4 original U.S. colonies</i>: North Carolina (67%; 4.5%), Virginia (64%; 5.1%), Georgia (58%; 11.3%), South Carolina (42%; 20.2%)</li> <li>• <i>7 newer U.S. states</i>: Texas (80%; 0.5%), Arkansas (77%; 8.1%), Tennessee (76%; 0.8%), Florida (57%; 2.4%), Alabama (55%; 11.6%), Louisiana (53%; 8.2%), Mississippi (46%; 36.6%)</li> <li>• <i>Bermuda</i> (44%)</li> </ul>
<b>Small minority (&lt;25%) – Caribbean and Africa</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>British Caribbean and related islands</i>: Barbados (20%), Bahamas (10%), Belize (8%), St. Kitts (8%), Trinidad (8%), Mauritius (7%), St. Lucia (6%), Antigua and Barbuda (5%), Guyana (5%), St. Vincent and the Grenadines (5%), Dominica (4%), Tobago (4%), Jamaica (3%), Nevis (3%), Grenada (1%)</li> <li>• <i>British Africa</i>: South Africa (21%), Zimbabwe (8%)</li> <li>• <i>Non-British Africa</i>: Algeria (14%), Namibia (14%), Tunisia (7%), Angola (5%)</li> </ul>

*Notes*: Table 2 lists every British settler colony in the New World and Africa, and all non-British settler colonies in Africa, which collectively composes almost every colony with pre-World War I elected representation. It lists each colony's highest European population share percent between (a) 1850 and (b) the later of 1900 and independence. In many Caribbean colonies, European population percent had declined considerably from the 17th or 18th century. Appendix Section A.1 describes the data. For U.S. states in the middle category, the second number in parentheses is the percentage of the white population residing in majority-black ("black belt") counties in 1940 (Key, 1949, 7).

### 3.1 Post-World War II Africa

#### 3.1.1 Main Pattern: Lower Enfranchisement in Settler Colonies

Figure 4 summarizes three distinct periods of suffrage expansion during the 20th century across Africa, highlighting a middle period in which non-settler colonies diverged from the settler colonies. This middle period is consistent with theoretical expectations that, faced with a threat from below, colonies with sizable settler minorities should prevent franchise expansion that includes the majority.

The sample consists of 43 mainland African countries, including North Africa and Madagascar, that gained African majority rule after 1945, including one observation for South Africa rather than one each for its



**Figure 4: Legalized Suffrage in 20th-Century Africa (Pre- and Post-Independence)**



four constituent colonies. It presents patterns for every year between 1900 and 2000, including years before and after independence. Examining pre- and post-independence periods is useful because the timing of independence was endogenous to European settler pressure, as settlers’ political clout often enabled delaying reforms. The dependent variable is percentage of the population with the legal voting rights in national elections, measured by V-Dem.<sup>90</sup> Therefore, this variable relates to legal franchise restrictions based on race, but even territories with high values of this variable are not necessarily democratic because they may lack free and fair elections. Appendix Table A.6 provides supporting regression analysis,<sup>91</sup> and Table A.8 provides summary statistics.

First, in the decades preceding World War II, Europeans pacified their African territories and established colonial rule. All territories exhibited a low percentage of the population with the legal franchise. In fact, this percentage tended to be higher in the settler colonies because they experienced legislative elections earlier, with the franchise restricted almost exclusively to whites. Europeans elected representatives in Cape and Natal in South Africa, Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), and Algeria by the turn of the 20th century, and in Tunisia and South-West Africa (Namibia) shortly after World War I.

Second, important changes during and after World War II created a “wind of change” that yielded peaceful

<sup>90</sup>Coppedge 2018.

<sup>91</sup>Also see Paine 2018.

transitions to majority rule and independence in most of non-settler Africa<sup>92</sup>—but Africa’s settler colonies exhibited a divergent path from the rest of the continent. Although settler and non-settler territories each experienced increases in legalized suffrage in the decades following World War II, this process occurred more slowly in settler colonies. The gray shaded area highlights the 1955-to-1970 period and shows that non-settler colonies expanded the franchise more rapidly than settler colonies as decolonization proceeded in Britain’s and France’s non-settler colonies. In fact, South Africa’s Cape province initiated non-racial franchise rules in the 1850s, but these eroded over time and the national legislature revoked non-whites’ remaining suffrage rights in 1956.

Third, settler territories eventually caught up. Liberation wars in Portuguese Africa, British southern Africa, and (earlier) in French North Africa ended with Africans or Arabs gaining majority rule.

### **3.1.2 Evidence of White Resistance to Franchise Expansion**

Considerable evidence supports the key redistributive mechanism for Hypothesis 2 posited by class-based theories: the settler landed elite repressed the majority to perpetuate their dominance over the best land. Research by area specialists and historians of Africa supports that land inequality between Europeans and Africans was starkly higher in settler than non-settler colonies. “In many African colonies without settlers, the colonial authorities did not attempt to disrupt local tenure practices. Indirect rule was interpreted to call for, in some places, vesting local authorities with control over land.”<sup>93</sup> By contrast, almost every colony that experienced disruption to existing land tenure practices “saw exceptionally large amounts of land alienated during white rule for the benefit of white settlers.”<sup>94</sup> Table 3 summarizes starkly unequal land distribution patterns in four major settler colonies, compared to 0% European land alienation in most colonies.<sup>95</sup>

European settlers did not face major challenges to their political hegemony before 1945. However, post-World War II changes facilitated African mobilization, creating a threat from below.<sup>96</sup> The key economic difference between settler and non-settler colonies—considerable European alienation of land—created broad interests against decolonization in settler colonies. For farmers, relatively low technological barriers

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<sup>92</sup>Young 1994, 182-217 details changes during the decolonization period.

<sup>93</sup>Herbst 2000, 190.

<sup>94</sup>Herbst 2000, 189.

<sup>95</sup>See Hailey 1957, 687.

<sup>96</sup>Young 1994, 182-217.

**Table 3: European Settler Land Domination in Africa**

<b>Territory</b>	<b>Eu. settler % of population</b>	<b>Eu. settler % alienated land</b>	<b>Eu. settler % cultivable land</b>
South Africa	21%	87%	61%
Algeria	14%	34%	27%
Southern Rhodesia	8%	50%	58%
Kenya	1%	7%	25%

*Source:* Land data from Lutzelschwab 2013, Tables 5.1 and 5.2. Figures for Algeria exclude the Sahara.

ers to entry on many Europeans' farms would make it easy to replace Europeans with Africans.<sup>97</sup> European land control also created positive spillovers for non-agricultural whites via broader extractive mechanisms. The major settler colonies were founded upon preferential European access to land, and displacing Africans from their land created a cheap, mobile labor supply.<sup>98</sup> Consequently, politically influential European settlers responded with repression rather than with concessions to the African majority. South African and Southern Rhodesian whites elected extremist parties after World War II to combat rising African demands, and French settlers in Algeria rigged the 1948 legislative elections to prevent Arab representation. Overall, all six African colonies coded as settler colonies in Figure 3 experienced a major liberation war to gain independence—or, in the case of South Africa, to end European political dominance and gain majority rule—amid repression intended to prevent enfranchising Africans. This contrasted with the remainder of the continent, where franchise expansion and independence occurred mostly peacefully.

## **3.2 Post-Slavery British Caribbean**

### **3.2.1 Main Pattern: Reversals in Elected Representation**

Figure 5 demonstrates three distinct periods of elected representation in the British Caribbean between 1600 and 1950, highlighting a middle period in which most colonies disbanded their legislatures. This middle period is consistent with theoretical expectations that, faced with a threat from below, resistance to franchise expansion in colonies with sizable settler minorities should hinder representative institutions.

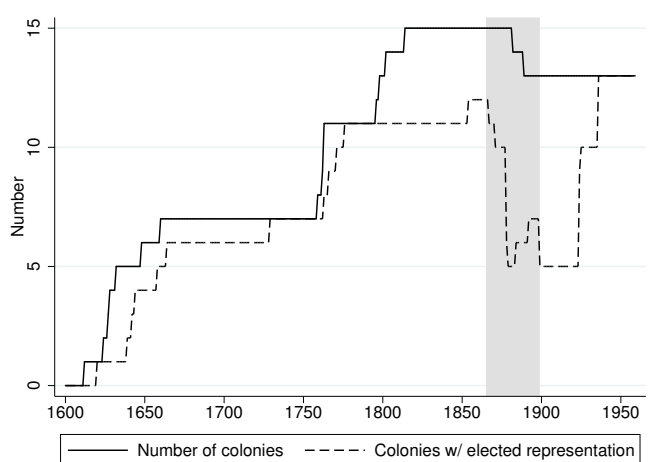
Unlike for Africa, there is no natural control group because British Caribbean colonies contained similarly sized European settler populations, although below I briefly discuss several divergent colonies. Figure 5 uses the same elected legislature data as in Figure 3, although Figure 5 differs in three ways. First, it contains only

<sup>97</sup>Kahler 1981, 391.

<sup>98</sup>Mosley, 1983, 13-6.

British Caribbean colonies.<sup>99</sup> Second, it lists the number rather than percentage of colonies with an elected legislature. Third, the legislature variable equals 1 if the colony has an elected legislature in a particular year and 0 otherwise, as opposed to whether or not the colony has *ever* had an elected legislature (as in Figure 3).

**Figure 5: British Caribbean Colonies with Elected Legislatures**



The first period, as the previous section describes, entailed British settlers creating elected legislatures shortly after colonial inception, shown by the close relationship between the solid and dashed lines prior to 1800. Several colonies acquired during the French revolutionary and Napoleonic wars failed to gain elected representation (see Appendix Section A.3). Second, a wave of legislature dissolutions occurred starting with Jamaica in 1865, which the gray shaded area highlights and on which this subsection focuses. By 1880, only Antigua, the Bahamas, Barbados, Bermuda, and Dominica retained any elected members in their legislatures. Furthermore, in the 1860s, Antigua and Dominica transitioned from the “old representative system” that conveyed wide legislative autonomy for settlers to a legislative council with a mix of elected and appointed members, and in 1898 both transitioned to fully nominated legislative councils. Third, as Appendix Section B.2 discusses, legislative representation again became prevalent in the region starting in the 1920s.

<sup>99</sup>Although no countries in this sample gained independence before 1950, the number of colonies dropped by two in the 1880s because Britain merged each of St. Kitts/Nevis and Trinidad/Tobago into a single colony.

### 3.2.2 Evidence of White Resistance to Franchise Expansion

Why did legislative reversals occur in the second half of the 19th century—reversing earlier contestation gains? Historical evidence closely matches the expectations of class-based theories, supporting Hypothesis 2. Most British Caribbean colonies produced sugar and, by the 19th century, featured a small landed settler elite ruling a vastly larger slave population. Among nine British sugar colonies with disaggregated population data around 1830, slaves ranged from six times the size of the white population in Barbados to more than 30 times in Grenada.<sup>100</sup> Sugar was either the principal or the only product in most British Caribbean colonies, and plantations provided the core social and economic units<sup>101</sup>—indicating extreme land inequality.

In the 19th century, British settlers faced two types of challenges to maintaining their political power, which they exercised through elected legislatures in most colonies. First, the latent threat of revolution from below by the slave majority became more acute in the 19th century. In addition to the successful Haitian revolution, “[s]lave rebellions significantly increased after 1815 on all the British islands. Slaves rebelled both in the major sugar colonies and on the smaller islands.”<sup>102</sup> A second challenge arose after decades of successful lobbying by white Caribbean planters to retain slavery finally failed in 1833,<sup>103</sup> when Britain outlawed slavery throughout its empire. Although this policy created the possibility of former slaves gaining political representation, European settlers reacted by increasing property right restrictions on voting while creating exceptions for whites that could vote under the old rules.<sup>104</sup> Table 4 summarizes available voter data in several colonies and shows that less than 2% of the population could vote in the 1850s even though slavery had ended more than a decade before. Overall, British settlers “had no intention of sharing their liberty with former slaves or of making island liberty less exclusive.”<sup>105</sup>

Apprehensive of mass enfranchisement by either peaceful or revolutionary means, settlers ultimately forfeited electoral representation in most colonies and acquiesced to direct British Crown rule. After slavery ended, plantation agriculture in the Caribbean became less profitable, which in turn decreased government

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<sup>100</sup>Green 1976, 13.

<sup>101</sup>Green 1976, 35.

<sup>102</sup>Rogozinski 2000, 161-163, 185.

<sup>103</sup>Greene 2010*b*, 74-75.

<sup>104</sup>Rogozinski 2000, 194.

<sup>105</sup>Greene 2010*a*, 15.

**Table 4: Population Share of Eligible Voters in Mid-19th Century**

Colony	Year	Voters	Population	Eligible voter population %
Jamaica	1863	1,457	441,300	0.33%
Grenada	1854	191	28,732	0.66%
Barbados	1857	1,350	135,939	0.99%
St. Vincent	1850s	273	22,239	1.23%
Tobago	1850s	135	9,026	1.50%

*Sources:* Rogoziński 2000, 194 provides data on number of voters. Barbados population measured in 1851 and Jamaica in 1861 from Rogoziński 2000, 188, Grenada in 1829 and Saint Vincent in 1825 from Rogoziński 2000, 120, and Tobago in 1775 from Wells 1975, 253.

revenues. Over time, an increasing share of white planters believed that an authoritarian government with a strong executive would increase private investment in the islands,<sup>106</sup> and prevent non-whites from gaining political power. In 1852, Britain’s Secretary of State for the Colonies warned that absent reforms, “they must anticipate being overwhelmed in the Assembly by representatives of the coloured and black population.”<sup>107</sup> The triggering event for moving to direct British rule occurred after a major revolt led by former slaves at Morant Bay in Jamaica in 1865. Although the government successfully repressed the rebellion, “the gravity of the crisis was vastly greater than anything experienced in Jamaica since emancipation.”<sup>108</sup> This revolt was interpreted by whites in starkly racial terms. Jamaica’s governor “declared that only a strong-minded government could preserve the island from further violence” in his speech that preceded a vote to disband the legislature.<sup>109</sup> Facing largely similar circumstances, most of the remaining British Caribbean followed this trajectory in the 1860s and 1870s, although in other cases “the process of alteration from Council and Assembly to single nominated Council was more gradual than it had been in Jamaica. First, perhaps, the Council and Assembly would be merged in one body, as they had been in Dominica in 1863; then the number of elected members would be reduced so as to leave a nominated majority; finally, the elected members would be dispensed with altogether, and the whole legislature would be nominated by the Crown.”<sup>110</sup>

The three British Caribbean colonies that retained the old representative system faced less dire circumstances than in Jamaica and most other sugar colonies. Neither Bermuda nor the Bahamas contained sugar plantations,<sup>111</sup> and Barbados was “the sugar colony in which the prosperity of the planters was not imperilled

<sup>106</sup>Green 1976, 361.

<sup>107</sup>Green 1976, 363.

<sup>108</sup>Green 1976, 390.

<sup>109</sup>Green 1976, 395.

<sup>110</sup>Wrong 1923, 77.

<sup>111</sup>Green 1976, 65.

and their political domination not challenged.”<sup>112</sup> Although the small number of cases that do not match the scope conditions of class-based theories disables performing statistical analysis, it is notable that the exceptions to the pattern of eliminating electoral representation correspond with theoretical expectations.

Settlers responded to mass threats throughout the Caribbean—fundamentally altering their representative system—more bluntly than in other settler colonies. In contrast to their British neighbors in North America, or later in South Africa and Rhodesia, the very small size of the white plantocracy created severe vulnerabilities for British Caribbean settlers,<sup>113</sup> yielding metropolitan rule as the desired solution to their fear from below. The possibility of creating British Crown rule was also historically contingent. For example, settler populations in Tanganyika/Tanzania, Northern Rhodesia/Zambia, and Kenya were influential but not large enough to follow the South African or Rhodesian path of ruling independently of Britain. After World War II, Britain had developed a firm commitment to promoting electoral representation inclusive of non-Europeans.

Despite 19th century legislative reversals, most British Caribbean countries gained independence peacefully in the 20th century and consolidated democracy after independence. Appendix Section B.2 provides additional discussion of the British Caribbean in the 20th century, showing that the non-white professional and working class propelled reforms that recreated electoral representation and, later, full suffrage. This was possible because the political and economic clout of the white planter elite had weakened considerably by the 20th century.

### 3.3 Post-Civil War U.S. South

Constituent colonies/regions within the neo-Britains generally featured large white majorities. The only exception is the U.S. South, where the large African American population engendered states with tenuous white majorities, or—in several states—white minorities, as Table 2 shows. The non-monotonic logic of Hypothesis 2 implies that when comparing U.S. states with each other, states with *smaller* white population shares should exhibit greater franchise restrictions because they are contrasted with states with overwhelming white majorities that faced no threat to their dominance.<sup>114</sup> Membership in a large federal political

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<sup>112</sup>Green 1976, 353-4.

<sup>113</sup>Greene 2010*b*, 70.

<sup>114</sup>By contrast, within Africa, colonies with *higher* white population shares should exhibit greater franchise restrictions because they are contrasted with colonies with essentially no European population.

unit and sizable white populations—compared to those in the British Caribbean, for example—implied that even states in the U.S. South faced a low threat of revolution from below. However, after the Civil War in the 1860s, these states’ demographic conditions created the threat of ex-slaves and poor whites voting in large enough numbers to eliminate Democrats’ control of the South. Southern white elites also feared economic reforms, such as expanding land ownership rights for blacks. These vulnerabilities created conditions that the theory anticipates should engender repression to undermine franchise expansion, which empirical evidence supports.

### **3.3.1 Main Pattern: Voting Restrictions After Reconstruction**

Figure 6 summarizes voter restrictions between 1850 and 1975 among U.S. states. It highlights a middle period in which the U.S. South diverged from the rest of the country which, as in the previous two cases, supports Hypothesis 2. The figure distinguishes 11 states in the U.S. South in which white population share was less 80% from 19 states in the North and Midwest with higher white population shares. Categorizing U.S. states based on racial composition enables comparison with the other world regions considered here, although it is identical to how some of the Americanist literature categorizes the U.S. South.<sup>115</sup> The sample only contains states admitted to the Union prior to 1850, creating a constant basket of states. In each year, a state can have up to four restrictions on voter eligibility, disaggregated by economic requirements, whites-only voting, poll taxes, and literacy requirements.<sup>116</sup> Therefore, the dependent variable for the figure ranges between 0 and 4, and the lines represent averages among the two groups of states.

The earliest prevalent form of voter requirements (besides those based on gender) were property-holding and related economic requirements, although few states retained these by 1850. Between 1850 and the beginning of Reconstruction in the late 1860s, the predominant form of voter restrictions was by race, which the 15th Amendment (adopted in 1870) disallowed. However, starting in 1890 when the federal government signaled it would not interfere with states’ voting practices, poll taxes and literacy requirements became prevalent among southern states prior to the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (the gray shaded area in Figure 6). These actions created a large gap in the average number of voter restrictions between southern U.S. states and the rest

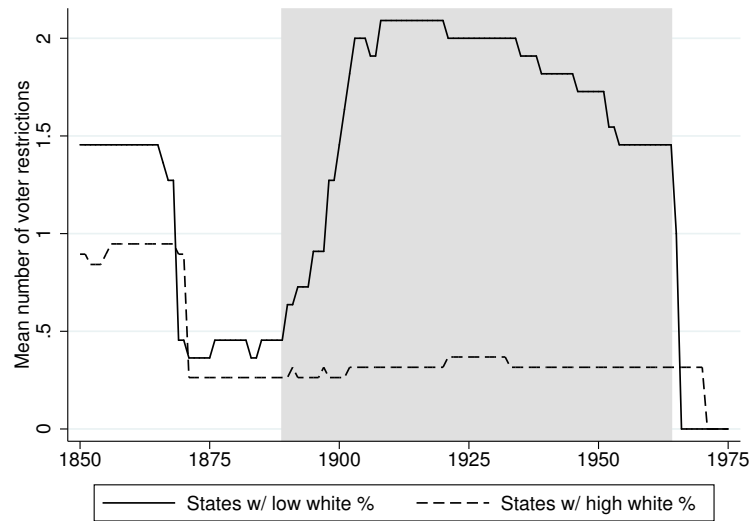
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<sup>115</sup>Key 1949, 10.

<sup>116</sup>These are the most theoretically relevant voter restrictions for testing the proposed theory. Other common restrictions during the period studied include gender, residency, and citizenship.



**Figure 6: Voter Restrictions in U.S. States**



*Notes:* Annual number of voter restrictions by state, averaged between the two groups of states. Coded by author using data from Rusk 2001, 13-36.

of the country—supporting Hypothesis 2—although several northern states featured literacy requirements until 1970 (Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York).

### 3.3.2 Evidence of White Resistance to Franchise Expansion

Southern U.S. states differed on average from those in the Middle Atlantic and New England in their factor endowments. Northern states' factor endowments facilitated producing crops with limited scale economies, such as grains and hays, that yielded relative equality. By contrast, southern states specialized in crops such as tobacco, rice, and cotton that exhibited scale economies and engendered large slave plantations, although “even here, the size of the slave plantations, as well as the degree of inequality in these colonies, was quite modest by the standards of Brazil or the sugar islands.”<sup>117</sup> Political leaders in southern states campaigned vigorously for slavery to continue during the first half of the 19th century, eventually culminating in civil war in the 1860s, and the 11 states highlighted in Figure 6 perfectly correspond with the original states that seceded to form the Confederacy.

Following Union victory in 1865, slave emancipation and constitutional amendments to grant political rights generated high rates of black participation and rising Republican vote share in elections during and imme-

<sup>117</sup>Engerman and Sokoloff 2011, 52.

diately after the Reconstruction era.<sup>118</sup> These political changes challenged Democratic dominance in the South and complicated planters' ability to maintain a regular supply of reliable labor for cultivating cash crops,<sup>119</sup> similar to the concerns described above for African settler colonies. V. O. Key stresses the importance of African Americans' political position for explaining southern politics, and argues that whites' fear of blacks' position was particularly acute in "black belt" counties with black majorities—especially because these areas coincided with the largest white landowning elites with the greatest needs for black labor.<sup>120</sup>

The end of Reconstruction in 1876, Republicans' electoral shift away from the South, and strategic usage of repression and other forms of violence created an opportunity for white landlord elites to reverse electoral gains for non-whites—in particular after the "Force Bill" failed in Congress in 1890, which would have strengthened federal oversight of states' election procedures.<sup>121</sup> Figure 6 highlights the slew of voter restrictions that arose at the turn of the century in southern states. Although these restrictions did not explicitly target voters on racial criteria—made illegal by the 15th Amendment—these laws primarily sought to disenfranchise blacks. They succeeded. Estimated black turnout plummeted by an average of 62% in the first election following the passage of these laws across 10 southern states,<sup>122</sup> and effectively consolidated white "enclave rule" in the South for more than a half-century.<sup>123</sup>

Evidence from the U.S. South also supports the other component of Hypothesis 2: actions to prevent franchise extension can undermine contestation institutions. "[E]nclaves depended upon restrictions on free and fair political contestation . . . party-state institutions helped render opposition parties nearly unthinkable. Democrats controlled all election laws and election administration, and they took care to keep barriers to entry of potential political opponents prohibitively high. . . . In traditionally Republican upland areas of North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia, Democrats used other techniques to defeat opponents, such as ballot-stuffing, ballot-stealing, and mysterious poll closings. As in other electoral authoritarian polities, southern

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<sup>118</sup>Kousser 1974, 11-44.

<sup>119</sup>Mickey 2015, 36-37, 45.

<sup>120</sup>Key 1949, 5. Mickey 2015, 46 also uses the explicit language of large landowners as the elites, consistent with the posited theoretical mechanisms.

<sup>121</sup>Mickey 2015, 39, 41-2, 57.

<sup>122</sup>Kousser 1974, 241.

<sup>123</sup>Mickey 2015, 43-5.

primary and general elections were neither free nor fair.”<sup>124</sup> Nor did voter restrictions disenfranchise only blacks. Similar to the Caribbean colonies but in less extreme fashion, the percentage of *white* voters that could participate also diminished drastically. White voter turnout declined by an estimated average of 26% in the first post-restriction election.<sup>125</sup> In Alabama, “[b]ecause white population outstripped black, by 1941 more poor whites than blacks had been disfranchised by the provisions of the 1901 Alabama Constitution, primarily by the cumulative poll tax: 600,000 whites to 520,000 blacks.”<sup>126</sup>

## 4 Discussion

This article examines the origins and evolution of political institutions during colonial rule, specifically engaging with widely debated European settler legacies from a new perspective by extending existing theories and compiling new data. Statistical evidence shows that early elected representative institutions are limited to British settler colonies, which is also consistent with qualitative evidence that British settlers demanded (and received) electoral representation in conjunction with their proclaimed natural rights as Englishmen. However, even in cases with early electoral representation, data on various franchise and contestation measures show that settler colonies in Africa and the British Caribbean, and states the U.S. South, subsequently suffered reversals either absolutely or relative to comparable cases. Qualitative evidence demonstrates a common pattern across the settler cases: landed European settler elites that perceived threats to their political dominance from non-whites took vigorous actions to prevent non-whites from exerting political influence. This also highlights the core democratic contradiction in European settler colonies: even where they exhib-

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<sup>124</sup>Mickey 2015, 56.

<sup>125</sup>Kousser 1974, 241.

<sup>126</sup>Feldman 2004, 136. Suryanarayan and White 2019 provide corroborating evidence by examining a related outcome, fiscal capacity. They show that per capita taxation decreased after Reconstruction by a larger amount in areas of the South with more ex-slaves, consistent with elites’ incentives to diminish tax capacity to prevent redistribution. Additional research demonstrates similar patterns in other periods. During colonialism, Nikolova 2017 provides evidence that southern U.S. colonies began imposing greater voting restrictions than northern states only after beginning to import slaves. More recently, although the Voter Rights Act of 1965 succeeded in enfranchising millions of African Americans, Komisarchik 2018 provides evidence that southern whites responded by restricting the number offices chosen by election in counties with politically active black populations.

ited favorable conditions for early representative institutions, the same actors that created these institutions also harbored strong incentives to retain power for whites only.

Although the article focuses primarily on colonial-era outcomes, the findings carry implications for studying post-colonial legacies. Table 5 lists every colony in the present sample with a European population share of at least 5% at any point during colonial rule, disaggregated by British and non-British settler colonies. Two of the columns provide information for the two hypotheses: whether or not the colony had elected representation in 1918, which relates to early elected representation;<sup>127</sup> and, conditional on having elected representation at any point before 1919, whether the colony exhibited large-scale settler resistance to franchise expansion during colonial rule by disbanding its legislature or by fighting a major war to try to prevent liberation of non-whites. It also summarizes the country's democracy score in its first decade of independence, with "YES" implying democracy in all 10 years, "NO" capturing 0 years, and "MIXED" in between.<sup>128</sup>

Only seven of the 34 settler countries exhibit (1) early representation, (2) no large-scale settler resistance to franchise expansion during colonial rule, and (3) early post-colonial democracy: the four neo-Britains and three British islands.<sup>129</sup> Two additional cases exhibit mixed evidence by having elected representation in 1918 and post-colonial democracy, but also experienced large-scale settler resistance to franchise expansion: Jamaica and South Africa. The other settler colonies lacked elected representation in 1918 and/or stable democratic rule in the first decade of independence. Consistent with Hypothesis 1, Table 5 rejects positive settler legacies on democracy outside the British empire, with the partial exception of Dutch Suriname.

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<sup>127</sup>Appendix Table A.3 provides evidence using this proxy for early representation. This early date for contestation, as opposed to 1945 used in Table 1, better corresponds empirically with cases in which European settlers were primarily responsible for generating elected representation. By contrast, in most colonies that gained elected representation after World War I, European settlers did not provide the impetus for institutional change. Consider, for example, evidence from Appendix Section B.2 that non-whites were primarily responsible for recreating elected legislative councils in much of the British Caribbean in the 1920s.

<sup>128</sup>This column uses Boix et al.'s 2013 binary democracy variable, which requires high contestation and high participation. This column is identical when instead using Miller's 2015 contestation data. Incorporating post-independence information explains why Table 5 only includes colonies that have gained independence.

<sup>129</sup>However, as discussed, the U.S. South has a mixed post-independence democratic record.

**Table 5: Colonial European Settlers and Democratic Legacies**

Country	Independence year	Elected representation in 1918? (H1)	Large-scale settler resistance to franchise expansion? (H2)	Democratic in first decade?
<i>British colonies with sizable European population</i>				
Neo-Britains*	Various	YES	NO	YES
Jamaica	1962	YES	YES	YES
Trinidad and Tobago	1962	NO <sup>†</sup>	YES	YES
Barbados	1966	YES	NO	YES
Mauritius	1968	YES	NO	YES
Bahamas	1973	YES	NO	YES
Grenada	1974	NO <sup>†</sup>	YES	MIXED
Dominica	1978	NO <sup>†</sup>	YES	YES
St. Lucia	1979	NO	-	YES
St. Vincent and G.	1979	NO <sup>†</sup>	YES	YES
Zimbabwe**	1967/1980	YES	YES	NO
Antigua and Barbuda	1981	NO <sup>†</sup>	YES	NO
Belize	1981	NO <sup>†</sup>	YES	YES
St. Kitts and Nevis	1983	NO <sup>†</sup>	YES	YES
South Africa**	1910/1994	YES	YES	YES
<i>Non-British colonies with sizable European population</i>				
Iberian America*	Various	NO	-	NO
Haiti	1804	NO	-	NO
Tunisia	1956	NO	-	NO
Algeria	1962	YES	YES	NO
Angola	1975	NO	-	NO
Cape Verde	1975	NO	-	NO
Sao Tome and Principe	1975	NO	-	NO
Suriname	1975	YES	NO	MIXED
Seychelles	1976	NO	-	NO
Namibia	1990	NO	-	NO

\*Appendix Table A.1 lists every colony/country within these groups.

\*\* South Africa gained independence in 1910 but did not gain African majority rule until 1994. Rhodesia declared independence in 1965 but did not gain internationally recognized independence until 1980.

<sup>†</sup>Indicates that European settlers created an elected legislature early in the colonial era, transitioned to an all-appointed legislative council in the 19th century, and regained elected representation after World War I primarily via demands by non-European settlers.

Consistent with Hypothesis 2, 11 of 19 settler colonies that experienced elective representation at any point prior to World War I also exhibited large-scale settler resistance to franchise expansion, and four of the eight exceptions (the neo-Britains) largely do not meet the scope conditions of Hypothesis 2 because of their sizable European majorities.

The analysis carries implications for several important literatures and also points toward innovative areas for future research. Most directly, the new focus on colonial-era institutional origins and evolution challenges arguments that imply favorable legacies for European settlers and democratic institutions. Regarding the broader colonialism literature, the analysis also contrasts with the recent shift toward studying specific colonial actors and de-emphasizing the importance of colonizer identity. The present findings demonstrate

that these two are not mutually exclusive and should be studied jointly. Yet older research that emphasizes mostly beneficial British colonialism is also incomplete because it overlooks the resistance that British settlers exhibited toward franchise expansion—despite earlier representative innovations. Furthermore, given the present analysis of colonial institutions, additional statistical tests are needed to assess *post*-colonial democratic legacies of European settlers.

The theoretical and empirical analysis also highlight important considerations for the broader democracy literature. Although existing theories anticipate resistance to democratization in the presence of redistributive threats,<sup>130</sup> much less theoretical work analyzes how those repressive actions can cause backsliding in electoral competition—highlighting the relevance of disaggregating democratic contestation and participation while also considering their interaction. Furthermore, contrary to Dahl’s argument about democratic sequencing,<sup>131</sup> establishing full democracy faces considerable impediments even after creating contestation institutions—especially in the colonial context. The same reasons that a polity gains early limited representation may also undermine prospects for subsequent democratization, as with British settlers that inherited a representative tradition but whose large landownings caused them to repress the masses. These incentives highlight a fundamental democratic contradiction in colonies that otherwise appeared to exhibit favorable conditions for democracy.

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<sup>130</sup>Boix 2003; Acemoglu and Robinson 2006.

<sup>131</sup>Dahl 1971.

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# Online Appendix for “Democratic Contradictions in European Settler Colonies”

## A Supporting Information for Institutional Origins Section

### A.1 Additional Data Information

*Sample for Table 1.* Owolabi’s (2015) dataset contains almost every colony under Western European rule in 1945 that now belongs to the United Nations (I added Bhutan, Eritrea, and Namibia), plus several present-day colonial dependencies. The sample for Table 1 contains all his units except seven present-day dependencies (all of which contain very small populations) that lack European population data in both Owolabi’s (2015) and Easterly and Levine’s (2016) datasets. The Table 1 sample also includes every former Western European colony that gained independence prior to 1945.

Overall, colonial political units—especially when measured within several decades of respective countries’ independence year—map closely to post-colonial political units,<sup>132</sup> which justifies using Owolabi’s (2015) sample of (mainly) post-colonial units as the basis for the present sample. However, I use colonial-specific units for several cases in which colonial units differed from post-colonial units. The following post-colonial countries each merged together multiple territories that existed as distinct colonial units for lengthy time periods: United States, Canada, Australia, South Africa, Trinidad and Tobago, and St. Kitts and Nevis. It is particularly important to disaggregate these countries—each of which contains sizable British settler populations—because their constituent colonies varied in their first year of elected representation. Additionally, the sample contains four distinct mainland Spanish American colonies (New Granada, New Spain, Peru, Rio de la Plata) because the 16 modern-day countries did not correspond to colonial territorial units. The resulting sample contains 144 colonies, including nine present-day dependencies.<sup>133</sup>

*European settlers.* The main European settlers variable in Tables 1 and A.6 indicates whether a territory had a European population share of at least 5% at any point while under colonial occupation. The data draw primarily from Easterly and Levine’s (2016) dataset, who compiled information on colonial European populations from a variety of primary and secondary sources, and also from Owolabi (2015) for some forced settlement colonies for which Easterly and Levine are missing data. I added data points using additional secondary sources for many colonies, including the neo-Britains because Easterly and Levine (2016) code European population at the country level.

- For the United States, Carter (2006) provide pre- and post-independence decennial census data that disaggregates by race. Unfortunately, these estimates do not include the Native American population, and other sources consulted (Thornton, 1987) do not provide a basis for state-by-state estimates over time (for example, historians disagree whether in 1492 the total number of Native Americans in the present-day U.S. was closer to 1 million or 5 million). Therefore, the U.S. estimates somewhat overestimate white percentage of the population, but this percentage (at least in the southern states) is still lower than that in the other neo-British colonies. Furthermore, the data capture the most theoretically

<sup>132</sup> The overlap between colonial and post-colonial units is a surprising aspect of the post-colonial international system. Rulers of ex-colonies have largely accepted European-drawn boundaries despite often alleging their arbitrariness. Even leaders espousing pan-regional aims, such as pan-Africanism or Pan-Arabism, have largely accepted colonial-determined boundaries (Herbst, 2000). The failed United Arab Republic (Egypt and Syria merged from 1958-1961) exemplifies the political difficulties of changing the colonial boundaries.

<sup>133</sup> Table 1 only contains 141 colonies because three (Egypt, Israel, Tonga) had established elected representation before colonial rule began, and the electoral representation onset variable is set to missing in all years after the first election year.

relevant non-white group—African Americans—for assessing the institutional evolution hypothesis because only this group posed a potential threat to white political dominance.

- Statistics Canada (2015) provides census information for Canada in 1871 that disaggregates by province and by First Nation population, and these European population share estimates are used for the entire period for the Canadian provinces.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics (2014) provides census data for Australia during the 19th century disaggregated by state and by country of origin—from which I calculated the white percentage of the non-aboriginal population—but the censuses did not count aboriginals. I incorporated Jones’s (1970) state-disaggregated estimates for aboriginal population in 1788 and 1901, assuming a linear trend to generate annual aboriginal population estimates by state.
- Similar to the U.S., uncertain estimates of the African population in different parts of South Africa disabled computing a separate European population share variable for the four South African colonies (see McEvedy and Jones 1978), and therefore I use the same value for each. The resulting estimate is consistent with the scholarly consensus that although the European population in these colonies was large by African standards, Europeans were still a relatively small minority.
- Easterly and Levine’s (2016) source document enables computing separate estimates for the colony of St. Kitts and the colony of Nevis, and for the colony of Trinidad and the colony of Tobago.
- Data from New Zealand comes from the census (Stats NZ, N.d.).
- Libya data comes from its *Encyclopaedia Britannica* entry.
- Lawrence (2010) provides data for French colonies between 1946 and 1950.
- Rogoziński (2000, 78, 165, 212) provides colonial-era data for Martinique and Guadeloupe.
- Easterly and Levine (2016) do not have data on Portuguese islands Cape Verde and Sao Tome and Principe prior to the mid-20th century. Putterman and Weil’s (2010) descendency data shows that 41% of Cape Verde’s residents lived in Portugal in 1500. This high figure is the basis for coding Cape Verde and Sao Tome and Principe as settler colonies for Table 1 (Putterman and Weil 2010 do not have data for Sao Tome and Principe).

The continuous European population share variable in Tables 1 is computed as follows. Easterly and Levine (2016) provide data points on European population share at various points in time in a colony’s history, as does the additional data described above. For every colony not included in Easterly and Levine’s dataset or that lacks a data point in the 20th century while still colonized, I added a data point from Owolabi (2015). I also added earlier data for Guadeloupe and Martinique using the sources described above. These data points served as the anchors for imputing a value for other years, which constitute an average between the last data point and the next data point weighted by the temporal distance from each point. For example, if a colony has data on European population share in 1850 and 1860 and for no years in between, then the imputed data point for 1857 equals 70% of the value for 1860 plus 30% of the value for 1850. In each colony’s first year of colonial rule, its European settler percentage is set to the year with the first data point.

The continuous European population share variable in Table A.6 differs because I analyze a concentrated time period. Unlike for Table 1, it is possible to use a small set of sources that cover every territory in the Africa decolonization sample. This measure is time-invariant and is based on one or multiple data points for each territory between 1945 and 1960, drawing from three sources that estimate Western European settlers as a percentage of the population. Lawrence (2010) provides a data point for each French colony between 1946 and 1950, Mosley (1983) for southern British colonies and several others in 1960, and United Nations

(1965) for various colonies for up to three years ranging from 1946 to 1961. The latter two sources were identified using the replication data for Easterly and Levine (2016).

***Colonizer identity and metropolitan constraints on the executive.*** For territories colonized by multiple European powers at different times, only the final colonizer is coded (the only partial exceptions are Somalia and Libya, which are coded as Italian colonies despite gaining independence as UN Mandates administered by Britain after Italy lost World War II). Consequently, the colonial onset year corresponds with colonization by the last-colonizing power, as opposed to the first year of colonization by any Western European power. For example, Tanzania is coded as colonized in 1919 by Britain, ignoring the earlier period of German colonization. Onset year is coded using Olsson (2009) and Encyclopaedia Britannica (which is also Olsson's 2009 source). For the few countries that combined multiple colonies with different colonizers, I use the colonizer for the larger territory. For example, Somalia is coded as an Italian colony despite combining Italian Somaliland and British Somaliland.

***Covariates.*** Many examine conditions that affected prospects for European settlement, or alternative colonial influences that affected democracy. The even-numbered specifications in Table 1 control for four factors. Acemoglu, Johnson and Robinson (2002) argue that Europeans faced difficulties settling en masse in territories with higher population density, and Hariri (2012, 2015) argues that territories with a longer history of statehood were better able to resist European encroachment. The regressions use their variables, logged population density in 1500 and state antiquity in 1500, respectively. I use the same data sources as the authors, although I modified the data for the more comprehensive sample in Table 1. Population density comes from McEvedy and Jones (1978), who provide population estimates and area in square kilometers that cover every territory in the present sample in 1500 except Maldives, which is computed by averaging Seychelles and Sri Lanka. I consulted Encyclopaedia Britannica (2017) for several territories with limited information in McEvedy and Jones (1978). The state antiquity index comes from the updated version of Bockstette, Chanda and Putterman's (2002) dataset, who code a territory's combined years with government above local level between 0 CE and 1500 (unit of analysis is modern countries). I coded this variable for numerous small islands and a handful of other territories missing data, using Bockstette et al.'s same data source (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2017) and using their averaging procedure with a 5% discount factor for each 50-year interval.

Regarding alternative colonial explanations for democratization, Owolabi (2015) codes an indicator variable for colonies in which "descendants of non-indigenous African slaves and/or Asian indentured laborers make up at least 60 percent of the postcolonial population." This also relates to Engerman and Sokoloff's (2011) argument that land endowments favorable for plantation-type agriculture generated large slave populations and high inequality. I coded this variable for every pre-1945 independence country—not included in Owolabi's (2015) dataset—which additionally yielded Cuba, Dominican Republic, and Haiti as forced settlement colonies. Woodberry (2012) provides data on the number of Protestant missionaries per 10,000 people in each territory in 1923. Although this variable has broad coverage, it is missing for the neo-Britains and for the nine modern-day dependencies in the sample. Using Owolabi's (2015) source data on Protestant population share in 1900 (Barrett, 1982)—which covers every territory in the present sample—I imputed a value for Woodberry's (2012) measure for every territory with missing data using the following procedure: regressing Protestant missionaries in 1923 on Protestant population share in 1900, and recording the predicted value. With these alterations, none of the covariates are missing data for any territory. However, since every variable is measured at the national level, for subnational units such as U.S. states, I use the country value.

**Table A.1: Sample and Main Variables for Table 1**

Colony (Post-colonial country)	Final W.Eu. colonizer	>5% Eu. pop.?	Year colonized by final W.Eu. colonizer	First colonial year w/ elected rep.*	Year independent from W.Eu.
Cape Verde	Portugal	YES	1462	1973	1975
Dominican Republic	Spain	YES	1492	-	1821
Mozambique	Portugal	NO	1505	1956	1975
Cuba	Spain	YES	1511	-	1898
New Spain (Mexico)	Spain	YES	1521	-	1824
Sao Tome and Principe	Portugal	YES	1522	1973	1975
New Granada (Colombia)	Spain	YES	1525	-	1819
Peru	Spain	YES	1531	-	1821
Brazil	Portugal	YES	1533	-	1822
Rio de la Plata (Argentina)	Spain	YES	1536	-	1816
Angola	Portugal	YES	1576	1956	1975
Virginia (United States)	Britain	YES	1607	1619	1783
Bermuda (Britain)	Britain	YES	1612	1620	-
Indonesia	Netherlands	NO	1619	1917	1949
Massachusetts (United States)	Britain	YES	1620	1634	1783
St. Kitts (St. Kitts and Nevis)	Britain	YES	1624	1642	1983
Barbados	Britain	YES	1627	1639	1966
Nevis (St. Kitts and Nevis)	Britain	YES	1628	1658	1983
Antigua and Barbuda	Britain	YES	1632	1644	1981
Maryland (United States)	Britain	YES	1634	1638	1783
Netherlands Antilles (Netherlands)	Netherlands	YES	1634	1936	-
Guadeloupe (France)	France	YES	1635	1854	-
Martinique (France)	France	YES	1635	1854	-
Connecticut (United States)	Britain	YES	1636	1637	1783
Rhode Island (United States)	Britain	YES	1637	1647	1783
Senegal	France	NO	1638	1879	1960
French Guiana (France)	France	YES	1643	1878	-
Bahamas	Britain	YES	1648	1729	1973
Reunion (France)	France	NO	1650	1854	-
Jamaica	Britain	YES	1660	1664	1962
North Carolina (United States)	Britain	YES	1663	1665	1783
New Hampshire (United States)	Britain	YES	1663	1680	1783
New Jersey (United States)	Britain	YES	1664	1668	1783
Delaware (United States)	Britain	YES	1664	1704	1783
New York (United States)	Britain	YES	1664	1683	1783
Haiti	France	YES	1665	-	1804
Suriname	Netherlands	NO	1667	1866	1975
South Carolina (United States)	Britain	YES	1670	1671	1783
Pennsylvania (United States)	Britain	YES	1682	1682	1783
Nova Scotia (Canada)	Britain	YES	1713	1758	1867
Georgia (United States)	Britain	YES	1733	1751	1783
India	Britain	NO	1750	1910	1947
Dominica	Britain	YES	1759	1771	1978
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	Britain	YES	1762	1776	1979
New Brunswick (Canada)	Britain	YES	1762	1785	1867
Tobago (Trinidad and Tobago)	Britain	YES	1763	1763	1962
Grenada	Britain	YES	1763	1766	1974
Equatorial Guinea	Spain	NO	1778	1968	1968
Ontario (Canada)	Britain	YES	1784	1791	1867
Quebec (Canada)	Britain	YES	1784	1791	1867
Malaysia	Britain	NO	1786	1955	1957
New South Wales (Australia)	Britain	YES	1788	1842	1901
Guyana	Britain	NO	1796	1892	1966
Belize	Britain	YES	1798	1854	1981
Sri Lanka	Britain	NO	1802	1910	1948
Trinidad (Trinidad and Tobago)	Britain	YES	1802	1925	1962
Tasmania (Australia)	Britain	YES	1803	1850	1901
Cape (South Africa)	Britain	YES	1806	1853	1910
Sierra Leone	Britain	NO	1808	1924	1961
Seychelles	Britain	YES	1814	1948	1976
St. Lucia	Britain	YES	1814	1924	1979
Mauritius	Britain	YES	1814	1886	1968
Gambia	Britain	NO	1816	1947	1965
Singapore	Britain	NO	1819	1948	1963
Queensland (Australia)	Britain	YES	1823	1859	1901
Natal (South Africa)	Britain	YES	1824	1856	1910



**Table A.1, continued**

<b>Colony (Post-colonial country)</b>	<b>Final W.Eu. colonizer</b>	<b>&gt;5% Eu. pop.?</b>	<b>Year colonized by final W.Eu. colonizer</b>	<b>First colonial year w/ elected rep.*</b>	<b>Year independent from W.Eu.</b>
Western Australia (Australia)	Britain	YES	1826	1867	1901
Algeria	France	YES	1830	1898	1962
Cote d'Ivoire	France	NO	1830	1925	1960
Victoria (Australia)	Britain	YES	1834	1850	1901
South Australia (Australia)	Britain	YES	1836	1850	1901
New Zealand	Britain	YES	1840	1854	1907
Gabon	France	NO	1841	1937	1960
Hong Kong (China)	Britain	NO	1842	1985	1997
French Polynesia (France)	France	NO	1842	1946	-
Comoros	France	NO	1843	1947	1975
Nigeria	Britain	NO	1851	1923	1960
Vietnam	France	NO	1859	1880	1945
Bahrain	Britain	NO	1861	-	1971
Djibouti	France	NO	1862	1946	1977
Cambodia	France	NO	1863	1947	1964
Benin	France	NO	1863	1925	1960
Lesotho	Britain	NO	1868	1960	1966
Fiji	Britain	NO	1874	1905	1970
Ghana	Britain	NO	1874	1925	1947
Guinea-Bissau	Portugal	NO	1879	1973	1974
Congo	France	NO	1880	1937	1960
Tunisia	France	YES	1881	1922	1956
Guinea	France	NO	1881	1925	1958
Egypt	Britain	NO	1882	1866	1922
Solomon Islands	Britain	NO	1885	1964	1978
Congo, Democratic Republic	Belgium	NO	1885	1960	1960
Botswana	Britain	NO	1885	1920	1966
Myanmar	Britain	NO	1886	1923	1948
Maldives	Britain	NO	1887	1954	1965
Macau (China)	Portugal	NO	1887	1973	1999
Somalia	Italy	NO	1888	1956	1960
Brunei	Britain	NO	1888	1965	1984
Eritrea	Italy	NO	1890	1952	1950
Zambia	Britain	NO	1890	1924	1964
Uganda	Britain	NO	1890	1958	1962
Zimbabwe	Britain	YES	1890	1899	1980
Malawi	Britain	NO	1891	1955	1964
Kiribati	Britain	NO	1892	1967	1979
United Arab Emirates	Britain	NO	1892	-	1971
Tuvalu	Britain	NO	1892	1967	1978
Mali	France	NO	1893	1925	1960
Laos	France	NO	1893	1947	1949
Madagascar	France	NO	1895	1946	1960
Kenya	Britain	NO	1895	1920	1963
Burkina Faso	France	NO	1895	1948	1960
Guam (United States)	United States	NO	1898	1968	-
Philippines	United States	NO	1898	1907	1946
Chad	France	NO	1898	1937	1960
Sudan	Britain	NO	1898	1948	1956
Central African Republic	France	NO	1899	1937	1960
Orange (South Africa)	Britain	YES	1900	1907	1910
Tonga	Britain	NO	1900	1875	1970
Transvaal (South Africa)	Britain	YES	1902	1906	1910
Swaziland	Britain	NO	1903	1921	1968
Mauritania	France	NO	1903	1946	1960
Vanuatu	France	NO	1906	1957	1980
Papua New Guinea	Australia	NO	1906	1951	1975
Bhutan	Britain	NO	1910	-	1947
Morocco	France	NO	1912	-	1956
Libya	Italy	NO	1912	-	1951
Samoa	New Zealand	NO	1914	-	1962
East Timor	Portugal	NO	1914	1973	1975
Kuwait	Britain	NO	1914	-	1961
Qatar	Britain	NO	1916	-	1971

**Table A.1, continued**

Colony (Post-colonial country)	Final W.Eu. colonizer	>5% Eu. pop.?	Year colonized by final W.Eu. colonizer	First colonial year w/ elected rep.*	Year independent from W.Eu.
U.S. Virgin Islands (United States)	United States	YES	1917	1936	-
Lebanon	France	NO	1918	1922	1946
Togo	France	NO	1919	1946	1960
Burundi	Belgium	NO	1919	1953	1962
Cameroon	France	NO	1919	1946	1960
Tanzania	Britain	NO	1919	1958	1960
Rwanda	Belgium	NO	1919	1953	1962
Namibia	South Africa	YES	1919	1926	1990
Nauru	Australia	NO	1920	1951	1968
Jordan	Britain	NO	1920	1929	1946
Iraq	Britain	NO	1920	1923	1932
Niger	France	NO	1922	1946	1960
Syria	France	NO	1922	1928	1946
Israel	Britain	YES	1923	1920	1948

\* A separate coding appendix provides extensive details on the coding and sources for colonial elections.

## A.2 Supporting Information and Robustness Checks for Table 1

**Table A.2: Summary Statistics for Table 1**

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Colony-years
Onset of elected representation	0.008	0.087	10,538
Settler colony (5% threshold)	0.489	0.5	10,538
ln(Colonial European pop. %)	-4.682	2.398	10,538
British colony	0.318	0.466	10,538
Metro. exec. constraints	0.579	0.494	10,538
Pre-1850 colonization	0.752	0.432	10,538
ln(Pop. density in 1500)	2.522	4.284	10,538
State antiquity index in 1500	0.15	0.253	10,538
Forced settlement colony	0.334	0.472	10,538
Protestant missionaries in 1923	1.081	1.669	10,538

**Table A.3: Restricting Table 1 Sample to Pre-1919**

	DV: Onset of elected representation					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Settler colony (5% threshold)	-1.440** (0.713)	-0.968 (0.782)	-0.475 (1.138)	-0.246 (1.282)		
British colony	0.507 (0.973)	-0.0183 (0.933)			6.232*** (1.360)	6.975*** (1.328)
Settler*British colony	4.903*** (0.940)	5.268*** (1.006)				
Metro. exec. constraints			0.953 (1.026)	0.888 (1.151)		
Settler*Metro. exec. constraints			2.619** (1.263)	2.792** (1.385)		
ln(Colonial European pop. %)					-0.159 (0.151)	-0.131 (0.155)
ln(Eu. pop. %)*British colony					0.862*** (0.198)	1.088*** (0.222)
Pre-1850 colonization	-1.106*** (0.367)	-1.268*** (0.350)	0.0941 (0.537)	-0.171 (0.499)	-1.164* (0.609)	-1.590** (0.661)
ln(Pop. density in 1500)		0.0772** (0.0378)		0.0490* (0.0260)		0.0998*** (0.0387)
State antiquity index in 1500		0.256 (0.883)		-0.439 (0.600)		0.676 (0.932)
Forced settlement colony		-0.686* (0.354)		-0.992** (0.389)		0.353 (0.312)
Protestant missionaries in 1923		0.145 (0.0947)		0.196** (0.0824)		-0.0917 (0.107)
Colony-years	8,946	8,946	8,946	8,946	8,946	8,946
Time controls?	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
	Marginal effect estimates					
Settler colony   British rule	0.0632*** (0.0224)	0.0698*** (0.0206)				
Settler colony   High metro. exec. const.			0.0165*** (0.00540)	0.0182*** (0.00569)		
ln(Eu. pop. %)   British rule					0.00959** (0.00406)	0.0119*** (0.00446)
Settler colony   Non-British rule	-0.00100* (0.000591)	-0.000652 (0.000493)				
Settler colony   Low metro. exec. const.			-0.000327 (0.000853)	-0.000142 (0.000770)		
ln(Eu. pop. %)   Non-British rule					-0.000102 (0.000115)	-8.25e-05 (9.80e-05)

Notes: Table A.3 ends the Table 1 sample in 1918, but otherwise estimates identical models. \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*  $p < 0.1$ .

**Table A.4: Exclude Neo-British Colonies from Table 1**

	DV: Onset of elected representation					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Settler colony (5% threshold)	-0.559 (0.664)	-0.514 (0.683)	-0.226 (1.179)	-0.160 (1.212)		
British colony	0.228 (0.375)	0.252 (0.384)			3.618*** (0.786)	3.440*** (0.907)
Settler*British colony	3.228*** (0.722)	3.160*** (0.720)				
Metro. exec. constraints			1.829* (0.948)	1.853* (0.963)		
Settler*Metro. exec. constraints			1.814 (1.226)	1.750 (1.243)		
ln(Colonial European pop. %)					-0.122 (0.112)	-0.137 (0.110)
ln(Eu. pop. %)*British colony					0.548*** (0.163)	0.502*** (0.184)
Pre-1850 colonization	-2.084*** (0.417)	-2.293*** (0.546)	-1.184*** (0.347)	-1.192*** (0.343)	-1.175*** (0.393)	-1.580*** (0.507)
ln(Pop. density in 1500)		0.0142 (0.0258)		-0.0107 (0.0240)		0.0160 (0.0279)
State antiquity index in 1500		0.705 (0.540)		0.274 (0.479)		0.706 (0.578)
Forced settlement colony		0.311 (0.499)		-0.118 (0.437)		0.796 (0.507)
Protestant missionaries in 1923		0.0720 (0.0634)		0.0745 (0.0547)		0.0241 (0.0791)
Colony-years	10,068	10,068	10,068	10,068	10,068	10,068
Time controls?	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
	Marginal effect estimates					
Settler colony   British rule	0.0451*** (0.0149)	0.0419*** (0.0139)				
Settler colony   High metro. exec. const.			0.0164*** (0.00472)	0.0160*** (0.00544)		
ln(Eu. pop. %)   British rule					0.00469*** (0.00166)	0.00375* (0.00220)
Settler colony   Non-British rule	-0.00120 (0.00129)	-0.00104 (0.00126)				
Settler colony   Low metro. exec. const.			-0.000141 (0.000758)	-9.75e-05 (0.000757)		
ln(Eu. pop. %)   Non-British rule					-0.000336 (0.000305)	-0.000349 (0.000278)

Notes: Table A.4 excludes the 24 neo-British colonies (13 in United States, 4 in Canada, 6 in Australia, and New Zealand) from the sample for Table 1 but otherwise estimates identical models. \*\*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \* $p < 0.1$ .

### A.3 Disaggregating British Settler Colonies

An important historical distinction among British settler colonies is whether they were founded by British settlement or by conquest. “The settlers who established settled colonies took with them all the rights of British subjects, particularly the right to be granted representative government in the shape of a bicameral legislature with a nominated upper house and an elected lower house, on the model of the British Parliament. The inhabitants of ceded colonies had only such rights as the Crown chose to allow them” (Wight, 1952, 5). Empirically, with few exceptions (such as the Bahamas due to continual military pressure from pirates, or New South Wales in Australia because of its founding as a penal settlement), British settled colonies gained elected representation within one or two decades of colonization, as evidenced across British North America and the Caribbean in the 17th and 18th centuries, and Oceania in the 19th century.

By contrast, the conquered colonies exhibited higher variance. Some, like Jamaica, gained elected representation shortly after British conquest in the 17th century. However, in the 18th and 19th centuries, Britain became increasingly reluctant to grant elected representation to conquest colonies amid “the transformation

of the empire . . . from one peopled almost exclusively by the British race to one with considerable minorities of other European nationalities and an enormous dependent non-European population . . . The subjects in the new colonies were French, Dutch, Spanish or Asiatic, without claim to British institutions or understanding of them, and in some cases potentially hostile” (Wight, 1946, 47). Empirically, Britain approached non-British Europeans differently than British settlers. The Canada Constitutional Act of 1791 “was the extension for the first time of British constitutional rights to a non-British colonial population . . . In Grenada, in 1763, the old representative system had been granted to a colony of French population, but without the enfranchisement of Roman Catholics; in Quebec, in 1774, civil rights had been guaranteed to Roman Catholics, but without the grant of representative government” (Wight, 1946, 45). Colonies gained during the French revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars did not gain representative institutions for a century or more (Belize, Guyana, St. Lucia, Trinidad). For example, when debating whether to grant elected representation in Trinidad in the 1880s, colonial secretary Joseph Chamberlain “argued that it was wrong to consider demands from the Crown Colonies for representative government as if they were advanced by ‘a wholly white and British population’; many of the Crown Colonies were largely composed of ‘native non-British races’. ‘In such cases it is really a misuse of terms to talk of Rep[resentative] government. There is no pretence of giving full representation of the alien or black population & the full concession of the demands of the Reformers would only result in transferring the responsibility of administration . . . to a small oligarchy of white settlers’” (Will, 1966, 714).

Although the main European settler variables analyzed here include *all* Europeans, assessing differences among British settler colonies enables assessing whether the relationship between British-ruled settler colonies and early representation is strongest when Britons—as opposed to other Europeans—founded the colony and composed its primary European inhabitants. Table A.5 evaluates this contention by including separate fixed effects for British settled colonies and for British conquest colonies that met the 5% European population threshold. The sample contains only British colonies, and therefore the excluded basis category is British non-settler colonies. The specifications resemble those in Columns 1 and 2 of Table 1, except there is no interaction term for British colonialism because the sample consists only of British colonies. Although the coefficient estimate for both types of British settler colonies indicates significantly earlier onset of elected representation than British non-settler colonies, the estimated failure rate for British settled colonies is 2.9 times greater than for British conquest colonies with sizable European settlement (however, the 95% confidence intervals for the predicted failure rate for these two categories overlaps).

**Table A.5: Disaggregating British Settler Colonies**

	DV: Onset of elected representation	
	(1)	(2)
British settled colony	3.773*** (0.574)	3.952*** (0.747)
British conquered colony (5% threshold)	2.649*** (0.489)	3.250*** (0.505)
Pre-1850 colonization	-2.129*** (0.497)	-1.981*** (0.478)
ln(Pop. density in 1500)		-0.00445 (0.0295)
State antiquity index in 1500		1.354* (0.787)
Forced settlement colony		-0.714 (0.465)
Protestant missionaries in 1923		0.0625 (0.105)
Colony-years	3,356	3,356
Time controls?	YES	YES

*Notes:* Table A.5 differs from Columns 1 and 2 of Table 1 by disaggregating British settler colonies by settled colonies and conquest colonies, and the sample contains only British colonies. \*\*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \* $p < 0.1$ .

## B Supporting Information for Institutional Evolution Section

### B.1 Africa

Table A.6 statistically assesses differences in legalized enfranchisement between 1955 and 1970 using OLS models with year fixed effects and standard errors clustered by colony. It demonstrates support for Hypothesis 2 using the same sample of African countries as in Figure 4. As in Table 1, Column 1 of Table A.6 models the settler colony dummy, British colonialism, and their interaction. Column 2 adds covariates. Columns 3 and 4 run otherwise identical models that replace the settler colony dummy with logged European population share. Across the columns, the table shows that settlers are strongly negatively associated with franchise size among both British and non-British colonies.

**Table A.6: Legalized Enfranchisement in Africa, 1955–1970**

	DV: Legally enfranchised pop %			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Settler colony	-37.51*	-34.14*		
	(19.79)	(17.01)		
British colony	-14.98**	-8.362	-19.03	-1.309
	(7.162)	(7.646)	(22.74)	(20.23)
Settler*British colony	-12.60	-1.640		
	(21.00)	(15.48)		
ln(Colonial European pop. %)			-7.552**	-6.474**
			(2.923)	(3.017)
ln(Colonial European pop. %)*British colony			-0.371	1.492
			(3.294)	(2.922)
ln(Pop. density in 1500)		0.422		0.331
		(0.432)		(0.396)
State antiquity index in 1500		22.35		16.09
		(19.49)		(17.53)
Protestant missionaries in 1923		-6.641*		-6.156
		(3.917)		(5.185)
Territory-years	682	682	682	682
R-squared	0.404	0.449	0.416	0.441
Year FE?	YES	YES	YES	YES
	Marginal effect estimates			
Settler colony   British rule	-50.11***	-36.45***		
	(7.204)	(8.460)		
ln(Eu. pop. %)   British rule			-7.923***	-4.982**
			(1.518)	(2.010)
Settler colony   Non-British rule	-37.51*	-34.14*		
	(19.79)	(17.01)		
ln(Eu. pop. %)   Non-British rule			-7.552**	-6.474**
			(2.923)	(3.017)

*Notes:* Table A.6 summarizes a series of OLS regressions by presenting coefficient estimates, and country-clustered robust standard error estimates in parentheses using two-sided hypothesis tests. The sample contains a complete panel of 43 continental African countries (plus Madagascar) between 1955 and 1970 (including both colonized and post-independence years). The dependent variable is legally enfranchised population percent measured annually. The forced settlement covariate is not used because it equals 0 for every country in this sample. Every specification contains year fixed effects. \*\*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \* $p < 0.1$ .

Appendix Table A.7 shows that the results are similar when not controlling for British colonialism and its interaction, which produces settler effect estimates based on a larger number of units pooled across empires. Although the results in Columns 3 and 4 of Table A.6 show that the marginal effect findings are not predicated on using the 5% population threshold for settler colonies, analyzing results without the Britain interaction mitigates some small-sample issues that arise when using the binary settlers variable: the only

British settler territories (by the 5% threshold) in this sample are South Africa and Zimbabwe, and the non-British settler colonies are Algeria, Angola, Namibia, and Tunisia. In Column 1, the expected difference in percent enfranchised is 41%, with 72% legal enfranchisement in non-settler colonies versus 31% in settler colonies.

Paine (2018) provides additional tests that complement these findings. I demonstrate similar results when instrumenting for European settlement using land suitability for large-scale European agriculture, and also show that percentage of land alienated for Europeans negatively correlates with franchise size.

**Table A.7: Table A.6 without British Colonial Control**

	DV: Legally enfranchised pop %			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Settler colony	-41.38*** (14.48)	-32.48** (12.37)		
ln(Colonial European pop. %)			-7.631*** (1.943)	-5.209** (2.311)
ln(Pop. density in 1500)		0.482 (0.407)		0.396 (0.367)
State antiquity index in 1500		23.75 (18.67)		17.10 (16.32)
Protestant missionaries in 1923		-8.361* (4.239)		-8.183 (5.539)
Territory-years	682	682	682	682
R-squared	0.366	0.441	0.379	0.429
Year FE?	YES	YES	YES	YES

Notes: Table A.7 is identical to Table A.6 except it does not control for British colonialism nor the interaction term.  
 \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*  $p < 0.1$ .

**Table A.8: Summary Statistics for Table A.6**

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Territory-years
Legally enfranchised pop. %	66.645	42.416	682
Settler colony	0.141	0.348	682
ln(Colonial European pop. %)	-5.752	1.997	682
British colony	0.352	0.478	682
ln(Pop. density in 1500)	3.251	5.125	682
State antiquity index in 1500	0.182	0.259	682
Protestant missionaries in 1923	0.637	0.950	682

## B.2 British Caribbean After World War I

After World War I, British Caribbean colonies experienced peaceful transitions to renewed electoral representation, universal suffrage, and independence. The important difference from contemporaneous African settler colonies, or from the British Caribbean in the 19th century, is that European settlers' political and economic clout had weakened considerably by the interwar period. Therefore, these cases provide informative null cases for assessing Hypothesis 2.

### B.2.1 Main Pattern: Early and Peaceful Transitions to Universal Suffrage

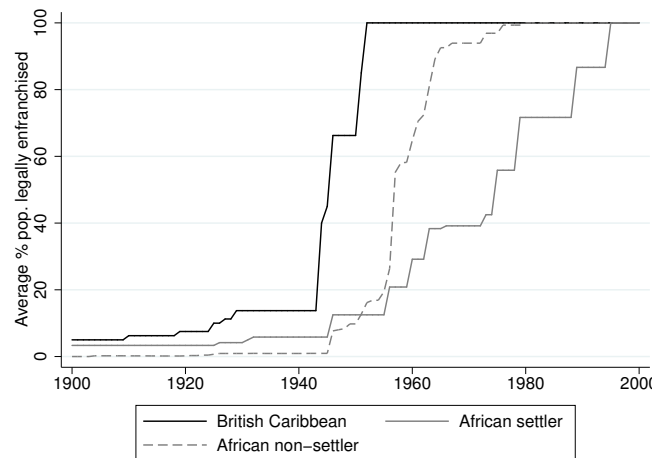
Excepting Jamaica's early return to elected representation in 1884, British Caribbean colonies that changed their institutions in the 19th century lacked elected representatives through World War I. However, the self-government movement became vocal and prominent in the 1920s, led by non-white professionals, World War I soldiers, and trade union leaders. "All demanded the election of at least some members of the colonial

legislative councils and a role in local government for the elected members” (Rogoziński, 2000, 311-2). These demands, complemented by sporadic violence such as fires in Grenada and strikes in Trinidad and Tobago, preceded reforms in 1924 to grant legislative representation to most of the islands. In the two exceptions—Antigua and Barbuda, and St. Kitts and Nevis—“the strong opposition of the large plantation owners and the prominent merchants to the introduction of the elective principle delayed the advent of a minority of elected members to these Councils until 1936” (Forbes, 1970, 60).

Following these initial reforms, only a minority of members on the legislative councils were elected, and the franchise remained small. Coupled with the Great Depression in the 1930s, “[d]emonstrations, strikes, and riots were frequent throughout the British Caribbean between 1935 and 1938” (Rogoziński, 2000, 313). These actions precipitated several influential commission reports. “The Moyne Report placed much of the blame for the disturbances on the Crown colony form of government. It called for stronger labor unions, more elected members to the Legislative Councils, and the eventual extension of the vote to all islanders” (Rogoziński, 2000, 314). The two largest islands, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, gained universal suffrage in the 1940s, followed by the smaller islands in the 1950s.

Figure A.1 compares franchise expansion in 20th century British Caribbean to patterns from Africa, using the same V-Dem legalized enfranchisement variable as in Figure 4. The black line presents average population percentage with legalized suffrage for the only three British Caribbean settler colonies with V-Dem data, Barbados, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago, and therefore the black line is slightly biased upward prior to 1951 relative to the true British Caribbean average. The gray lines pool the African countries from Figure 4 into settler (solid gray) and non-settler (dashed gray).

**Figure A.1: Comparing Suffrage in British Caribbean and Africa**



The main takeaway from Figure A.1 is that the British Caribbean colonies moved earlier to widespread suffrage not only before *settler* colonies in Africa, but also before non-settler colonies in Africa. Therefore, despite the institutional changes in the 19th century British Caribbean in which European settlers sought to prevent mass enfranchisement, a similar trend did not occur in this region following World War I.

## B.2.2 Evidence of Weakened European Planter Class

The crucial difference between the 20th century British Caribbean relative to the 19th century or to contemporaneous African settler colonies was that the British metropole rather than European settlers had the power to decide how to respond to demands by non-whites. Britain reacted to the disturbances in the 1930s



with concessions in the 1940s that went “much further than the local upper classes would have dreamed of” (Rueschemeyer, Stephens and Stephens, 1992, 240), and the movement to universal suffrage further “restricted the political power of the white planter oligarchy” (Hillebrands and Trefs, 2005, 595). Since the change in political institutions in the 19th century, economic changes weakened the white plantocracy by increasing foreign land ownership (Rueschemeyer, Stephens and Stephens, 1992, 238-239). Additionally, after ending slavery, Britain granted metropolitan legal rights to freed slaves in the Caribbean, and corresponding educational gains during the Crown rule period helped to facilitate societal organization (Owolabi, 2015), such as labor unions. This not only enhanced workers’ bargaining power, but trade union leaders also established labor parties across the region that advocated for political representation and participated in the first elections under universal suffrage in the 1940s (Rogoziński 2000, 315-319; Rueschemeyer, Stephens and Stephens 1992, 236-238). Overall, the re-establishment of elected representation and the rise of mass franchise expansion in the British Caribbean in the 20th century tended to occur in spite of rather than because of European settlers, and “the driving force behind democratization and decolonization was an alliance of the [non-white] working-class and the middle classes” (Rueschemeyer, Stephens and Stephens, 1992, 244).

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