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0521023262 - The Kaiser's Voters: Electors and Elections in Imperial Germany

Jonathan Sperber

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Although the German Empire of 1871–1918 was basically an authoritarian regime, its national elections were held under a democratic franchise and characterized by vigorous election campaigning and high levels of voter turnout. In *The Kaiser's voters*, Jonathan Sperber analyzes the thirteen general elections held in pre-1914 Germany. Using advanced mathematical methods, but presenting their results in understandable, non-technical language, his work offers estimates of the proportion of eligible voters from different confessional groups and social classes choosing the different political parties, and traces the flow of voters among the parties and between voting and abstention from one election to the next. Refuting a number of long-held propositions about the nature of the electorate in Imperial Germany, he presents a new interpretation of voting behavior in the formative years of the modern German political system, considers its consequences for German electoral politics in the twentieth century, and compares electoral trends in Germany with those in other European and North American countries in the age of universal suffrage.

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