

CHAPTER ONE

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## Southern Political Development in Comparative Perspective

What is the State? It is the Democratic party. . . . Whenever there were political questions involved, . . . we looked to the interests of the party, because they are the interests of the State.

—*Judge Thomas J. Semmes*, delegate at Louisiana's constitutional convention (1898)

The conversion of the South into a democracy in the sense that the mass of people vote and have a hand in their governance poses one of the most staggering tasks for statesmanship in the modern world.

—*Valdimer Orlando Key, Jr.* (1949)

ON JANUARY 11, 1961, Charlayne Hunter and Hamilton Holmes desegregated the University of Georgia in Athens. Their first afternoon of classes complete, Hunter settled in her dorm room, while Holmes returned to an off-campus residence. Much of the campus—and the state capitol in nearby Atlanta—was abuzz with talk of that night's scheduled disturbance. Politicians from north Georgia pleaded with Governor Ernest Vandiver to dispatch the state highway patrol to ensure that the court-ordered desegregation occurred peacefully. Advisers from south Georgia disagreed; some secretly helped riot leaders in their bid to make the campus unsafe for Hunter and Holmes and safe again for white supremacy. By ten o'clock, a crowd of some two thousand students and locals set upon Hunter's dormitory, where they hurled bricks and bottles and set fires nearby. After Athens cops fended off the crowd with tear gas and fire hoses, state troopers arrived—two hours after police requested help from the vacillating governor. National papers showed U.S. marshals rushing a distraught Hunter to safety. North Georgia politicians were chagrined by the disorder; those from south Georgia fumed at the state's capitulation.<sup>1</sup>

On a late September morning in 1962, U.S. marshals escorted James Meredith across the University of Mississippi campus to the Lyceum—the

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school's main administrative building—where a taciturn registrar awaited. Oxford's air still stung with tear gas; stray bullets had pockmarked the statues of Confederate fallen. The group proceeded down a bloodstained corridor past exhausted U.S. marshals slumped against the walls, gas masks still strapped to their jaws. A pitched battle had just resulted in two deaths and hundreds of injuries. Alternately encouraged, discouraged, and repressed by confused state and county law enforcement, two thousand rampaging white supremacists had attacked the marshals. U.S. troops numbering 31,000—more than were stationed in South Korea—detained hundreds of civilians and restored order. Mississippi's "occupation" had begun.<sup>2</sup>

Four months later, aspiring architect Harvey Gantt, stepping dapper out of a Buick sedan, strolled confidently across the campus of South Carolina's Clemson College in his dark pinstripe suit, checked coat, and hat. As he did, jostling and commotion ensued. The first stirrings of a riot here in America's last bastion of segregation? No, just shutterbugs jockeying for position. A polite meeting with the registrar, a quick press conference, a few curious onlookers. . . . Where was the angry white mob? Northern journalists left dejected. State politicians had foiled white supremacists' planned disorder. The *New York Times* cried, "Bravo, Clemson. . . . What a contrast to Mississippi!" President Kennedy applauded, too, and discussed doubling South Carolina's defense contracts.<sup>3</sup>

These confrontations among black insurgents, white crowds, state authorities, and federal officials varied greatly, ranging from the breakdown of order in Mississippi to South Carolina's much-lauded "integration with dignity." This book situates these crises as important moments in a much longer process—the democratization of southern authoritarian enclaves. Having begun in the 1940s, these transitions from authoritarian rule concluded by the early 1970s in the successful democratization of the eleven states of the former Confederacy. However, statesmen had converted them in sharply different ways. They differed in their ability to minimize outside interference with their dismantling of disfranchisement and "Jim Crow" social practices, to make peace with national Democrats, and to attract business investment. In part because they beat different paths out of Dixie, these states today differ in their politics and economics. Apprehending the contemporary South means coming to terms with the legacies of its democratizations.



In the 1890s leaders of the eleven states of the old Confederacy founded stable, one-party authoritarian enclaves under the "Democratic" banner. Having secured a conditional autonomy from the central state and the national party, these rulers curtailed electorates, harassed and repressed oppo-

sition parties, and created and regulated racially separate—and significantly unfree—civic spheres. State-sponsored violence enforced these elements in a system that ensured cheap agricultural labor and white supremacy. These regimes were effectively confections of the state apparatus with those institutions regulating political ambition. The state apparatus oversaw the hegemonic Democratic party, while the party staffed, exploited, and guided local, county, and state governments. Given the strength of these regimes, their most serious challenges would emanate from without, not within. Enclaves capitalized on their influence in Congress and the national Democratic party—as well as national indifference—to shield themselves from those who might violate their “sovereignty.” For a half-century, they succeeded.

Beginning with the U.S. Supreme Court’s abolition of the “white only” Democratic primary in 1944, black insurgents, mostly in the South, inspired, compelled, and capitalized on federal judicial rulings, national legislation, and national party reforms that battered these enclaves. By the early 1970s, a variety of actors—federal authorities, domestic insurgents, and their allies “abroad”—had defeated southern authoritarians. In the process, the central state had supervised the dismantling of disfranchisement, segregation, and state repression, while national Democrats ordered southern parties to incorporate racial minorities.

But the devil, as usual, was in the details. Across the South, officeholders sought to minimize federal supervision of state compliance with civil and voting rights legislation and scores of judicial directives, ranging from school desegregation to legislative reapportionment, from electoral systems to lunch counters. In many ways, minimizing oversight could lower the costs of democratization for incumbents and their clients. How successful were these resisters in doing so? How much autonomy did they manage to preserve? Were they able to democratize on their own terms, or was the process out of their hands? Once the guarantor of southern authoritarianism, an emboldened national Democratic party had begun to interfere with the manner in which state parties treated black voters, nominated candidates, and selected presidential delegates. Did southern Democrats reform racial practices and normalize relations, or did they bicker with the national party, file for “divorce,” and then walk away?

Across the region, the eleven enclaves differed in the nature of their compliance with federal directives; the pace and scope of black incorporation into the state Democratic party; and the timing and nature of their reconciliation with the national party. Different configurations of these factors constituted distinct modes of democratization (table 1.1). In one, enclaves quickly submitted to pressures to democratize, or even preempted some of them through “indigenous” reforms. Falling into line with federal and national party directives, these enclaves—usually in the Outer South—experienced an *acquiescent democratization*.<sup>4</sup> Others sought to delay change,

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control the pace of democratizing reforms, and minimize the consequences of black incorporation into the Democratic party.<sup>5</sup> To do so, they needed to walk a tight wire from angry defiance to lawful compliance without inducing disorder (and the breaches of “sovereignty” that might follow). Some successfully implemented this strategic accommodation, and thereby secured a *harnessed democratization*. Others failed, triggering enclave intransigence, massive interventions, and fractured national party relations, and experienced a *protracted democratization*.

Surprisingly, this variation existed even within the Deep South—a region that remains relatively undifferentiated in the popular imagination and academic mind. As the transitions began in the 1940s, these enclaves featured similar demographics, political economies, modes of governance, partisan dynamics, and commitments to white supremacy. Over time, rulers’ responses to democratization pressures propelled these states onto different paths. South Carolina managed a harnessed democratization, Mississippi stumbled through a protracted democratization, and Georgia experienced a bifurcated democratization, in which sectional conflict led north and south Georgia to come to different terms with the feds and the national party.

These different paths generated important legacies that still shape the present. Those enclaves that accommodated democratization pressures garnered greater success in capital accumulation and accelerated their state’s economic growth. Conversely, those enclaves unable to do so suffered greatly on this score. Ironically, however, by managing to incorporate blacks and reconcile with the national party smoothly, enclave rulers doomed state Democrats over the long run. Where rulers failed to accommodate strategically to democratization pressures, they unintentionally benefited state Democrats over the coming decades.

Southern regime change has never been examined. This study—a comparative historical analysis of democratization in Georgia, Mississippi, and South Carolina—seeks to explain one important element of this change: the processes of democratization undergone by Deep South states. It argues that elite cohesion, and the institutions of party and state that equipped and constrained these elites, help account for differences in modes of democratization across the Deep South. (Regime elites are discussed further in chapter 2. For now, by *elites* I mean powerful authorities in party or state institutions, and other important resource-holders within the regime.) *Elite cohesion* refers to the degree to which regime politicians and other resource-holders agree that the party remains the best vehicle for pursuing political careers and policy goals, and agree broadly on a strategy to resist democratization pressures. *Party-state capacity* refers to the degree of fit between, on the one hand, the institutions regulating political ambition and those of the state apparatus, and, on the other, elites’ efforts to undertake various governance tasks—especially those necessary for maintaining enclave rule.<sup>6</sup> By

TABLE 1.1  
Modes of Democratization

	Outer South	South Carolina	Mississippi	Georgia
State compliance with federal directives	Preemptive	Superficial and tranquil	Delayed and violent	Split by region
Black incorporation into state party	Early and extensive	Early and managed	Late and divisive	Split by region
Reconciliation with national party	Earliest and preemptive	Early 1960s and smooth	Late (mid-1970s) and turbulent	Split by region (early 1970s)
Type of democratization process	Acquiescent	Harnessed	Protracted	Bifurcated

the early 1960s, enclaves differed on these two dimensions, and thus varied in how they navigated mounting democratization pressures.

The South's democratization—a complex macrohistorical process occurring amid great social, cultural, and economic change—is the most important development in American politics since World War II. It has contributed to the ideological and racial polarization of the national parties, altered the dimensions on which the parties compete, redrawn the map of presidential elections, and transformed Congress. Moreover, today millions of Americans now practice an entirely different mode of politics. Whereas blacks were once shut out of electoral politics, some six thousand black elected officials now serve southern constituencies. More than 73 million southern adults, native-born and newly arrived, may participate freely in a competitive, two-party system. Whereas Democrats once occupied about 95 percent of all elective offices, Republicans now claim more than one-half of the region's federal and state offices.<sup>7</sup> Thus, understanding how the recent past shapes contemporary U.S. politics requires illuminating the political development of the American South.

This study offers an optic for focusing on the region, and on the United States, in cross-national perspective. The remainder of this chapter describes some of the principal approaches to southern political change, outlines the one used here, describes the study's research design, and summarizes the findings to come. This book is *not* a study of the emergence of a two-party South—the object of most scholarly and popular attention. However, as a study of Deep South democratizations, it will illuminate how Republican party advancement was in part both a consequence *and* a cause of these democratization processes.

## Alternative Perspectives on Postwar Southern Politics

Scholars have tackled several different facets of the South's recent political transformation. Most political scientists interpret it in terms of electoral politics and in particular seek to trace the contours of Republican advancement across the region and over time.<sup>8</sup> Other social scientists and historians have sought to understand several momentous changes, from the reenfranchisement of blacks and poorer whites to the desegregation of southern schools to the destruction of Jim Crow to the growth of black political power, and so on. In doing so, their explanations have centered on three main types of causes: political culture, political economy, and social movements. While scholars have not studied the post-World War II South in terms of the region's democratization, I review these families of explanations—as well as related arguments by scholars of comparative politics—to see what light they might shed on variation within the region in modes of democratization. Each generates crucial insights, and each points to important differences between the Outer South and Deep South. But none alone suffices to explain the surprising variation within the latter.

### *Political Culture*

Many scholars focus on the period as one of a growing convergence in political cultures between the South and the rest of the country. Here, the region's elites and masses are seen as undergoing great change—especially in terms of white racial attitudes.<sup>9</sup> There are at least two different routes by which political culture may matter for my purposes. First, rapid changes in *mass* beliefs and attitudes about politics can fuel political change. A variant of modernization theory argues that changing mass values and attitudes can be critical for stimulating public demand for political reforms.<sup>10</sup> In fact, the leading work in political science on postwar southern politics, Earl Black and Merle Black's *Politics and Society in the South*, offers a modernization account. It and other studies explain the pace and location of Republican advancement by emphasizing the importance of growing southern white incomes, industrialization, urbanization, and other changes—particularly the influx of nonnative whites to the region. These factors produced profound cultural changes, including a white electorate both less devoted to white supremacy and less loyal to the Democratic party, which spurred the growth of white Republican voting. Second, the beliefs, attitudes, and bearings of political *elites* can often help explain political change, especially short, turbulent periods in which elite agency is thought to be crucial in explaining outcomes.<sup>11</sup>

An emphasis on mass political culture would suggest that states' experiences during the civil rights era might differ given growing levels of the familiar components of modernization: urbanization, education, income, and exposure to national mass culture and communications. As these components increased, the commitment of white publics to white supremacy would weaken, and middle-class whites would pressure authorities to embark on liberalizing political reforms. By the same token, changing white mass attitudes might enable officeholders to embark on political projects they preferred but had shied away from in the past. And urbanization and educational attainment might help empower and embolden blacks and their white allies to mount more serious challenges to the political status quo, and thereby raise the costs for both white elites and publics of maintaining it. Thus, states that modernized earlier—such as those in the more urbanized Outer South—would experience earlier political change. And this change would likely be more peaceful, as pressure on authorities to respond to black insurgency with repression would be diminished. In fact, some Outer South states might enact reforms before ordered by the federal government to do so.<sup>12</sup>

Southern historians often explain the momentous events of the 1950s and 1960s with reference to elite political culture. Political elites are thought to have ranged widely, from North Carolina's "progressive plutocrats" and Virginia's aristocrats to Louisiana's "buffoons," from the "redneck" leadership of Mississippi to the "dignified" politicians of South Carolina.<sup>13</sup> Even if they did differ sharply across states, the explanatory power of these differences is not obvious; nor are there clear predictions to be made either between the Outer South and Deep South or within the Deep South. As chapter 7 details, for example, in the 1950s South Carolina's "dignified" authorities responded to black mobilizations after *Brown v. Board of Education* with sufficient viciousness to cast doubt on this approach. Still, if elite agency is especially important in explaining concentrated periods of major political change, perhaps cross-state differences among elite styles of governance might help explain modes of democratization.<sup>14</sup>

### *The Political Economy of Southern Political Change*

Differences in political economies may also help explain the diversity of states' experiences during the turbulent civil rights period. Two approaches are most relevant here: modernization theory and the politics of labor-repressive agriculture. The economic variant of modernization theory holds that economic growth promotes changes in a society's class structure that hasten the emergence of popular demands for liberalizing political change, usually because various classes develop new preferences and outlooks but, locked out of existing political institutions, cannot secure policies consistent

with them. In some versions, middle classes are the chief protagonists; in others, the working classes are.<sup>15</sup> Applied to the South, the approach suggests that those states in which incomes began to catch up more quickly to the national average would be more likely to feature rising middle classes impatient with the political status quo—especially those in the “Sunbelt” suburbs that began to emerge in the 1950s.<sup>16</sup>

Other political economists emphasize less the political and cultural effects of economic modernization than the relative political influence of various sectors of the economy. Most relevant is the prevalence of “labor-repressive agriculture.”<sup>17</sup> Here, a polity’s economy is substantially driven by large landowners who adopt public policies and rely on state-sponsored coercion of agricultural workers in order to guarantee a steady supply of farm labor. Labor-dependent landed elites are more likely to fear democracy, because their primary asset—land—is fixed and thus more easily taxed by politically empowered lower classes, and generally because the political and economic arrangements sustaining the status quo are vulnerable to abolition in a democracy.<sup>18</sup> In the South, large landowners dominated the “Black Belt,” the wide swath of counties running from east Texas to southern Virginia that were both rich in fertile soil and often majority-black (as reflected in figure 1.1). These elites estimated the costs of democracy to be even higher because they lived in more densely black areas, where the reenfranchisement of blacks would threaten local elites’ domination of municipal and county-level offices.<sup>19</sup> As in authoritarian regimes everywhere, suffrage would have to be “conquered, not granted.”<sup>20</sup>

Broad postwar economic change, particularly the mechanization of southern agriculture, is often cited as attenuating the ferocity with which powerful economic interests—whether planters or their coalition partners among the region’s merchants and industrialists—defended the status quo.<sup>21</sup> As the “Bulldozer Revolution” commenced after World War II, and southern states became more reliant on nonagrarian sectors, politicians linked to these sectors could then enact political and social reforms necessary to enhance their state’s labor force through human capital investment and to attract foreign direct investment.<sup>22</sup>

Comparativists suggest that the structure of the authoritarian political economy has great bearing not only on the preferences of economic elites for democracy but also on the turbulence of transition periods that may occur. When rulers are choosing between conceding to democratization pressures and repression, landowners—particularly those in highly unequal, labor-repressive agrarian societies—are more likely to favor repression than are industrialists. They consider the costs of repression to be lower, in part because they attach less value to their polity’s reputation as an orderly, peaceful, and attractive site of external capital investment.<sup>23</sup>

Both political-economic approaches predict that substantial political reforms—such as the reenfranchisement of blacks and poorer whites—should occur earlier and in a more orderly manner in the more industrialized Outer South than in the Deep South. Still, a few matters give us pause here. First, prominent landowners and firms cannot always easily convert their economic influence into political power. Political institutions can refract economic interests in strange ways; for instance, as chapter 3 describes, Georgia’s bizarre electoral system blunted for decades the influence of Atlanta’s economic modernizers in state politics. Second, as economic historian Gavin Wright has recently shown, white middle-class southerners and elected officials—including those relatively autonomous from their economic clients—had no trouble squaring rapid economic and metropolitan growth with their own preference for retaining segregated civic, social, and economic spheres. Third, when powerful interests clash, it is more difficult to predict which interests will carry the day. Fourth, a focus only on labor-repressive agriculture misses out on possible conflict and repression due to employment competition among blacks and working-class whites. As Joseph Luders suggests, when the latter is present, “society-led” repression (opposed by economic elites and authorities) or even “full intransigence” (when economic elites, the clients of public authorities, still rely on black labor) is possible.

Thus, political-economic approaches suggest that there may be variation within southern states, not broad distinctions between them.<sup>24</sup> Thus, while possibly helpful in explaining broad differences between the Outer South and the more agrarian Deep South, political economy scholarship suggests that we bring in the interaction of political economy and institutions of party and state to reckon with variations in the Deep South.<sup>25</sup>

### *Black Insurgency and Southern Political Change*

Finally, sociologists and historians have often treated black insurgency as the main driver of southern political change. Here, the region’s political transformation is narrated in large part through the development and cresting of a social movement, with its attendant triumphs and limits. In his seminal work on black insurgency, sociologist Doug McAdam explains the emergence, development, and decline of black movement organizations, rather than the outcomes of conflicts between black claimants and white political authorities and economic elites. Nevertheless, this approach implicitly offers some predictions about variation in the latter.

McAdam agrees with the political-economic perspective that the decline of “King Cotton” was significant for southern political development, but suggests an additional reason. Besides altering the strategies and relative

influence of major economic sectors, this change enhanced the capacity of black protest and weakened opposition to it. The mechanization of agriculture pushed blacks off the land and into southern cities, where potential activists held advantages over their rural counterparts. These included greater physical safety, denser associational networks, more aggressive churches, a larger critical mass of blacks economically independent of white employers, and black colleges and other useful sites for organizing. For McAdam, the demise of King Cotton facilitated black protest via a cultural channel (the development of a rising black militant consciousness) and an infrastructural one (as movement activities themselves became safer and better organized).<sup>26</sup> On this view, black insurgency would develop earlier, and more successfully, in the more urbanized Outer South. McAdam suggests that urbanization would also account for differences within states in the development and behavior of insurgencies.

However, the social movement approach leaves unclear how the emergence and development of black insurgency helps us to understand the eventual outcomes of clashes with adversaries. The implicit assumption is that stronger movements face lower levels of white repression; since strength is based on the goals and tactics of black groups, the choices of black insurgents are paramount in explaining outcomes. But, as McAdam acknowledges, the relative strength of black insurgencies across the South did not determine interactions with authorities and others (such as white supremacist organizations). As I will show in chapter 7, South Carolina's black protest declined sharply in the 1950s even as the structural conditions thought to foster this protest—education, urbanization, and so on—improved. Despite these advantages, the movement in South Carolina—the Deep South state with the least turbulent civil rights period—never approached the size, or experienced the frequency of contentious events or statewide dispersion, of those that emerged elsewhere. While movement strength, strategy, and tactics are critical to any explanation of outcomes, authorities' preferences and behavior must join the explanation in a more comprehensive way.<sup>27</sup>

In sum, explanations of various facets of the South's transformation drawing on political culture, political economy, and social movements capture essential features of the South's recent political development. Moreover, they overlap and support one another, particularly through a modernization perspective on political change. And they converge on a prediction that, broadly speaking, Outer South states experienced earlier and less tumultuous modes of democratization. However, these accounts are less useful for explaining the surprising variation within the Deep South, where states shared common values on identified causal forces, but political outcomes differed—often sharply.

These accounts are also theoretically unsatisfying for their inattention to political authority. While social and economic forces certainly shape

politics, Ruth Berins Collier and David Collier write, “the political arena is not simply fluid, constantly responding to socioeconomic change. Instead, because of an autonomous political logic and vested interests, it may be resistant to change over significant periods of time,” and “may to some degree follow its own pattern and pace of change that at times take a highly discontinuous form.”<sup>28</sup> Which public authorities were more likely to deter, neutralize, preempt, or adapt to their challengers, why, and with what institutional endowments constraining and enabling their ability to carry out these strategies?

To the extent that regime actors emerge in the analysis, they do so as clients of political-economic interests or as politicians infected by different strains of racist ideology. However, they do not appear as public authorities rooted in institutions and forced to manage their governance responsibilities while enmeshed in relations among localities, counties, and state and federal governments. Indeed, while histories of the civil rights period often compare localities, state government—its institutions, resources, and warrants of authority and responsibility—often go missing.<sup>29</sup> With it, the starring actors of Key’s *Southern Politics*—southern Democratic politicians—have been shooed away. Many scholars appreciate the South’s democratizers, yet democracy’s resisters remain poorly understood.<sup>30</sup> To understand differences within the Deep South, we must beckon these actors back on stage. I propose to do this through viewing these states as authoritarian enclaves under assault.

## Authoritarian Enclaves and Their Democratization

Most observers see the pre-1970s South as democratically governed and racist. Is the South really better viewed as a set of enclaves of authoritarian rule somehow allowed to exist within a federal democracy? I think so. To earn the moniker, democracies must feature free and fair elections, the safeguarding of rights necessary to sustain such elections—such as freedoms of assembly, association, and speech—and a state apparatus sufficiently responsive to election winners and autonomous from social and economic forces that these elections are meaningful. By this standard, which I defend and deploy in chapter 2, southern enclaves were clearly undemocratic and different in kind from nonsouthern states—diverging even from those marked by electoral fraud and unfair ballot laws or the corrupt practices of machines and other urban regimes. Here, I introduce the phenomenon of authoritarian enclaves and offer some intuitions about how they might be democratized.

### *Subnational Authoritarianism*

Today, most of the world's regimes are authoritarian. Moreover, those in which a single political party rules through less than free and fair elections are the most common form of authoritarian governance, and comprise fully one-third of all regimes. The share of these "electoral authoritarian" regimes is growing. Since World War II, elections and universal suffrage have become normative worldwide. The most dedicated autocrats understand that their regimes benefit from the appearance of elections.<sup>31</sup> Additionally, electoral authoritarian regimes are the most durable brand of authoritarianism. Far from hastening the demise of a regime's incumbents, regularly held unfree and unfair elections often serve the interests of rulers. They provide valuable (if imperfect) information about the preferences of their subjects and thereby help them respond to popular demand, co-opt opponents, and pay off supporters; they also shore up the regime's legitimacy.<sup>32</sup>

However, sometimes authoritarian regimes stumble and a transition ensues. Although the most common form of regime transition occurs from one form of authoritarianism to another, many transitions result in a nascent democracy. Even if democratic rule is consolidated, however, there often remains substantial variation in political practices across a country's territory.<sup>33</sup> In democratic polities, authoritarian enclaves are areas—usually states or provinces within a federal polity—that feature the absence of the aforementioned components of democracy. Such enclaves now exist in Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Russia, and elsewhere.<sup>34</sup>

Of course, authoritarian enclaves are not sovereign polities. Usually ruled by hegemonic state-level parties, enclaves are variably constrained by national state institutions and policies—especially constitutions, public finance disbursements, and the regulation of elections, administration, and so on. Additionally, as Edward Gibson argues in his pioneering work, national parties limit, to varying degrees, the extent to which their state-level counterparts can maneuver. Challenges may emanate "bottom-up" from indigenous movements, "top-down" from reformers within the ruling party, or through the imposition of central state authority. To forestall challenges, rulers seek to limit outside involvement in local affairs.<sup>35</sup>

Paradoxically, doing so requires projecting their power onto national-level politics, and monopolizing linkages between provincial-level actors and both the central state and national party. These linkages include institutions regulating intergovernmental relations on such matters as "revenue flows between center and periphery, communication flows, and service delivery between levels of government," as well as rules that determine the balance of power between the national party and its subnational units. Conversely, in order to weaken the regime, domestic opponents reach out across

enclave boundaries for assistance from supportive central state officials, allies in the national party, and other “outside agitators.”<sup>36</sup>

Since enclaves lack actual sovereignty, they depend on the unwillingness or inability of the central state and national party to intervene against them. Often their ability to deter such intervention is achieved through deals between local elites and national-level politicians. Whether seeking to build a new national coalition or secure national-level political or economic reforms, federal politicians often turn to enclave rulers for their votes in the national legislature or their help within the national party. In exchange, they offer rulers warrants of autonomy over province-level politics, greater influence within the party, or financial or other resources. Even national officials sympathetic to the subjects of enclave rule usually decide that the costs of challenging them outweigh the benefits. Rulers also benefit from a national-level judiciary that does not disturb repression and that does not challenge often-arbitrary law enforcement. Once established, enclaves “are extremely difficult to dislodge in the absence of outside intervention.”<sup>37</sup>

Despite recent waves of democratizations worldwide, authoritarian enclaves are increasingly common. Transitions to democracy have been frequently accompanied by decentralization, or the devolution of power and key governance tasks from the national government to subnational units. Decentralization has provided local elites with opportunities to maintain (or even build anew) authoritarian rule over their states or provinces. Thus, in some Mexican states, local *caciques* have made “full use of local clientelistic networks, economic resources, and political machines to consolidate provincial authoritarian projects.”<sup>38</sup> Additionally, national democratizers are usually not preoccupied with dynamics at the local level. Rather, they are focused on securing power, advancing large-scale political and economic reforms, and accomplishing other tasks that require national coalitions. These coalitional needs leave national leaders indebted to subnational politicians who can exert reliable control over voters and legislators, giving these regional rulers additional political leverage over the center.<sup>39</sup> Clearly, the fate of authoritarian enclaves hinges on much more than the particular characteristics of states or provinces—rather, the dynamic interaction between and among national and subnational polities is decisive.

### *Subnational Democratization*

Why do authoritarian enclaves collapse, and in what ways? At the national level, the process of dismantling authoritarian regimes differs widely, even within the same region.<sup>40</sup> Explaining the causes—and consequences—of different modes of democratization is difficult. Usually, modes of national-level democratization have been distinguished by the identity of the actor initiating the challenge to the regime (“soft-liners” and “hardliners” within

the regime, “moderates” and “radicals” among its opponents, and so forth), the relative importance of particular socioeconomic classes as initiators, and the degree of confrontation that ensues among the transition’s major actors.<sup>41</sup> Many observers have preferred so-called “pacted” transitions, in which an agreement is hammered out among a limited set of actors, to revolutions from below or other types of transitions that feature greater popular participation. On their view, the latter will provoke additional repression from rulers, sparking greater disorder and violence. Even if democracy then takes hold, they anticipate long-term negative consequences for democratic stability.<sup>42</sup> While there is no consensus on how to classify or explain modes of national democratization, many scholars agree that the manner in which a country democratizes generates durable legacies for the future, even independent of the larger forces that first brought the country to the brink of a regime transition.<sup>43</sup>

Scholarship on modes of democratization at the national level points to the importance of initiating actors, dynamics among contestants, and the likelihood that different paths out of authoritarian rule generate their own important political, economic, and social legacies. That said, as Edward Gibson argues, subnational democratization is not national democratization cast in miniature. While maintaining focus on the identities of initiating actors, he points to the vertical dynamics between subnational and national actors as most important. Gibson distinguishes broadly between “party-led” and “center-led” modes of subnational democratization. In the former, party allies at the national level assist embattled partisans within an enclave, who then triumph via the ballot box. Party-led democratizations, as in Mexico, are thus only possible where enclave electoral practices are not so onerous as to prevent this pathway. In contrast, in situations in which enclaves have greater autonomy relative to the center, only a center-led transition is possible. Here, enclave insurgents must depend on the central state to oversee and effectively sponsor the enclave’s democratization. A third broad mode of democratization—a largely indigenous or self-imposed democratization in which external pressures and resources are not crucial—is highly unlikely given the severe imbalance of power within the enclave. Given this imbalance, “authoritarian incumbents prevail when the scope of conflict is localized. They are threatened when provincial conflict becomes nationalized,” as opponents build alliances with national-level actors and exploit new resources to destroy enclave rule.<sup>44</sup>

Another major difference between national and subnational democratizations is that the variation among cases of the latter is likely to be truncated, especially when they occur within the same nation-state. In this situation, they are likely to be brought about by many of the same national-level forces, whether the national party, the central state, or both. Moreover, they are also likely to be subject to similar types of oversight as they transition. Re-

latedly, the major concern regarding the possible legacies of different modes of national democratization—a turbulent democratization imperils subsequent democratic consolidation—is lessened. Subnational democratization is likely to be a centralizing phenomenon. Given the fact that these subnational units are not sovereign and are now weaker relative to the center, “backsliding” into authoritarian rule is unlikely—or at least much less likely than is true for democratic transitions of nation-states.

The distinction between party- and center-led transitions is helpful, both in classifying different paths out of subnational authoritarianism and in pointing to how we might explain variation across cases. There still remains variation within these broad types. The eleven cases of the U.S. South, for example, are of the center-led mode, but they still differ in important respects. How can we explain the differences among them? And what might the legacies be of their different democratizations? Some of the thoughts below draw in part upon the narratives to follow; thus, this study should be treated only as a work of theory-building, not theory-testing.

*Dimensions of Subnational Democratization:  
Compliance with Federal Directives, Political Incorporation,  
and Reconciliation with the National Party*

As Ruth Berins Collier writes, “[I]f democracy is understood as a particular set of institutions, democratization, in turn, is understood as the introduction, adoption, or installation of those institutions.” Because authoritarian enclaves are likely to be ruled by a hegemonic political party that is conflated with the state apparatus, democratization must involve upending both halves of these “party-states.”<sup>45</sup> Three dimensions of subnational democratization are particularly important: the compliance of enclave regimes with new federal policies and with orders to reform their state apparatus; the incorporation of new voters and groups into the polity; and the nature of the ruling party’s reconciliation with the national party.

*Compliance with federal directives* to institutionalize democratic rule is, of course, essential, in two ways. First, the destruction of authoritarian institutions and the installation of democratic ones require this compliance. In the southern cases and likely others, this involves not merely federal statutes but also new federal regulations and judicial decrees. Second, rapid, orderly, and complete compliance is vital for moving toward national, democratic standards of the rule of law. Whether this compliance emerges early or late, or is orderly or turbulent and even violent, may alter democratization paths and their subsequent legacies. State- and local-level compliance hinges not merely on the preferences of authorities but also on their capacity and willingness to employ state policing institutions. And—besides their own ideological commitments—the nature of demands for compliance in various

arenas by domestic insurgencies significantly shapes authorities' behavior. With respect to the southern cases, major indicators of compliance include responses by authorities to the Civil and Voting Rights Acts, to judicial desegregation decrees aimed at county and local school officials, and—less well publicized—to federal statutes, regulations, and court orders requiring the desegregation of the southern public sectors.

*Political incorporation of voters and politicians* is usually a central dimension of democratization. Whether directly, through suffrage restrictions against citizens of particular groups, or indirectly, through the effects of elections that are less than free or fair, one-party rule restricts political contestation and often distributes participation rights unequally. Democratization is thus often accompanied by the mobilization of voters, activists, and ambitious politicians into existing parties and political organizations. In the U.S. South, this generally meant blacks, Hispanics, and poorer whites. Elsewhere, incorporation has meant the inclusion of rural areas, working classes, unions, and so forth. The timing and thoroughness of incorporation can each generate their own important political legacies.<sup>46</sup>

Political incorporation requires the involvement of both motivated ruling party officials and empowered ones. Incorporation episodes are, in the words of Martin Shefter, “products of serious and unbridgeable conflicts dividing the political elite,” as well as the goals and strategies of those demanding incorporation. Elites motivated to effect the incorporation of the previously excluded must actually be empowered within party and state institutions to make it happen. Attention here is placed on the timing and extensiveness of the incorporation of black voters and candidates into state Democratic parties, the ruling parties of southern authoritarianism. (This eventual incorporation, as opposed to other possible sites of black political mobilization, must be explained, not assumed, and the state-level narratives to come will do so). Indicators include statutes and regulatory changes governing access to the voting booth, to candidacy filings, and to local and state-level party organizations. Party incorporation should also be reflected in nontrivial levels of black participation in local and state party conventions and officeholding, in shifts in party position-taking, and in the election and appointment of black legislators and officials. Additionally, major policy shifts, such as changes in resource flows to groups and regions, usually accompany substantial new incorporations.<sup>47</sup>

*Ruling parties' reconciliation with the national party* is also likely to be a critical component of subnational democratization. During stable enclave rule, ruling parties often benefit from their influence within the national party. As democratization challenges emerge and a transition begins, relations between national and state parties are placed under great stress. In enclaves where their reconciliation occurs earlier and more smoothly, subsequent democratization may be more orderly. This reconciliation has sev-

eral possible indicators, including these: state party endorsement of democratization and acceptance of any national party reforms; some convergence in party platforms and position-taking; and the timely reappearance or acceptance as members in good standing of enclave parties in national party decision-making bodies. With respect to the South, this would mean the timing of southern state Democratic parties' reappearance at presidential nominating conventions, the racial integration of delegations to these conventions, and the full acceptance of party reforms ordered by the national Democratic party in the early 1970s.

The timing and nature of reconciliation with the national party is likely to be shaped by a few factors. The first is the regime challengers' own choices about whether to mobilize supporters in a new party or other movement, or to seek incorporation in the ruling party. Second, the relative strength of factions within the regime is critical. Disagreements among them on reconciliation may emerge because of ideological commitments, electoral vulnerability, or additional careerist concerns. Additionally, institutions within the party may affect its maneuverability for those favoring reconciliation. Third, the timing of any incorporation into the ruling party may be closely related to reconciliation. If this incorporation occurs early, earlier reconciliation is also likely, as those in the ruling party opposing reconciliation will exit it more quickly. The more quickly this sorting dynamic occurs, the smoother reconciliation is likely to be.

The foregoing discussion has repeatedly pointed to two causal forces that may shape modes of subnational democratization: elite cohesion within the ruling party, and the fit of party and state institutions with enclaves' preferred responses to democratization challenges. Because politicians of hegemonic subnational parties are likely to rule enclaves, subnational authoritarian regimes are effectively party-states, a term I use interchangeably with "regime" in order to emphasize this conflation of party and state apparatus.

### *Elite Cohesion and Enclave Responses to Democratization Challenges*

Durable regimes, according to Karen Orren and Stephen Skowronek, hold "together in the same orbit interests and ambitions that in other circumstances could be expected to be regularly at loggerheads." Thus, there is always some degree of elite conflict within a ruling party over policy choices and the distribution of resources. A critical factor here is that the losers of these conflicts are not tempted to exit the party. At the onset of democratization challenges, ruling parties seek to deter, defeat, or at least defer them indefinitely. After all, "threats from below"—a good description of black activists' exploiting external democratization challenges—are, as Robert Kaufman writes, the "most important bond of cohesion" in authoritarian

regimes.<sup>48</sup> Whatever differences may exist within the ruling party, there is an initial, strong disposition toward the status quo.

Over time, interventions and responses to them can shift the factional balance and affect rulers' ability to implement their preferred strategies.<sup>49</sup> Some elites associated with particular social groups, economic interests, or regions may seek to liberalize civil society and expand opportunities for political participation, and may no longer value the party's ideological commitments.<sup>50</sup> Others, whether for ideological reasons or because liberalization and eventual democratization are expected to exact higher costs, may prefer above all to honor these historic commitments, if necessary through repression of regime opponents. Those not prevailing in these debates may now face the loss of their elite status or their core goals (or both), and the temptation to defect grows, as they conclude that the ruling party is no longer the most effective means to advance their goals. As this exit option becomes more attractive, elite cohesion declines, and the prospects for effective collective action by the regime diminish. Given this dynamic, the degree to which elites remain committed to the party as the best vehicle for pursuing political careers and policy goals, while agreeing broadly on a strategy to resist challenges to the regime, is extremely important. While the dominance of a particular faction may enable an enclave to respond more coherently and effectively to a democratization challenge, a severe split may stymie such a response. Indeed, low levels of elite cohesion raise the likelihood of confusion, miscalculations, tangled lines of authority (both horizontally across the polity and vertically between state and local officials), and poorly executed responses. In this study, elite cohesion is ascertained largely through the use of archival materials, which help depict the degree of factionalism and the relative strength of different factions, as well as the preferences and beliefs about the future of key elites and of their clients.<sup>51</sup>

### *Party-State Institutions and Enclave Responses to Democratization Challenges*

As democratization challenges begin, the shape of party institutions can facilitate or frustrate elites' abilities to enact their preferred strategies. These institutions affect the quality of information rulers use to update their beliefs and strategies, and their capacity to act quickly and decisively. A party's ability to block the exit of valuable individuals and resources is also critical. Some parties promise longer-term careers for individuals or deploy other carrots or sticks to induce party discipline. These parties may be able to induce loyalty, swing the balance of power to their pragmatists, and thereby adapt more skillfully during a transition. Generally, the shape

of its institutions may affect a party's flexibility, informational needs, and ability to discipline those who wield its label as officeholders, office seekers, and activists.

In three key respects, rulers may be frustrated by a poor fit between their preferred responses to democratization challenges and state institutions responsible for implementing these responses.<sup>52</sup> First, authorities must secure and maintain order. These party-state officials, whatever their ideological preferences, are distinguished from other actors because they *rule*—they must order the polities they govern. In transition periods, rulers face uncertain environments, perhaps with social disturbances, organized or spontaneous violence, and other threats to order. In certain circumstances it matters greatly whether a state's repressive capacity is centralized, professional, projected across the entire polity, and capable of deterring, minimizing, or committing cost-effective violence and avoiding the excessive use of force. As suggested earlier, these issues become important during the college desegregation crises. Second, state institutions in enclaves differ in their administrative or fiscal capacities to develop and implement programs to co-opt potential reactionaries and insurgents, or to develop new bases of support.<sup>53</sup>

Third, in a more general way, the degree to which public authority is centralized is likely to affect the range of possible responses to democratization challenges. Within federal polities, states vary in their authorities and responsibilities, as they empower different actors at different levels of the polity to accomplish different tasks. Subnational polities do as well; this is especially true with regard to southern states, where county jurisdictions have often long been invested with powerful authority and resources. Rulers who frame policy responses at the state level, for example, may be unable to wrest authority from officials within county and municipal governments. In the management of crises—when temporal constraints prevent institutional innovations—these vertical distributions of authority within enclaves are likely to influence outcomes. This last issue points to an interesting and perhaps unique feature of southern democratizations: they unfolded slowly relative to other democratizations (national or subnational). As the narratives demonstrate, rulers had time to anticipate future challenges and respond by adapting existing institutions or creating new ones to better meet these challenges. As with elite cohesion, this fact forces us to consider party-state institutions as moving targets rather than as static background conditions to explain outcomes in a straightforward way. But, as Orren and Skowronek note, “[C]hange confronts political authority already on the scene.” Party-state institutions developed often decades earlier for quite different purposes could block rulers' efforts to adapt their institutional toolkit for new challenges.<sup>54</sup>

## Research Design

This book has a few goals. First, it attempts to demonstrate that political institutions and elite behavior, not merely antecedent conditions such as political culture and political economy, best account for variation in modes of democratization in the Deep South. Second, it seeks to probe the plausibility of the historical interpretation advanced at greater length in the next chapter—that by aiding and then abetting subnational authoritarian enclaves, U.S. democracy was consolidated only very recently. To make this case requires detailed evidence married to theories and concepts from comparative politics. A third goal, building on this last point, is to chip away at the parochialism of the book’s home subfield of American Political Development. The frequent choice not to draw upon concepts and theories of comparative politics leads to many missed opportunities.<sup>55</sup>

In the tradition of comparative historical analysis, scholars tackle large-scale processes and outcomes that unfold over long stretches of time. A small number of similarly situated cases is used to identify configurations of causal forces that help explain puzzling differences among these cases. Such research is often used to develop new concepts and generate theories that can be tested on additional cases. The effort to describe and explain in a systematic and detailed way particular historical outcomes usually exacts costs concerning the testing of highly general causal propositions.<sup>56</sup>

This study fits into that tradition. To explain how different processes of democratization unfold, this study constructs and compares three narratives of enclave demise in the Deep South. To discipline the narratives, the study periodizes a regionwide, southern transition consisting of highly similar and effectively simultaneous external challenges to enclave rule. The narratives describe and explain the consequences of major democratization challenges. They then trace how these pressures conditioned enclaves to absorb subsequent challenges, culminating in different modes of exit from authoritarian rule. The book’s close discusses how some of the legacies of these different experiences help explain divergent patterns of partisan and economic change.<sup>57</sup>

The comparison of richly detailed narratives has some important disadvantages. One is that it cannot suffice as a testing ground for theories. The theoretical approach sketched in this chapter is in part informed by the narratives; the narratives cannot then be said to test this account.<sup>58</sup> Another is that narratives resist replication, in part because they are not assembled from systematically collected datasets. Rather, this study relies on process tracing to describe and explain democratization challenges and their consequences. Process tracing, as David Waldner describes, is often used in case-study research and draws upon “multiple types of evidence for the verifica-

tion of a single inference.” Through the assemblage of these “causal process observations,” the analyst asserts the existence of a “causal chain” in which, given some fact patterns, causal claims, and causal mechanisms, “one event constrain[s] future events such that a subsequent event [is] bound to happen, or at least [more likely to occur].”<sup>59</sup> The comparison of three narratives thus puts a premium on internal validity, but at the expense of external validity. Despite these (and other) problems, this brand of research is appropriate given our state of knowledge on subnational authoritarian politics. Research on subnational authoritarianism is at an early stage with respect to concepts, theories, and measurements, and subnational democratization is even less well understood. Theory generation remains a priority, and this research design advances this goal.<sup>60</sup>

### *Telling Time in the South*

As with other work of comparative historical analysis, this study is preoccupied with issues of temporality. Here I touch on a few: the periodization of the transition and the exogenous “shocks” that structure it; whether and how critical junctures demarcate time during the transition; and the presence of path-dependent properties in the narratives to follow.<sup>61</sup>

This study periodizes a regionwide, southern democratic transition period occurring from 1944 until 1972 (see chapter 2 for a defense of this periodization). A succession of external interventions challenged southern rulers by strengthening their opponents, withholding valuable regime resources, and making the ruling party’s historic project less viable. These were the Supreme Court’s abolition of the white primary in 1944; national Democrats’ embrace of racial equality in 1948; the Supreme Court’s invalidation of state-mandated segregation in schools and other public sites in 1954 and the important college desegregation crises that the decision spawned; the Court’s invalidation of gross legislative malapportionment in 1962; the Civil and Voting Rights Acts of 1964 and 1965; and the national party reforms of 1968–72. As democratic transitions go, this is a fairly long one. Some individual enclaves moved through this period more quickly than others, and the relative importance of particular external challenges for them varied.<sup>62</sup>

Were these democratization pressures really external? If they were not emanating from outside the enclave and were not of roughly similar substance and timing, structuring the comparison of enclaves as I have described might be problematic. As we will see, none of these pressures could have emanated from within, but they were not perfectly “exogenous” to the behavior of rulers and challengers within enclaves—certainly not when compared to the impact of, say, World War II on Latin America.<sup>63</sup> The central state institution most isolated from enclave influence, the U. S. Supreme

Court, cast a large shadow over the southern transition. But even its pressures were not perfectly exogenous. First, they did not strike their targets at exactly the same time. Some did in a shallow sense. Supreme Court rulings applied to the entire region, of course, were announced just once, and President Harry S. Truman's rhetorical commitment of the national party to racial equality in early 1948 reverberated through the South at the same moment. But federal judicial implementation decrees—the moments when a particular state (or locality) was ordered to take some action—differed. Enclave rulers' own strategies and choices, such as their desire and ability to stall mandated change through seemingly endless legal challenges—influenced when these moments came. The choices of domestic insurgents to devote resources to attacking some parts of enclave rule and not others also mattered. In this sense, the timing of these shocks was often not quite the same for all enclaves. Second, federal judges, legislators, and agency officials crafted rulings, statutes, and regulations with likely levels of resistance weighing heavily on their minds. Enclaves could influence the substance of democratization pressures, such as when their rulers warned the Court and others that mass bloodshed might follow an onerous ruling. And enclave opponents clearly affected the timing and substance of democratization pressures, whether through their own efforts in federal courts or through the use of nonviolent direct action to compel Congress to act. I raise these issues in the narratives.

Comparative historical analyses commonly invoke much-debated concepts such as “critical juncture” and “path dependence.” Used together, they have, as Waldner notes, “come to mean moments in which structural constraints have been relaxed so that political actors exercise greater agency and their actions during the critical juncture have highly enduring legacies.”<sup>64</sup> While the narratives in this book highlight college desegregation crises as important moments in long democratic transitions, I am generally skeptical about the presence of critical junctures and path-dependent processes, for a couple of reasons. First, common uses of “critical juncture” suggest that its origins are to be explained with reference to structural forces, not human agency. On the contrary, my narratives of the first two decades of the transition emphasize the importance of the choices of institutionally situated politicians. Second, analyses relying on a critical juncture framework, especially when combined with path dependence, typically argue that agency is much less important after the critical juncture, as the range of both possible options for actors and possible historical trajectories is narrowed.<sup>65</sup> Of course, some moments *are* more important than others. As I discuss in chapter 4, the politics unleashed by the abolition of the white primary in 1940s Georgia almost ushered in massive change. Likewise, there are many types of processes at work in these narratives, and some would be termed “path-dependent”—such as the back-and-forth sorting of many elites and

voters into different parties after the Voting Rights Act.<sup>66</sup> Still, there is a good deal of continuity—in institutions, in actors' preferences, in distributions of power, and in the importance of human agency—that, according to Wolfgang Streeck and Kathleen Thelen, extends “through and in spite of historical break points.”<sup>67</sup> I return to these matters while discussing the operation of historical legacies in chapter II.

### *Case Selection and Evidence*

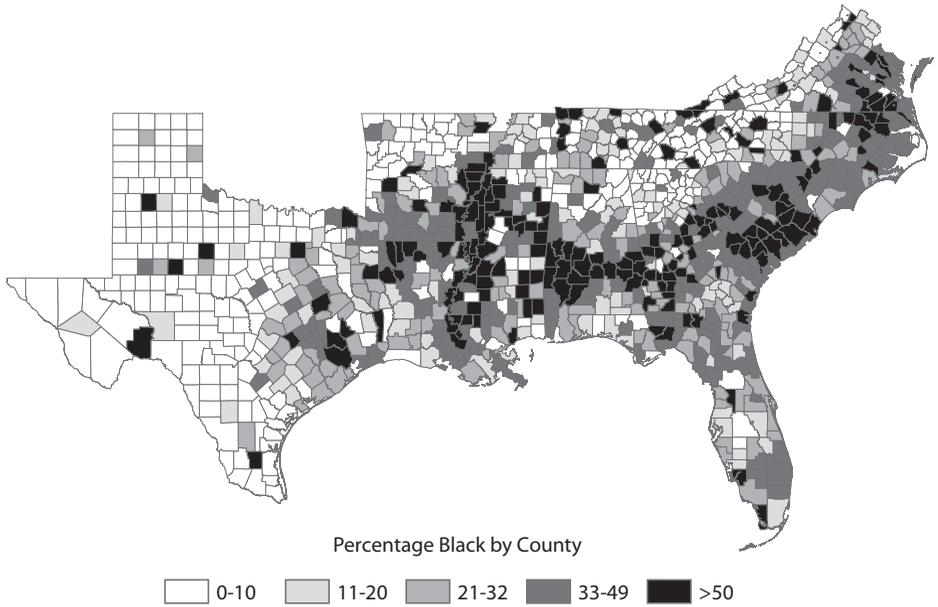
At an early stage in research programs, when work is intended to generate testable hypotheses, qualitative scholars commonly select cases for intensive analysis that are similar in terms of those characteristics thought to explain outcomes, but are diverse—and puzzlingly so—with respect to outcomes of interest.<sup>68</sup> The South is helpful in this regard. As V. O. Key insists, the South was never as “solid” as outsiders believed.<sup>69</sup> Most importantly, Deep South states—Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina—shared a number of characteristics that distinguished them from the states of the Outer South.<sup>70</sup>

For most of the twentieth century, the populations of the Deep South states were more rural and featured a greater share of blacks, their economies were more dominated by labor-repressive agriculture and were less industrialized, their polities were marked by almost a total absence of Republican or other ruling party challengers, their white populations seemed the most committed to white supremacy, and they had the weakest infrastructure for black insurgency. Just as important, they differed in their subsequent modes of democratization (table 1.1). Thus, the five Deep South states provide an excellent subset of cases for analysis, as they satisfy both case selection criteria.

Among the Deep South states, Georgia, Mississippi, and South Carolina have been chosen for study. They are especially similar to one another even among the Deep South states. In contrast, Alabama's much earlier industrialization sets the state apart from its neighbors, and Louisiana's parish system and reliance on the Napoleonic code introduces complications that frustrate comparisons of county governance.<sup>71</sup> Finally, all three boast excellent secondary literatures that help corroborate inferences drawn from primary sources.<sup>72</sup>

Several measures bear out the similarities among the Deep South states under study as well as their differences with those in the Outer South. For instance, as figure 1.1 illustrates, these states stand apart in their greater share of blacks.

Second, Deep South political economies were marked by labor-intensive agricultural production (for which the share of black sharecroppers among all farm operators is a good proxy). As table 1.2 demonstrates, these states—



**Figure 1.1.** Black share of population, 1940  
(Source: University of Virginia Historical Census Bureau)

all substantial growers of cotton (as chapter 2 discusses, a classic “reactionary crop”)—were at least three times more reliant on this mode of production on the eve of the transition period than the average in other southern states.<sup>73</sup>

**TABLE 1.2**  
Enclave Reliance on Labor-Intensive Agriculture, 1945

	Black sharecroppers as percentage of all farm operators
Georgia	16
Mississippi	31
South Carolina	19
Remainder of Census South <sup>a</sup>	6

*Source:* Bureau of the Census, *United States Census of Agriculture, 1945*, vol. 2: *General Report* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1947), chap. 3, “Color and Tenure of Farm Operator.”

<sup>a</sup> Includes the eleven states of the ex-Confederacy (excluding Georgia, Mississippi, and South Carolina), plus Delaware, Maryland, Oklahoma, Kentucky, and West Virginia.

Third, these states' electorates throughout the period of stable enclave rule (1890s–40s) were highly demobilized. Figure 1.2 demonstrates the share of their voting-age populations participating in presidential elections. Fourth, these states were highly devoted to the national Democratic ticket, even relative to the Outer South (see figure 1.3).

Chapter 3 discusses other important commonalities among Deep South enclaves that cast doubt on the political cultural, political economic, and social movement approaches discussed earlier.

The main advantage of focusing on the Deep South is that it allows for investigating the claim that differences in modes of democratization were substantially shaped by the actions of institutionally situated rulers. This is because similarities in these states' structural features (such as their political economies) provide something like "controls" that cast at least initial doubt on plausible alternative explanations. There are disadvantages, too, of course, which I discuss in chapter 11.<sup>74</sup> One potentially problematic question should be addressed now: do these three states really constitute independent cases? Whether due to preference, skill, or luck, some enclaves successfully delayed the absorption of particular shocks and thus experienced them later than other enclaves. This could allow late-movers to learn and benefit from others' experiences, and this in turn endangers the assumption that the cases under study are truly independent of one another. For instance, as I will show in chapters 6 and 7, the fact that South Carolina's

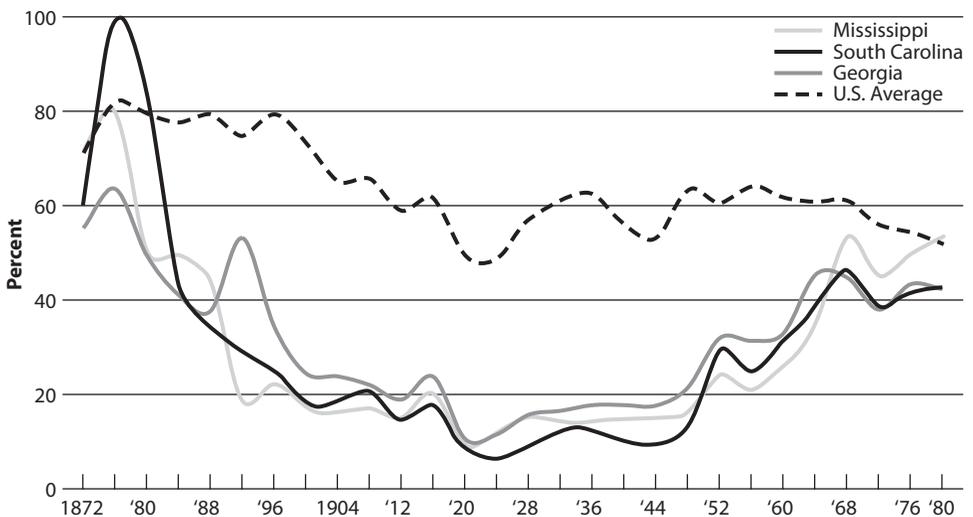


Figure 1.2. Presidential voters as share of voting-age population, 1872–1980

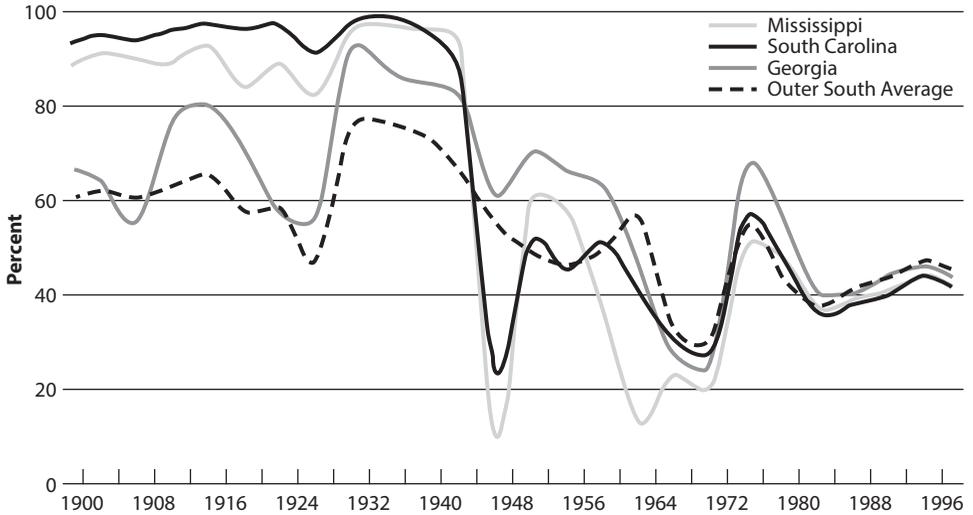


Figure 1.3. Democratic presidential vote, 1900–2000

rulers could experience that state's main college desegregation crisis a few months later than Mississippi meant that they could learn valuable lessons. Moreover, regionwide collective action helped these enclaves emerge as well as endure, and also existed during their transitions. This issue, which I discuss in the narratives that follow, is a real concern. However, it is not unique to the South but is in fact common in recent waves of regime transitions.<sup>75</sup>

To trace the ways in which external challenges, elite cohesion, and party-state institutions interacted over time to produce different paths out of Dixie, several types of evidence are required. On the basis of archival collections of state parties and important politicians, contemporaneous elite interviews, oral histories, newspaper accounts, and memoirs, I make inferences concerning the beliefs, preferences, and relative influence within ruling parties of various actors. Transcripts of hundreds of interviews conducted by Alexander Heard for V. O. Key's *Southern Politics*—rarely exploited by scholars—are especially valuable, as are other interviews conducted in the 1940s, 1970s, and thereafter.<sup>76</sup> Official records in state archives, records of state parties, newspaper accounts, private papers, interviews, and other sources capture the impact of party and state institutions on rulers' responses to external challenges. Newspapers, both local and national, situate discussions of electoral politics and intraelite conflict, as do voting and officeholding data.<sup>77</sup>

Various collections of papers from presidential libraries, official histories of administrative agencies, and publications of federal agencies help capture the nature of federal interventions and the degree of compliance with them

in areas such as voting, the desegregation of public sector employment, public accommodations and schooling, and law enforcement. Official papers of national- and state-level black protest groups (such as Congress of Racial Equality [CORE], the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People [NAACP], and the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee [SNCC]) and of southern nongovernmental organizations (such as the Southern Regional Council [SRC]), as well as oral histories with black and white activists, help describe insurgents' goals, strategies, and decision-making. Finally, this study relies on many excellent, unpublished works that offer a range of evidence on enclave rule. A bibliography available online provides a complete list of sources used and archives consulted.<sup>78</sup>

## Summary of Findings

Given differences in elite cohesion and party-state institutions, rulers' responses to early interventions buffeted Deep South enclaves in different ways, positioning them differently to meet later ones. By the early 1960s, they had different reputations in the eyes of federal authorities, national black protest organizations, and national party officials. These reputations shaped rulers' ability to minimize outside interference in their dismantling of authoritarian states and parties, and thus harness political change. By the 1970s, Deep South enclaves had been democratized differently; the legacies of these different modes of democratization contributed to divergent patterns of Republican growth and economic development.

After some two decades of forthright resistance to any racial reforms, of attacks on white civil society, and of black protest, South Carolina's rulers capitalized on cohesive elite networks and an effective coercive apparatus to navigate safely the desegregation crisis at Clemson. This outcome made rulers' strategic accommodation to democratization pressures more likely. They capitalized on the state's external reputation to maintain order, deter interventions by national black protest organizations, and, where possible, limit federal oversight of party-state compliance with federal directives. By doing so, rulers accelerated the exit of white supremacist activists from the ruling party, and sped the party's incorporation of blacks and its reconciliation with the national party. Limiting the disruptive effects of democratization in the short term, South Carolina successfully harnessed the revolution. For South Carolina's rulers of the 1960s and early 1970s, this outcome was a salutary one, for it helped them retain their offices, pursue further ambitions within the national party, and exploit the state's reputation as a dignified, orderly site for capital investment and firm relocation. In the long run, however, South Carolina's harnessed revolution would be disastrous for the Democratic party.

Mississippi also resisted early democratization pressures. However, during the 1950s the state's decentralization of authority stymied reformers' attempts to overhaul the state's policing apparatus and pursue other institutional reforms. The party faction's dominance by White Citizens' Council (WCC) forces, coupled with the state's disorganized law enforcement, resulted in the debacle at Oxford. The federal military intervention exacerbated a white supremacist backlash to the university's desegregation that further corroded law enforcement and induced a massive intervention from national black protest organizations. An ensuing spiral of interventions and disorder resulted in substantial federal oversight of Mississippi's compliance with federal directives. An incredibly quick mobilization of black Mississippi occurred, but it did so outside of the confines of the ruling party. In the ensuing chaos of a fissured state Democratic party, relations with the national party became estranged and remained so into the mid-1970s. In sum, Mississippi's rulers stumbled through the 1960s. By failing to deter white supremacist violence, they unwittingly induced the violations of Mississippi "sovereignty" against which they had long railed. Ironically, however, this chaotic transition would reap benefits for future wielders of the Democratic party label, while slowing the state's economic development.

Finally, Georgia's white supremacist rulers narrowly escaped a collapse of the ruling party in the late 1940s. Securing the dominance of the segregationist Talmadge faction, they pursued a massive resistance to democratization pressures through the 1950s. In doing so, they damaged statewide networks of black protest. By the time black direct action movements swept the state, many of the forces of black protest in Atlanta—the likely engine of statewide black insurgency—had accommodated corporate interests by trading critical support in mayoral elections for meager policy benefits. This accommodation weakened statewide networks of black insurgency. Georgia's Black Belt activists were left largely on their own to deal with powerful county interests, violence, and intimidation. Atlanta's carefully developed reputation as a "dignified," compliant city reaped benefits for north Georgia, and helped deter substantial interventions by black protest organizations and the federal government in south Georgia. The two Georgias quickly diverged, as north Georgia experienced a harnessed revolution and south Georgia a protracted democratization.

This study argues that interactions between rulers and challengers produced different democratization processes, which generated important legacies for these states' politics and economics. Three types of objections might be raised here. First, rulers' agency and party-state institutions during transitions may have little effect on the democratizations that ensue; rather, differences in antecedent conditions may bear all the causal weight.<sup>79</sup> Second, politicians' agency at alleged key moments in the narratives may not be important. Rather, emerging secular differences in economic development,

black insurgency, or other potential causal forces since the beginning of the long transition may swamp the importance of rulers' responses to democratization pressures. Third, even if these forces do matter, ensuing modes of democratization may fail to produce important legacies for politics and economics. Differences since the 1970s in partisan change and economic development are due to longstanding (pretransition) differences across cases or have proximate sources. Chapters 10 and 11 wrestle with these issues.

This book, like the democratization of the South itself, unfolds slowly. The next chapter makes the case for interpreting the post-1890s South as a set of stable enclaves of authoritarian rule, and describes their founding and maintenance until serious democratization challenges began in the 1940s. Chapter 3 introduces Deep South enclaves as polities in their own right, describing their intraparty factions, party-state institutions, political economies, and prospects for black insurgency on the eve of the transition. Chapters 4 and 5 analyze the democratization challenges of the 1940s—the Supreme Court's abolition of the whites-only primary and President Harry Truman's commitment of the national Democratic party to the cause of racial equality—and compares the responses to them by Deep South enclaves. After a prologue that discusses *Brown v. Board of Education* and the region's "massive resistance" that followed, chapters 6, 7, and 8 assess how each enclave navigated the challenges of the 1950s and its chief college desegregation crisis in the early 1960s. Chapter 9 traces how the federal government and black protest organizations intervened in different ways in these enclaves. Chapter 10 compares how these enclaves experienced different modes of democratization in light of the deathblows of federal legislation, domestic insurgencies, and national party reform in the 1960s and early 1970s. In chapter 11, the book closes with a discussion of the legacies of these different paths out of Dixie and of the research agendas that emerge if a democratization approach to understanding the twentieth-century South is adopted.



Once called "not quite a nation within a nation, but the next thing to it," the South has long captured the imaginations of Americans. This fascination can be a problem. The region has long retained a mystical status over many writers, whose usual unadorned prose lapses into poetic imageries: Spanish moss, wisteria, fire hoses and police dogs, "strange fruit," and so on. By advancing a southern exceptionalism, the South can be pushed further out of analytical reach. Even when not romanticizing the region, many social scientists code observations that fall within the South with a "dummy" variable—the statistical equivalent of a shrug regarding *how* the South is different. The region becomes an undifferentiated, unexplored mass that,

even worse, renders “normal” the politics of another such mass: the “non-South.” The South must be reckoned with as distinctive, but should be approached with familiar tools of comparative historical analysis. In so doing, we can link the region—and its component parts—to other cases past and present.<sup>80</sup>

By framing the political development of the South as one of regime change, this book returns the study of American political development to the belated and uneven nature of the country’s consolidation of democratic rule. The United States has long seen itself as “*the* democratic nation.” Scholars have instead seen a democracy with limited, if constantly expanding, voting rights.<sup>81</sup> In contrast, I argue that the United States was not a fully democratic polity until preparations were well under way for the celebration of the bicentennial of the Declaration of Independence. Instead, it was a federal polity of representative democracy at the national level with durable enclaves of authoritarian rule. This fact is not principally “about” the South and its distinctive characteristics. Rather, authoritarian enclaves exist at the pleasure of the democracies in which they are allowed to form and endure. Over the lifespan of America’s enclaves, their host opened global trade routes, established colonies, won world wars, split atoms, visited the moon, prevailed in a geopolitical competition with the Soviet Union, and exported models for economics and politics throughout the world. While most of what follows concerns politics within three Deep South states, the broader story is most importantly one of *America’s* political development.<sup>82</sup>