

### Minor and major flaws of a widely used data set: the ICPSR 'German Weimar Republik data 1919-1933' under scrutiny

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## editorial

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This issue of Historical Social Research contains an article by Jürgen W. Falter and Wolf D. Gruner about a historical data set which has been prepared for machine-readable use by the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) in Ann Arbor/USA. The current article in Historical Social Research is intended to give possible users of these material information how to avoid minor flaws in the data; flaws which do not impair the merits which the ICPSR has gained by making available these data for machine-readable use.

MINOR AND MAJOR FLAWS OF A WIDELY USED DATA SET:  
THE ICPSR "GERMAN WEIMAR REPUBLIK DATA  
1919 - 1933" UNDER SCRUTINY

Jürgen W. Falter / Wolf D. Gruner<sup>+</sup>

The Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft and the Stiftung Volkswagenwerk are funding two separate but thematically connected research projects on elections and voting behaviour in Weimar Germany and Austria. The two research teams, headed by J. Falter, are based at the Hochschule der Bundeswehr in Munich (German Military University, Munich). Much of their work is, among other sources, drawing on the widely used ICPSR data set "German Weimar Republic Data 1919 - 1933" (ICPSR No. 0042) which is distributed in West Germany by the Cologne Zentralarchiv für empirische Sozialforschung.

1. Introduction: Two New Research Projects Established

The data set is of particular use for the Volkswagen project with the programmatic title "Voter Movements to National Socialism 1924 - 1933". This research project has a funding of almost 500.000 Marks for the next three years. Its research interest centers on questions about the correlates and causes of the National Socialist electoral successes, especially on the social and party-political background of the NSDAP voters, the economic and organizational conditions of the NSDAP surge in Germany and Austria, and the differences between the various waves of support for Hitler and his party between 1930 and 1933. Of further interest will be, among other aspects, the propensity of middle-class and working-class voters to join the Nazi electorate in the two countries. Finally the comparison between Germany and Austria should throw some additional light on the role of differing party systems, internal organizational structures and the external political framework of action for the stability of democratic political systems under strong economic and social strains.

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To pursue these goals we will have to supplement the ICPSR Weimar data set with additional information on the occupational, social and economical characteristics of the German electorate, and we furthermore face the necessity to create a wholly new data set on Austria, including the electoral results, demographic variables and socio-economic characteristics of the research units used. Since there is no public opinion data available from the Weimar area we will have to base our analysis totally on aggregate data.

The up to now the most comprehensive data set on Weimar elections in machine-readable form, the ICPSR file quoted above, contains almost complete electoral and some basic socio-demographic information about the Weimar national elections and plebiscites from 1920 to 1933, at the level of Land and Stadtkreise (counties, townships and cities). The data was drawn from official sources like the voluminous "Statistik des Deutschen Reiches".

Due to a multitude of administrative reforms the boundaries of these territorial units underwent significant changes between 1919 and 1933. These boundary changes not only make time-series analyses a quite tedious task, they also complicate the combination of census and electoral data which typically date from different years. In the following we will discuss some of the awkward problems encountered by the historical "psephologist" through those changes of administrative boundaries, and the way they are dealt with in the data set.

From earlier experiences with this data set - the first of the two authors was among the first to use the file whilst attending the 1970 Ann Arbor ICPSR summer course, the second got to know certain shortcomings of the file when attending a summer course on 'quantitative methods in History' at Essex University in 1973, heading the team on Weimar voting patterns - we were aware of the existence of some small mistakes in connection with particular elections and regions. Furthermore, there was a persisting rumour within the profession about other, more serious flaws in the data. Therefore, the members of the (earlier established) DFG research group underwent the extremely time-consuming, and at times quite boring task, to check every single absolute number in the data set against the official electoral and census statistics, as published by the Statistisches Reichsamt in "Statistik des Deutschen Reiches".

This effort which lasted for approximately three months (= between 1500 and 2000 man hours) did pay for itself quite convincingly. The members of our research team discovered an unexpectedly great number of inconsistencies between the ICPSR data set and the "Statistik des Deutschen Reiches". They mainly seem to be the results of punching errors. On the other hand there is a considerable number of more serious mistakes arising partly from interpretive misunderstandings and partly from the inadequate treatment of boundary changes by the Ann Arbor team.

In the following we will discuss various types of errors in detail,

pointing out the amount of administrative territorial reforms in Weimar Germany, citing examples from different elections and the 1925 census. Furthermore, we would like to show the empirical consequences of these minor and major flaws in the ICPSR data set in comparing the original with the corrected version for the 1928 Reichstag election.

The corrected data set will be distributed from the ICPSR, the ZA in Cologne or from QUANTUM in the near future. It will be gradually expanded by further census data within the next two or three years. Some additional material has already been gathered from the occupational, agrarian and tax statistics of 1933. It should be available in machine-readable form in the fall of 1982.

## 2. Some General Problems Concerning the ICPSR Data-set German Weimar Republic Data 1919 - 1933

The ICPSR data-set on the German Weimar Republic has been widely used by a community of investigators, interested in voting patterns and the political, social, and economic history of Weimar Germany. The data-set seemed to be quite useful for the election returns for the Reichstag 1920 - 1933, and for the Reichspräsident 1925 and 1932. In addition to this data it contained information on the type of employment of the German labour force and on the religious denomination for the administrative units (Land, Provinz, Regierungsbezirk, Stadt- und Landkreis). (1) The sources of the data collected are the respective volumes of the Statistik des Deutschen Reiches (StDR) issued by the Statistische Reichsamt in Berlin:

For the Reichstag-elections 1920 - 1930: StDR vols. 291/III (6.6.1920); 315/II,IV (4.5.1924/7.12.1924); 372/I,II (20.5.1928); 382/I,II (14.9.1930);

For the Reichspräsident-elections 1925 and 1932: StDR vols. 321 (29.3. and 26.4.1925); 427 (13.3. and 10.4.1932);

There is no specific evidence concerning the sources for the Reichstag-elections of July 31, 1932 (StDR vol. 434), November 6, 1932 (StDR vol. 434) and March 5, 1933 (StDR vol. 434). Despite many minor and major inaccuracies the sources for these elections seem to have been the publications of the Statistisches Reichsamt.

The occupational data is derived from StDR vols. 403 - 405 (population census, occupational and social classification for Ost- and Mitteldeutschland, Nord- and Westdeutschland, Hessen and Süddeutschland).

The urban-rural data were collected from StDR vol. 372/II (Wahlen zum Reichstag am 20. Mai 1928). (2)

It would be extremely useful to have additional information on the economic and social developments in Weimar Germany, for example the returns of the Census of June 16, 1933 (StDR vols. 450 - 470), in-

formation concerning foreign trade (StDR vols. 310, 317-319, 329-330, 339, 351, 366, 383) supplemented with data for 1930 - 1933 (3), the results of German income tax, wage tax, corporation tax and property tax (StDR 293, 312, 337, 348, 350, 353, 357, 359, 361, 375-376, 379, 388, 390-391, 394, 399, 430, 378, 442, 472, 482) and the development of public finance (StDR vols. 387, 437, 440, 375, 483). Some of this information will be gathered in the near future by our Volkswagen project.

In the ICPSR dictionary on "German Weimar Republic Data" the users are told that, where "possible, recalculations of the original data were performed in order to decrease the number of missing units over time". (4) They are given no information, however, as to the administrative basis used and are only warned: "The user is urged to use as population variable the variable attached to each election. Even where the population figures were obtained from the same census, these figures can differ due to change in the boundaries of the units". (5)

These comments raise the question of territorial aggregation and why the ICPSR team did not attach a detailed list of administrative changes as an appendix to the dictionary, as they did for the contents and procedure of the referenda regarding the confiscation of property of the former ruling nobility (June 20, 1926), and regarding the 'enslavement' of the German people (December 22, 1929). (6)

It is well known that there were major changes in the administrative units between 1919 and 1933, especially as far as Stadt- and Landkreise were concerned. These changes of administrative boundaries have not only been due to the incorporation of suburbs into urban districts, or from the separation in the light of a general tendency for administrative reform, i.e. the National government and the Länder governments were expecting substantial savings in the formation of larger administrative units of Kreis-level. The key word for this development was "Verwaltungsvereinfachung" (improvement of public administration).

An analysis of administrative reform in Germany since the Napoleonic Wars shows that this question was handled along different lines: A variety of administrative types as well as considerable differences with regard to the size and population of the administrative units at various levels were the results of these reforms. In most German states we have to distinguish between three administrative levels:

1. the municipality (politische Gemeinde),
2. the (lower) district or Kreis (Kreis, Bezirksamt, Amt, Drostei),
3. the (upper) administrative district (Regierungsbezirk, Kreis, Landeskommisärbezirk, Landdrostei, Oberamt, Amtshauptmannschaft and Provinz (Hesse)).

In addition we have as a fourth unit within the organization of administration the "Provinz" (province) in Prussia.

The administrative powers of the third administrative level were varied. Most "Regierungspräsidenten" had to send weekly, fortnightly

or monthly reports to the respective Ministry of the Interior. These reports are based on detailed accounts from the "Landräte". These reports have proved to be very useful for research. (7) In Bade the Landeskommissär was a member of the Ministry. (8)

In Weimar Germany the average population of the smaller administrative district (Kreis) was approximately 64,000 residents, if we do not take into consideration the urban districts of Berlin (4024,286 residents) and Hamburg (1152,523). The average population of the smaller administrative district (Kreis) was varying from state to state within the German Reich. After the administrative reforms of the late 1920s the smallest unit was the "kreisfreie Stadt" Rodach near Coburg (2832 residents). Before that period, according to the 1925 census these were the "Kreise":

Schwalenberg (Lippe)	:	941 residents
Barntrup (Lippe)	:	1957 residents
Horn (Lippe)	:	2477 residents
Feldberg (Mecklenburg)	:	1577 residents
Mirow (Mecklenburg-St.)	:	1645 residents

Whereas for example in the state of Wurtemberg the "Oberamtsverfassung" hardly underwent any change from the Middle Ages until the administrative reform of 1938, quite the opposite was true of Bade. (9) Generally speaking there was a continuity of local government in most of the German states with some notable exceptions to the rule.

Considerable change had taken place in the Ruhr area since the peak of the industrialization in Germany in the last quarter of the 19th century. Due to the growing urban population in the Ruhr area there was an almost permanent formation of new Stadtkreise (urban districts) and Landkreise (rural districts) cut out from then existing smaller administrative districts at Kreis-level. (10) In addition the economic depression of 1929 - 1933 had led to rigorous changes. Numerous Kreise were dissolved. Between 1925 and 1933 a total of 115 smaller administrative districts lost their independence, among them 20 urban districts and 95 rural districts. (11) The greatest changes took place in Prussia. 65 districts out of 542 were dissolved, e.g.:

Province Hannover	:	21
Rhine Province	:	15
Lower Silesia	:	9
Westphalia	:	6

In only four Prussian provinces were there no administrative changes at all. Significant administrative reform ("Gebietsreform") occurred in the state of Lippe where the number of independent districts was reduced from 22 to 2, and in the two Mecklenburgs where 9 smaller districts were dissolved. (12) Before 1925 major administrative reform took place in the Thuringian states.

Major changes also occurred at provincial and Land-level. By Reichsgesetz of March 23, 1928 the state of Waldeck was incorporated into the Prussian province of Hesse-Nassau. The Kreis Wetzlar, belonging to the Rhine province (Regierungsbezirk Koblenz), was incorporated

into Hesse-Nassau (1.8.1932). In 1932 certain "Regierungsbezirke" in Pommerania (Stralsund), Saxonia (Bautzen) and Bavaria (fusion of Niederbayern and Oberpfalz, Mittelfranken and Oberfranken) were dissolved. This did not have significant impact, but were the results of a want for "Verwaltungsvereinfachung".

Nevertheless the consequences of administrative reform cannot be neglected, if one is interested in comparative analysis over time. The "Gebietsveränderungen" in Weimar Germany therefore have produced considerable problems for research as will be seen below. What we need for the purposes of comparative research are reliable data for all of the smaller administrative districts in Weimar Germany between 1919 and 1933. That means, the existing data set on Weimar Germany has to take account of the numerous territorial changes during that period. They should be documented within practical limits.

The number of quantitative historical and social research on Weimar elections and voting behaviour is, according to our knowledge, rather restricted. (13) This is especially true for those research efforts where, not only a single town, county or region but the Reich as a whole is concerned. Among these latter investigations only two are known by the authors to be based on the ICPSR data set. Four were using their own data. These two works drawing on the ICPSR Weimar data file, have apparently ignored the various boundary changes. Wernette (1974) for example, who even seems to have assisted at the creation of the ICPSR Weimar data set, speaks of 1127 units of observation with no hint whatsoever about aggregation problems and the multitude of territorial reforms administered between 1928 and 1933, the very period he is dealing with, in his otherwise sophisticated analysis of the sources of National Socialist electoral success.

As has been shown above, the number of territorial units shrank during this time span by more than 10 %, not to speak of those units which survived the reforms only by name but not in substance. This makes it highly plausible that Wernette treated those territorial units which ceased to exist between 1928 and 1933, or which came into existence during this time span as missing values. The even larger number of counties and townships which underwent considerable territorial change, and which therefore could not be easily combined with the 1925 census data of the ICPSR file, remained undetected by Wernette, and thus were treated as units unchanged over time. (14)

The same is true for Levines dissertation of 1976 (15) analyzing not only the 1930 Reichstag election but also the developments of electoral behaviour between 1928 and 1930, i.e. the period of time when most of the boundary changes took place. On page 159 he talks about 1062 territorial units included in his cluster analysis. This figure, however, seems to be too high to be regarded as the result of an adequate consideration of

- (a) units merged with other units,
- (b) units divided up between adjacent counties and townships,
- (c) or newly created units.

Unfortunately, Levine does not comment on boundary changes at all.



It is highly probable that he was simply not aware of them and the problems created by the territorial reforms. The empirical results and analytical conclusions of his as well as of Wernette's investigation therefore will have to be scrutinized in the light of this possible neglect of boundary changes.

Two other dissertations by Meckstroth (1972), and Waldman (1973), seem to be based on data sets specifically created by the authors for their analyses. (16) Quite understandably both of them are fully aware of the boundary changes and the aggregation problems mentioned above. Meckstroth and Waldman tackle these problems quite differently: The former leaves out of consideration those territorial units which have been changed between two consecutive elections and thus deals with different numbers of Kreise for each pair of elections (709 for 1928/30, 901 for 1930/1932A, and 879 for 1932A/1932B). He is able to do this since he is only analyzing changes between parties, leaving out of consideration all questions concerning the social bases of electoral support for the different political groupings. He, however, does not discuss the possibility that some of his results may be blurred due to units left out of his analysis. This possibility will be analyzed in the near future by members of the Volkswagen research project.

Waldman, on the other hand, was not able to cope with boundary changes in the same manner as Meckstroth, since his analysis centers on the social and economical conditions of NSDAP electoral successes. To pursue these questions he had to combine census data and electoral statistics. Since the two last censuses closest to the period in question were held in 1925 and 1933 he had to merge quite a number of adjacent units of observation into kinds of super-counties, to create territorial units stable over time so that census categories could be correlated with, or regressed on party percentages. In doing so he ended up with 747 administrative units some of them as large as provinces or "Regierungsbezirke". His cutting points were defined by population movements through boundary changes above 1 %. Perhaps a higher, less restricting cutting point of, say 5 %, as practiced by the recently established Norwegian "Between Disruption and Continuity-project" (17) might prove to be more adequate, since a larger number of counties and townships will be preserved. (18)

As has been shown above the boundary changes were not at all restricted to the rural parts of Germany. The number of townships and independent cities (kreisunmittelbare Städte) shrank between 1925 and 1933. At the same time a number of cities "swallowed" large chunks of the surrounding counties and bordering towns. As a result they not only grew in size and population, but underwent some demographic and socio-economic changes as well. Therefore boundary changes induced by administrative reforms should also be taken into consideration by those investigations relying exclusively on city data. The only two analysis which are based on a city level with the whole Reich in focus, are the theses of Childers (1976) (19), and Pratt (1948). (20) While the latter investigated the July 1932 Reichstag election, on the basis of 193 out of 215 towns and cities over 25 000

inhabitants, using the 1933 census as his main data source, the former analyzes all national elections in Weimar Germany from 1924 to 1933 in urban communities of over 15 000 inhabitants. The aggregation problems are, of course, far more tedious for Childers' diachronic analysis than for Prattis synchronic investigation. Unfortunately, Childers does not indicate in his dissertation or his article in *The Journal of Contemporary History* (1976) how he dealt with these and other related problems. Anyway, the supposition seems to be founded that Childers, too, was either not aware of the fact of territorial reforms in Weimar Germany or that he did not pay too much attention to their potential impact upon his findings. In the forthcoming publication of his analysis (21), however, he will take into consideration all boundary changes resulting in population movements of more than 2 % (personal message to Dr. Gruner).

As a result of this review of the relevant literature on Weimar voting behavior, we found out that only two out of six analyses so far have considered boundary changes due to administrative reforms as potential sources of bias for their findings. The other analyses, particularly those relying on rural as well as urban administrative districts, have to be used with care. It is quite possible that their results are severely blurred, not only by the data errors of the ICPSR file mentioned above, but also by their total neglect of boundary changes. It will be one of the main initial tasks of our Volkswagen Foundation research project to correct these flaws, and to cope in an adequate way with the aggregation problems inherent in the data set, i.e. to find suitable cutting points in order to create territorial units stable over time, which will permit extended time-series analysis and the combination of census and electoral data.

### 3. Missing Data, Punching Errors and Related Problems

It would be very convenient for the user of the ICPSR German Weimar Republic Data set, if there were information on the administrative units which did change (e.g. marked by an asterix), how they have changed over time and how the recalculations of the ICPSR team were made, instead of inserting seven nines for units of analysis which were not in existence as Kreise for particular elections. It would only have meant minor additional work to insert data for units which were to become independent "Stadtkreise" in the course of administrative changes since 1919.

#### 3.1 Towns Which Were to Become "Stadtkreise"

The index number used in the data set for towns incorporated into a Kreis is 4 whereas for independent Kreise the index number is 3.

Examples:

##### 3.1.1 Case no. 782 Bad Reichenhall (Bavaria):

For the Reichstag elections of 1930, 1932/I,II and 1933 and the Reichs-

präsident-election of 1932 Bad Reichenhall appears as a "Stadtkreis". It had become "kreisunmittelbar" in 1929. Before that period it was incorporated into the Bezirksamt Berchtesgaden, i.e. the election returns for the Reichstag and Reichspräsident 1919, 1920, 1924, 1925, and 1928 will be found sub "Berchtesgaden" (case no. 783) in the respective volumes of the Statistik des Deutschen Reiches. This is also true for the 1925 census. For comparative purposes, e.g. if one tries to follow up voting patterns over time, it might be quite useful to collect all the important data before the unit became an independent Kreis. These data should appear on the print-out as follows:

782          4    Bad Reichenhall    (e.g. Reichstag election of May 20,  
1928)

(var. 058)	population (16.5.1925)	8274
(var. 059)	eligible voters	6279
(var. 060)	votes cast	4627
(var. 062)	valid votes cast	4535
(var. 061)	invalid votes cast	92
(var. 063)	SPD	1328
(var. 064)	DNVP	679
(var. 065)	(Zentrum) BVP	1320
(var. 066)	DVP	475
(var. 067)	KPD	33
(var. 068)	DDP	186
(var. 069)	WP	67
(var. 070)	NSDAP	100

### 3.1.2 Case no. 776 Viersen (Prussia, Rhine Province):

Viersen was formed as a "Stadtkreis" on August 1, 1929, i.e. the election returns for the Reichstag and the Reichspräsident since that period can be found in the respective volumes of the StDR sub voce "Viersen".

Before 1929 Viersen was incorporated into the Kreis Gladbach (case no. 757). The 'missing data' for the town of Viersen for the census of 1925 and the election return can be found sub voce Gladbach. It is therefore no problem adding the missing data for 1919 - 1928.

### 3.1.3 Case no. 627 Fulda (Prussia, province Hesse-Nassau):

The town of Fulda became an independent Stadtkreis on April 1, 1927. Before that period it was incorporated into the Kreis Fulda (case no. 626). In the ICPSR Weimar data set even before 1927 both are inserted as separate units which is clearly wrong. For the period from 1919 to 1927 we have to designate the town of Fulda code number 4. The data concerning the municipality of Fulda have to be added to case no. 626. Take e.g. the Reichstag-election for June 6, 1920:

626          3    Fulda (Kreis)

(Var. 005)	population October 8, 1919	66833
	- not August 10! -	

(var. 008)	eligible voters	38166
(var. 009)	votes cast	33698
(var. 011)	valid votes	33522
(var. 010)	invalid votes	176

627	4	Fulda (town)	
(var. 005)	population October 8, 1919	23881	
(var. 008)	eligible voters	14314	
(var. 009)	votes cast	12097	
(var. 011)	valid votes	12040	
(var. 010)	invalid votes	57	

Comparably inaccurate aggregations can also be found for cases no. 613 Siegen (town) and 612 Siegen (rural district) or for cases no. 531 (Bottrop), 536 (Gladbeck) and 540 (Osterfeld). At the time of the 1920 Reichstag elections these towns were incorporated into the Kreis Siegen (case no. 612) or Recklinghausen-Land (case no. 541).

3.1.4 Case no. 642 Marburg (Prussia, province Hesse-Nassau):  
On April 1, 1929 the Kreis Marburg was dissolved. In its place the urban district of Marburg and the rural district of Marburg (cases nos. 644, 643) were formed.  
The 'missing data' for the town of Marburg for the census of 1925 and the elections before 1929 can be found sub voce Marburg. It therefore would have been no problem adding the missing data for 1919 - 1928, inserting it into the data set for case no. 644 4 Marburg (town)

3.2 Kreise of the Data set (Data type code 3) which occur only once or have never existed:

Examples:

3.2.1 Case no. 71 Nowawes (town incorporated into the Kreis Teltow):  
The correct data type code would have been 4

16.6.1925	population:	26975
	Catholics:	1496
	Total Labour force:	15032
	Employed Forestry, Agriculture:	328

3.2.2 Case no. 22 Heydekrug (part of the province of East Prussia until 1919)  
As a result of the Treaty of Versailles the Kreis Heydekrug from 1924 (May 17) - 1939 (March 22) formed part of the Memelgebiet which was occupied by France since January 1920. From 1924 - 1939 it was an autonomous region of Lithuania. (22) Therefore, the population of Heydekrug only participated in the 1920 Reichstag election.

3.2.3 Case no. 916 Königsberg:  
Municipality of the Bezirksamt Hofheim (case no. 971). Before the union of Saxe-Coburg with Bavaria in 1920, Königsberg was an exclave of the Duchy of Coburg in Bavaria. Since 1927 the official name was Königsberg i. Bayern.

8.10.1919	939 residents
16. 6.1925	997 residents
16. 6.1933	970 residents

There are elections returns for the Reichstag 1920. In this special case it would have made sense to aggregate Königsberg and Hofheim, documenting this decision and changing the respective data for Oberfranken and Unterfranken. There would have been no alteration concerning the Reichswahlkreis 29, for the Regierungsbezirke Oberfranken, Mittelfranken and Unterfranken formed the "Reichswahlkreis" Franconia.

### 3.2.4 Case no. 1146 Bonndorf (Bade):

Bonndorf was a county ceded by Wurtemberg in the Treaty of July 12, 1806 to Bade. At the end of the First World War Bonndorf was an "Amt" within the Kreisverband Waldshut. On January 18, 1924 it was dissolved. Its municipalities were incorporated into the Ämter Donaueschingen, Neustadt and Waldshut. (23)

Here again the question of aggregation arises, i.e. should the returns for the municipalities of the Amt Bonndorf for the Reichstag elections of 1920 be added to cases no. 1147 (Donaueschingen), 1156 (Waldshut) and 1165 (Neustadt)? It is inaccurate, however, to procede as was done with regard to the Amt Breisach. The municipalities of this Amt were incorporated into the Ämter Freiburg (case no. 1160) and Emmendingen (case no. 1159). Thus the Amt Breisach cannot be aggregated to Freiburg (cf. Reichstag elections 1920, case no. 1160). This is also true of the Amt St. Blasien which was partly incorporated into the Amt Waldshut (case no. 1156), partly into the Amt Neustadt (case no. 1165). The same problems arise in regard to case no. 1186 Boxberg (Bade): By decree of January 18, 1924 the municipalities of the Amt Boxberg were incorporated into the Ämter Adelsheim and Tauberbischofsheim (cases nos. 1185 and 1192).

There is a multitude of errors within the data, some of them shall be documented in the following.

### 3.3 Major and minor errors of the data set:

Examples:

#### 3.3.1 Population census of June 16, 1925:

Case no. 9 Königsberg/Preußen (Stadtkreis):

corrected: 16.6.1925	50991 residents
ICPSR :	44251 residents

Case no. 10 Königsberg/Preußen (Landkreis):

corrected: 16.6.1925	279739 residents
ICPSR :	286666 residents

Case no. 30 Tilsit-Ragnit:

corrected: 16.6.1925	57405 residents
ICPSR :	57349 residents

Case no. 101 Zauch-Belzig:

corrected: 16.6.1925	92266 residents	2081 Catholics
ICPSR :	90797 residents	2052 Catholics

Case no. 630 Hanau (Landkreis):

corrected: 16.6.1925	63453 residents	12216 Catholics
ICPSR :	53772 residents	10324 Catholics

Case no. 817 Dillingen:

corrected: 16.6.1925	6091 residents	5629 Catholics
ICPSR :	69091 residents	63847 Catholics !!!

Case no. 1094 Heilbronn:

corrected: 16.6.1925	81773 residents	12487 Catholics
ICPSR :	97467 residents	14912 Catholics !!!

Case no. 1113 Oehringen:

corrected: 16.6.1925	27173 residents	945 Catholics
ICPSR :	33664 residents	1178 Catholics

Remark: Do these figures already include the 13 municipalities of the Amt Weinsberg, which were incorporated into the Amt Oehringen in 1926? Concerning the data for the cases nos. 240 - 258 the only ones being correct are the nos. 243 (Falkenberg), 249 (Kreuzburg) and 255 Oppeln (urban district).

3.3.2 Election returns: Reichstag election May 20, 1928

Examples:

Case no. 1 Ostpreußen:

var. 059 eligible voters	corrected: 1339372
ICPSR :	1338509
var. 060 votes cast	corrected: 1009652
ICPSR :	1009168
var. 062 valid votes	no difference
var. 061 invalid votes	corrected: 10845
ICPSR :	10361
var. 063 SPD	corrected: 268007
ICPSR :	268308
var. 064 DNVP	corrected: 313089
ICPSR :	312845
var. 065 Zentrum	corrected: 74271
ICPSR :	74280
var. 066 DVP	corrected: 97968
ICPSR :	97990
var. 067 KPD	corrected: 94949
ICPSR :	94946
var. 068 DDP	corrected: 38343
ICPSR :	38392

var. 069	WP	corrected:	20431
		ICPSR	: 20416
var. 070	NSDAP	corrected:	8097
		ICPSR	: 8114
var. 071	DBP	corrected:	8796
		ICPSR	: 8739
var. 073	VRP	corrected:	16433
		ICPSR	: 16299
var. 074	other parties	corrected:	58423
		ICPSR	: 58478

Case no. 12 Mohrungen:

var. 060	votes cast	corrected:	22657
		ICPSR	: 22652
var. 061	invalid votes	corrected:	267
		ICPSR	: 262
var. 063	SPD	corrected:	7069
		ICPSR	: 7281
var. 064	DNVP	corrected:	10185
		ICPSR	: 9973
var. 069	WP	corrected:	380
		ICPSR	: 365
var. 070	NSDAP	corrected:	73
		ICPSR	: 83
var. 071	DBP	corrected:	141
		ICPSR	: 112
var. 074	other parties	corrected:	1322
		ICPSR	: 1356

There are virtually hundreds of such minor inaccuracies for the elections of 1928 alone, not to speak of the other elections, in the ICPSR data set.

Cases nos. 437 - 441 Land Bremen:

There are no data collected in the data set.

Case no. 437 Bremen:

var. 058	population as of June 16, 1925	338846
var. 059	eligible votes	248701
var. 060	votes cast	200087
var. 062	valid votes	198378
var. 061	invalid votes	1709
var. 063	SPD	83539
var. 064	DNVP	15323
var. 065	Zentrum	4825
var. 066	DVP	37244
var. 067	KPD	19622

var. 068	DDP	19379
var. 069	WP	11808
var. 070	NSDAP	2065
var. 071	DBP	79
var. 072	DLV	666
var. 073	VRP	1001
var. 074	other parties	2827

Case no. 438 Bremen (Land):

var. 058	15624
var. 059	10966
var. 060	8791
var. 061	48
var. 063	4471
var. 064	655
var. 065	32
var. 066	1239
var. 067	283
var. 068	859
var. 069	226
var. 070	63
var. 071	16
var. 072	54
var. 073	28
var. 074	517

Case no. 439 Bremen (Stadt):

var. 058	294966
var. 059	216487
var. 060	175331
var. 062	173798
var. 061	1533
var. 063	72721
var. 064	11298
var. 065	4269
var. 066	33598
var. 067	18169
var. 068	17333
var. 069	11104
var. 070	1861
var. 071	59
var. 072	543
var. 073	728
var. 074	2115

Case no. 440 Bremerhaven:

var. 058	23896
var. 059	17966
var. 060	13347
var. 062	13250
var. 061	97
var. 063	5196
var. 064	2834



var. 065	468
var. 066	1869
var. 067	1021
var. 068	995
var. 069	309
var. 070	100
var. 071	3
var. 072	57
var. 073	217
var. 074	181

Case no. 441 Vegesack:

var. 058	4360
var. 059	3282
var. 060	2618
var. 062	2587
var. 061	31
var. 063	851
var. 064	536
var. 065	56
var. 066	538
var. 067	149
var. 068	192
var. 069	169
var. 070	41
var. 071	1
var. 072	12
var. 073	28
var. 074	14

Case no. 437 Bremen (state) Reichstagsselections July 31, 1932:

Even where valid information is given in the ICPSR data set in regard to Bremen the figures contain many inaccuracies, e.g.

var. 093	eligible voters	corrected: 259407
		ICPSR : 259464
var. 094	votes cast	corrected: 214919
		ICPSR : 214917
var. 096	valid votes	corrected: 212855
		ICPSR : 212856
var. 095	invalid votes	corrected: 2064
		ICPSR : 2061
var. 098	NSDAP	corrected: 64691
		ICPSR : 64692

Case no. 269 Jerichow I Reichstag election of June 6, 1920:

var. 005	population as of Octbre 8, 1919	
		corrected: 80002
		ICPSR : 56976

var. 008	eligible voters	corrected:	48603
		ICPSR	: 33907
var. 009	votes cast	corrected:	39213
		ICPSR	: 26769
var. 011	valid votes	corrected:	39102
		ICPSR	: 26691
var. 010	invalid votes	corrected:	111
		ICPSR	: 78
var. 012	DNVP	corrected:	7785
		ICPSR	: 6810
var. 013	DVP	corrected:	4177
		ICPSR	: 2526
var. 014	Zentrum	corrected:	312
		ICPSR	: 118
var. 015	DDP	corrected:	5636
		ICPSR	: 3433
var. 016	SPD	corrected:	14960
		ICPSR	: 9935
var. 017	USPD	corrected:	437
		ICPSR	: 132

Remark: Up to now we have not been able to find out what reasons might be responsible for these truly tremendous discrepancies.

### 3.3.3 Social Data (Census June 16, 1925):

As will be seen below similar flaws are to be found in the (rather sparse) census data for 1925.

Examples:

Cases nos. 568 - 584 Lippe (case no. 567):

Case no. 571 Blomberg (Land):

var. 182	inhabitants as of June 16, 1925	corrected:	3984
		ICPSR	: 13659
var. 425	number of Catholics 1925	corrected:	164
		ICPSR	: 528
var. 208	total labour force 1925	corrected:	2470
		ICPSR	: 8121 !
var. 186	wage earners agriculture, forestry, fishery 1925	corrected:	1482
		ICPSR	: 4682

Case no. 573 Brake (Land):

var. 182		corrected:	9832
		ICPSR	: 33253

var. 425	corrected:	131
	ICPSR	: 1249
var. 208	corrected:	5685
	ICPSR	: 19185
var. 186	corrected:	2302
	ICPSR	: 9598

Case no. 574 Detmold (Land):

var. 182	corrected:	11989
	ICPSR	: 37604
var. 425	corrected:	202
	ICPSR	: 1434
var. 208	corrected:	6847
	ICPSR	: 21811
var. 186	corrected:	2392
	ICPSR	: 8225

Case no. <sup>x</sup> Hohenhausen:

var. 182	7155
var. 425	46
var. 208	4151
var. 186	2262

Case no. <sup>x</sup> Horn (Land):

var. 182	7429
var. 425	438
var. 208	4279
var. 186	1710

Case no. <sup>x</sup> Lage (Land):

var. 182	16592
var. 425	258
var. 208	9825
var. 186	3863

Case no. 580 Lipperode-Cappel:

var. 182	corrected:	1594
	ICPSR	: no data
var. 425	corrected:	937
	ICPSR	: no data
var. 208	corrected:	860
	ICPSR	: no data
var. 186	corrected:	260
	ICPSR	: no data

Case no. 581 Oehrlinghausen:

var. 182	corrected:	10961
	ICPSR	: 3071

var. 425	corrected:	249
	ICPSR :	71

Case no. 582 Schötmar (Land):

var. 182	corrected:	11265
	ICPSR :	19155

var. 425	corrected:	155
	ICPSR :	226

The figures for variable 208 and 186 are accurate. The same applies to case no. 581 above.

Case no. <sup>x</sup> Schwalenberg (Land):

var. 182	5401
var. 425	1024
var. 208	3149
var. 186	1903

Case no. <sup>x</sup> Sternberg-Barntrup:

var. 182	10689
var. 425	142
var. 208	6402
var. 186	3671

Case no. <sup>x</sup> Schieder:

var. 182	4274
var. 425	102
var. 208	2502
var. 186	1287

Case no. <sup>x</sup> Varenholz:

var. 182	5577
var. 425	28
var. 208	2947
var. 186	1363

All above cases marked with an asterix (<sup>x</sup>) will obtain new code numbers in the corrected data set, since the aggregations in the ICPSR data set are far from adequate.

Some more examples shall further illustrate the many minor and major errors of the ICPSR data, e.g.

Case no. 651 Wiesbaden (Regierungsbezirk):

var. 182	corrected:	1304573
	ICPSR :	1314254

var. 425	corrected:	489807
	ICPSR :	479355

The figures for variables no. 208 and 186 are accurate.

Case no. 1051 Flöha:

var. 425	corrected:	1592
	ICPSR	: 2480

Case no. 1056 Stollberg:

var. 182	corrected:	80106
	ICPSR	: 80501

Case no. <sup>x</sup> Weinsberg:

There are no data for this Oberamt in the state of Wurtemberg. This Oberamt was dissolved in 1926. Its municipalities were incorporated into the Oberämter Heilbronn (19), Öhringen (13) and Hall (2).

var. 182	23675
var. 425	832
var. 208	16245
var. 186	10110

The figures for var. 182 (population as of June 16, 1925) and var. 425 (Catholics 1925) also differ for the cases

no. 1092 Hall:

var. 182	corrected:	28400
	ICPSR	: 29890
var. 425	corrected:	2122
	ICPSR	: 2242

no. 1094 Heilbronn:

var. 182	corrected:	81773
	ICPSR	: 97467
var. 425	corrected:	12487
	ICPSR	: 14912

no. 1113 Öhringen:

var. 182	corrected:	27173
	ICPSR	: 33664
var. 425	corrected:	945
	ICPSR	: 1178

As we know the Oberamt Weinsberg was incorporated into these Oberämter. But if you add up the respective figures (corrected data nos. 1092, 1094, 1113 + Weinsberg / ICPSR data for 1092, 1094, 1113) the same differ substantially. In this connection it might be of some interest that the ICPSR totals for the state of Wurtemberg (case no. 1071) also differ from the respective census data of the Statistik des Deutschen Reiches.

Despite all the major and minor mistakes listed up in this report the authors have to confess that nevertheless they have to appreciate the work of the ICPSR team for historical and social research greatly.

#### 4. Some Statistical Consequences

The aggregation problems, punching errors and even the more substantial mistakes of the ICPSR data set pointed out above are evident. Most of the minor inaccuracies seem to be the result of quite common coding and punching unreliabilities. In addition, the fault detecting devices of the ICPSR team seem to have worked rather crudely. Otherwise the minor inconsistencies which only affect the last digits of the data cannot be explained. Despite of all these minor and major flaws within the original, i.e. the uncorrected ICPSR Weimar data set, however, their overall consequences are far less serious than might be assumed by the reader. This at least should be true for most analyses at the Reich level. Table 4.1 gives the means and standard deviations of some variables in their corrected and uncorrected version. The problems created by aggregation errors, however, have been controlled for. Therefore, only inaccuracies of the data proper are influencing the differences in means and standard deviations.

Table 4.1: Differences in means and standard deviations

Variable	Mean		Standard Deviation	
	uncorrected	corrected	uncorrected	corrected
total population	58448.064	58188.317	75877.424	75913.734
voter turnout	29152.525	29063.297	43006.656	43033.647
SPD	8538.154	8461.230	15595.192	15510.850
DNVP	4109.805	4082.076	6191.415	6165.293
Z/BVP	4380.056	4337.294	7184.544	7150.245
DDP/VRP	1398.089	1401.197	3461.108	3474.543
KPD	3054.362	3040.588	8178.459	8142.636
NSDAP	760.552	753.767	1775.278	1774.767
Catholics	18971.053	18706.055	35216.791	34673.734
Total Labor Force Agriculture	9138.918	9063.798	6678.737	6677.876

Table 4.1 shows quite clearly that after correcting for territorial inconsistencies of the data the differences between the ICPSR version and our corrected version at least for the 1928 elections and some of the demographic material is quite negligible. Differences can easily be detected. But they should blur correlational and regression analyses only to a minor extent. Thus, most of the empirical investigations cited above which base their data analysis on the original ICPSR data set should produce, at least from the point of the data used, valid results. Correlation coefficients and regression weights will be only slightly biased by the inaccuracies pointed out.

The aggregation problems left out of this comparison prove to be much more important. The confrontation of the two data sets, be it corrected or uncorrected, without the aggregational inconsistencies eliminated shows considerably stronger discrepancies than those demonstrated in table 4.1. Correlation coefficients and regression weights thus should be much more affected as is the case with pure data inconsistencies. Therefore, we would like to encourage the future analyst of Weimar elections to use the corrected, territorially adjusted version of the data set. It should be available to the public in approximately one year and will contain a multitude of additional variables not contained in the original data set distributed by the ICPSR.

#### FOOTNOTES

- \* We would like to thank our collaborators Irmgard Herzog, Dagmar Lüder, Karl Neugebauer and Siegfried Schumann who have been of great help during the tough work of correcting the ICPSR German Weimar Republic data. We also are grateful to Mrs. Heumann, our data-typist, and to Mr. Dotzler, our programmer, who gave their indispensable support in correcting and recoding the respective data for us.
- 1 Cf. for the "Wahlkreise" and "Wahlkreisverbände" Reichsgesetzblatt No. 87/1920 (April, 27), Appendix p. 636 ff. and Reichsgesetzblatt No. 18/1924 (March, 8), Appendix p. 159 ff.
- 2 Cf. the Dictionary "German Weimar Republic Data 1919 - 1933", Appendix C, p. VI.
- 3 These missing data on trade figures might be collected from governmental sources e.g. the files of the Reichswirtschaftsministerium etc..
- 4 Ibid., p. 1.
- 5 Ibid., p. following p. 31 (notes).
- 6 Cf. Appendix B.
- 7 Cf. e.g. Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Munich Ministry of the Interior (MA) 102135 ff..
- 8 Since 1863 the four "Kreise" (Seekreis, Oberrheinkreis, Mittelrheinkreis and Unterrheinkreis) were put under the direct control of the

Ministry of the Interior. For controlling the government of the Kreise and local selfgovernment four Landeskommissäre were appointed, who had a seat and a vote in the Ministry. In 1865 four Landeskommissariate were formed:

1. Konstanz, Villingen, Waldshut
2. Lörrach, Freiburg, Offenburg
3. Karlsruhe, Baden
4. Mannheim, Heidelberg, Mosbach

cf. Staatsarchiv Freiburg, Bestand LK Konstanz and in general Akademie für Raumforschung und Landesplanung (Ed.), Verwaltungsgrenzen in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland seit Beginn des 19. Jahrhunderts. Hannover, 1977, p. 319 ff..

- 9 Cf. Verwaltungsgrenzen (s.n. 7), p. 326 ff. and p. 335 ff.
- 10 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 206 ff.. See esp. Helmut Croon, Die verwaltungsmäßige Gliederung des mittleren Ruhrgebietes im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert. (=Bochum und das mittlere Ruhrgebiet, hrsg. von der Gesellschaft für Geographie und Geologie Bochum. Paderborn, 1965, p. 59 - 64); J. Balthasar, Eingemeindungspolitik und Verwaltungsorganisation. Eine Studie über kommunale Veränderungen des mittleren Ruhrgebietes. Köln, Berlin, 1970.
- 11 Cf. StDR vol. 451/I, p. 27.
- 12 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 26 f. (for details). For the two Mecklenburg (Schwerin, Strelitz) see Georg Wilhelm Sante (Ed.), Geschichte der deutschen Länder vom Wiener Kongreß bis zur Gegenwart, Würzburg, 1971, p. 620 f. and Statistische Nachrichten des Landes Mecklenburg-Schwerin Jg. 1/1925, Schwerin, 1925. For today's Hesse, i.e. former province Hesse-Nassau, most Kreise of the former Volksstaat Hessen, see Hessisches Statistisches Landesamt (Ed.), Historisches Gemeindeverzeichnis für Hessen. H. 2: Gebietsänderungen der hessischen Gemeinden und Kreise 1834 bis 1967. Wiesbaden, o. J.; Verwaltungsgrenzen, p. 238 ff., for Bavaria see Bayerisches Statistisches Landesamt (Ed.), Historisches Gemeindeverzeichnis. Die Einwohnerzahlen der Gemeinden Bayerns in der Zeit von 1840 bis 1952. Beiträge zur Statistik Bayerns H. 192, München, 1953.
- 13 A survey is given in Jürgen W. Falter, Wählerbewegungen zur NSDAP 1924 - 1933. Methodische Probleme - empirisch abgesicherte Erkenntnisse - offene Fragen. (= Otto Büsch (Ed.), Wählerbewegungen in der europäischen Geschichte. Berlin, 1980, p. 159 - 202) and *idem*, Wer verhalf der NSDAP zum Sieg? Neue Forschungsergebnisse zum parteipolitischen und sozialen Hintergrund der NSDAP-Wähler 1924 - 1933. (= aus politik und zeitgeschichte. Beil. zur Wochenzeitschrift Das Parlament 28/29 v. 14.7.1979, p. 3 - 21) and *idem*, Radicalization of the middle classes or mobilization of the unpolitical? (= Social Science Information 20/2, 1981, pp. 389 - 430).
- 14 See Richard Wernette, Political Violence and German Elections: 1930 and July 1932. (Ph. D. Diss. University of Michigan, 1974). W. does, indeed, speak consistently of 1100 Stadt- and Landkreise (e.g. p. 52, p. 62) when dealing with the various pairs of successive elections. He does not indicate that there remained only about 950 of those units in 1932.



- 15 Mark Howard Levine, Who voted for Hitler? Revisited: A Cluster Analysis of the Bases of Increased Nazi Support in the 1930 Reichstag Election. Ph. D. Diss. Bowling Green State University, 1976 (microfilm).
- 16 Theodore M. Meckstroth, Conditions of partisan realignments: a study of electoral change. Ph. D. Diss. University of Minnesota, 1972 (University microfilms), Loren K. Waldman, Models of mass movements - the case of the Nazis, Ph. D. Diss. University of Chicago, Dep. of Political Science, Chicago, 1973.
- 17 Between Disruption and Continuity. German Electoral Contest from 1870 to 1980. Institute of Comparative Politics. University of Bergen: Jofrid Lied and Frank H. Aarebrot, The German Diachronic Aggregated Kreis Units. 1924 - 1969. (Ms.); Frank H. Aarebrot and Jofrid Lied, On Some Interpretative Implications of Using Diachronic Data in Ecological Analysis.
- 18 It should be pointed out here that Waldman is the only author who meticulously demonstrates his chosen strategy and lists all reaggregated and stable territorial units. This makes his analysis replicable. Unfortunately, however, it is said that he has lost his complete data files.
- 19 Thomas Childers, The social bases of electoral politics in urban Germany 1919 - 1933 - A sociological analysis of voting behaviour in the Weimar Republic. Ph. D. Diss., Dep. of History, Harvard University. The study is now accessible in the Harvard University Archives. Idem, The Social Bases of National Socialist Vote (= JCH 1976, p. 17 - 42).
- 20 Samuel Pratt, The social basis of Nazism and Communism in urban Germany - A correlational study of the July 31, 1932 Reichstag election in Germany, MA-thesis, Dep. of Sociology, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan (microfilm).
- 21 The Social Bases of Nazism in Germany (University of North Carolina Press, 1982).
- 22 Treaty of Versailles pt. II, article 28 and pt. X, articles 99 - 108. See also Territorien-Ploetz II, p. 113 - 117.
- 23 For the changes see Verwaltungsgrenzen, p. 329 f.. As Bade is one of the German states during the Republic of Weimar which edited the election returns for the Reichstag at municipality level, it is possible to find out which municipality of the Amt Boxberg or Bonndorf, or Breisach etc. was incorporated into which Amt. In our special case the municipalities were incorporated into the Ämter Donaueschingen, Waldshut and Neustadt (Schwarzwald). For the election return and territorial changes compare: Statistisches Landesamt, Die Wahlen zum Reichstag am 6. Juni 1920. Karlsruhe, 1920, Tab. I, p. 2 ff.; and: Badisches Statistisches Landesamt (Ed.), Die Wahlen zum Reichstag am 4. Mai 1924 in Baden. Karlsruhe, 1924.