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Peter Flora, Franz Kraus, and Franz Rothenbacher

Elections in Western Europe since 1815

THE SOCIETIES OF EUROPE

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THE

S O C I E T I E S

OF

EUROPE

Elections in Western Europe since 1815
Electoral Results by Constituencies

DANIELE CARAMANI

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Editorial Introduction

The Unity and Diversity of Europe

by Peter Flora

This handbook on European elections is the first in a whole series of volumes. With this series we hope to improve the empirical basis for a comparative-historical analysis of the *Societies of Europe* which is also the title chosen for the series.

Unity and diversity

Anyone who is interested in Europe, as a citizen or scientist, faces the basic question of the *unity and diversity* of the European societies. The question itself is characteristic of Europe; for any other region of the world, it would make much less sense. Between unity and diversity, there has been a persistent though varying tension, with productive as well as destructive consequences. This tension was at the very heart of the unique dynamism of European society, of its modern achievements which have spread over the world; but it was also at the root of the unique destructiveness of the Europeans who made their civil wars into world wars.

'Diversity within unity', 'unity of diversity': questions behind such plays on words can only be studied meaningfully in a *long-term historical perspective*. What we call Europe today grew out of the decline of the Roman Empire which was centred on the Mediterranean, superimposed a strong military-administrative structure on the ethnic and cultural diversity of its peoples, and achieved a certain cultural integration through the Latin language, Roman law, and later the Christian religion.

With the breakdown of the Western empire as a political entity and with the Islamic conquests in North Africa and the Iberian peninsula, the centre of gravity shifted to the north-west, and ethnicity became a dominant principle of political organization. This meant increasing diversity. The fragmentation was counteracted, however, by the unifying impact of Western Christianity. The Roman Church had survived the political breakdown and was able to spread its influence over the centuries to the north and east, far beyond the former *limes*.

Through its centralized and bureaucratic structure, the Roman Church had a standardizing effect on the organization of social life across the continent, and through its reliance on canonical law it shaped the specific role law has played in European societies in general and for their social institutions in particular. Thus, the Europe we know today was created first of all as a *cultural and legal entity*.

Cultural unity, however, had to coexist with political fragmentation. The attempt to resurrect the Roman Empire in the Carolingian empire and its successors ultimately failed. The German-Roman Empire never covered all of the then-important territories of Europe, and in the long run its internal structure proved too weak. But nevertheless it kept the *idea of a politically-unified Europe* alive.

The failures of empire-building cleared the way for the development of the modern state with a more compact territory, more clearly-defined boundaries, a more differentiated centre, and closer relationships between centre and territorial population. With these developments, though they varied across time and space, European diversity acquired a clear political *gestalt*: it became a *system of territorial states*.

A new map of political boundaries was drawn, overlaying the much older map of ethnic-linguistic boundaries which had been the result of successive waves of migration over the centuries. The concurrence or discrepancy of these two types of boundaries set the options for the later transformation of the territorial into *national states*. These conditions greatly varied across Europe, and in general ethnic heterogeneity increased from the west (and north) to the east. Thus, for a long time Europe was divided between Western European nation-states and Eastern European multi-ethnic empires, with the rather different, confederated and consociational political structures of Central Europe in between.

The development of the European nation-state as the predominant form of political organization was closely linked to the earlier rise of vernaculars to languages with written standards and a corresponding decline of Latin as the means of elite communication. It was also facilitated by the establishment of national Protestant churches in northern Europe, as a consequence of the Reformation, whereas the Catholic Church retained its supra-national character. The division of Western Christianity also produced a new map which, as in the case of ethnic-linguistic boundaries, did not always coincide with the political map.

In this way, the diversity of Europe assumed a new shape: it became a diversity of varying relationships between political organization on the one hand and cultural, above all linguistic and religious, heterogeneity or homogeneity on the other. This kind of diversity was rooted in the past, but it developed in full only with the fundamental transformation of European societies since the nineteenth century: with industrialization and urbanization, with the creation of national systems of mass education, and with the democratization of the political systems. Europe became a *system of nation-states* and reached the highest degree of fragmentation in its history, hardly contained within a common cultural frame.

The democratization of the European nation-states and their transformation into welfare states added two new dimensions to the diversity of Europe: *the diversity of public institutions* and the *diversity of intermediary structures*. New institutions were created in the search for national solutions to problems and tasks connected with the development of capitalist industrial societies: not only systems for mass education, but also for social security, for health, and for other areas relevant for the life chances and living conditions of the mass population. And these institutions have greatly varied in many respects, above all in the degree of their 'stateness' as well as in the extent of their fragmentation or unity.

This institutional diversity across Europe largely persists today, as does the diversity of *intermediary structures*. In the process of democratization, older and newer cleavages dividing the people of the nation-states were transformed into a variety of 'intermediary' organizations: political parties, trade unions, co-operatives, voluntary welfare organizations and many others. Many of these organizations emerged from older cleavages resulting from the non-congruence of political and

cultural boundaries. Others were related to new cleavages generated by the process of capitalist industrialization. As the structure of these cleavages has greatly varied across Europe, so have the intermediary structures.

In the process of *industrialization*, due to differences in its timing and character, economic diversity was increasing across Europe over a long period of time, and the continent became ever more structured into economic centres and peripheries. This was not a completely new diversity, however, but one that developed out of older divisions. There was, first, the *old city belt* stretching from Northern Italy to the Low Countries and across the Channel, a product of the revival and redirection of long-distance trade in medieval times. Industrialization added new towns and urban areas, but did not replace this dorsal spine of economic Europe with something completely new.

There was, second, the later rise of a mercantilist *Atlantic capitalism* which divided Europe roughly into an advanced economic centre in the north-west, a dependent periphery in the east, and a semi-periphery in the mediterranean south. The diffusion of the process of industrialization and the later rise of other regions such as Scandinavia have somewhat changed and also reduced economic diversity, but older divisions still reappear in the territorial structuring of the more advanced industrial as well as 'post-industrial' activities across Europe today.

Dimensions of variation

Putting together the elements mentioned above, one may try to define *European diversity since the nineteenth century*, the period covered by this series of handbooks, in the following way: it is first of all a diversity of societies politically organized as nation-states varying in at least *three crucial dimensions*:

1. the *varying interrelations between political organization and cultural heterogeneity*, as a result of the different political and cultural boundary-building in the processes of state formation and nation-building;
2. the *variations in public institutions and intermediary organizations*, as a result of the transformation of varying cleavage structures and state-society relationships in the processes of democratization and the building of welfare states;
3. the *varying interrelations between the different positions of the national societies in the European world economy* on the one hand, and the *varying structuring of their internal division of labour* on the other.

Twentieth-century divisions

On the eve of World War I, an observer might have gained the impression that the whole of Europe (except Russia and the Ottoman Empire) was on the road to democracy, that industrial capitalism would sooner or later shape the structure of all European societies, and that the European nations, although in fierce competition throughout the world, were somewhat held together not only by economic exchange, but also by a common belief in scientific and social progress.

History took another turn, as we know today. After the first great civil war of the Europeans in the twentieth century, democracy broke down in most of Central

Europe, and it could not develop in the old South nor in the new nation-states of Central-Eastern Europe emerging from the breakdown of the eastern empires. This divided Europe deeply, between a democratic-liberal and a fascist-authoritarian part, building on existing and much older divisions. In addition, Europe was split even more radically by the Russian October Revolution which led not only to a new, totalitarian, political system, but also to a new form of non-capitalist industrial society. And this new political, economic, and social model was exported after the second great civil war, via the Red Army, to Central-Eastern Europe.

This meant that after 1945, the enfeebled Europe, stripped of its leading role in the world, became more divided than ever before in its history, and this for almost half a century until the breakdown of communism in Eastern Europe. Western Europe, however, increasingly identified with Europe itself, proved able to revive the ancient idea of European unity and to base it on common institutions. Ironically, with the liberation of Eastern Europe, a historical event pointing to the future, we seem to witness the *reappearance of the basic and much older structure of Europe in its unity and diversity*.

'Core' and 'peripheries'

The *core of the (Western) European unification movement* still lies in the territories of the old Carolingian empire and the old central city belt. The success of this core, above all in economic terms, and the not unrealistic hope of the other nations to use the increased strength of a more unified Europe for their own purposes explain the momentum European integration has gained. The success of the core was a precondition for the democratization and economic development of Southern Europe, and it may have the same beneficial effects in Eastern Europe, or at least parts of it.

The core territories have become the heart of European integration not because they have been homogeneous; quite the contrary. One might even say that their strength, beyond sheer demographic and economic weight, simply lies in the combination of a diversity typical of Europe, with roots reaching far back into history: to the *limes* and the great migrations which produced Romanic and Germanic territories with their ethnic and cultural differences; to the division of the Carolingian empire which ultimately led to the antithesis of a centralized French nation-state and a federated German empire with a delayed nation-building; and to the Lotharingian middle zone, the origin of the specific development of city states and confederations in Northern Italy and the Low Countries; and to the Reformation which cut across the whole area.

Around the West European 'core' we find territories that one may call 'peripheries', but for very different reasons. There are first of all the *British Isles*, only briefly and partially incorporated into the Roman Empire, never part of the German-Roman Empire, breaking with Rome and establishing a national church, building its own overseas empire, on the basis of a strong domestic society as the first industrial nation and with a long-standing democratic tradition. This explains the distance to Europe and much of the specificities of English society. With the loss of the empire and a certain move towards 'Europe' this may change but will certainly not disappear.

The *Iberian powers*, Spain above all, shared with Britain the distance-creating experience of overseas empire-building, but their internal development was rather different. Absolutism and social rigidity set barriers to political modernization, social mobility, and economic innovation. This led to a long-lasting decline and to an isolation from 'Europe', overcome only more recently, and with enduring consequences for the social structure and institutions of the Iberian societies.

Scandinavia may be considered a third 'periphery' which also developed in relative isolation from 'Europe' and took an autonomous road. The early end of empire-building efforts and the successful political centralization of the home territories, the establishment of national Protestant churches, early nation-building, and the relatively high degree of freedom and equality traced out the way to mass democracy and welfare states. The Scandinavian countries were able to develop a specific model in which the state and the community of people do not fall apart and in which egalitarianism is writ large.

Moving to the '*peripheries*' in *eastern and south-eastern Europe*, things become more complicated, because these territories are very heterogeneous in themselves and because there the question of the boundaries of Europe arises. The diversity has been of course one of ethnic-linguistic differences. But two other divisions have probably been even more important: the demarcation line between the Roman Catholic and the Greek Orthodox Church, and the partition of the area among the various multi-ethnic empires.

Europe was Christianized from two centres: from *Rome*, the fountainhead of Western Christendom, pushing to the north into Scandinavia, to the east into Central-Eastern Europe, and also to the south-east; and from *Byzantium*, the centre of Eastern Christianity, moving through the Balkans into Moravia and Bohemia. Where they met, there was conflict. But around the year 1000 the question was settled, the territory partitioned: Poland, the Czech lands, Hungary and Croatia became Roman Catholic and largely remained so; Serbia, Bulgaria, and the Ukrainian and Russian territories became and stayed Orthodox. This line of division was to isolate these Slavic areas from cultural influences coming from the 'West'.

There were early and successful state-building efforts in all these areas, supported by the various 'national' orthodox churches, but also by the Roman Catholic Church in Poland and Hungary. Ultimately, however, they all failed, partly due to the invasions from Central Asia, partly as a consequence of relative economic decline and increasing dependence on the 'West'. Thus, they all became incorporated into *multi-ethnic empires*: into the absolutist Austrian, the autocratic Russian, and the despotic Ottoman empires.

The boundaries of these empires overlaid religious and ethnic boundaries, thus adding to the heterogeneity of the region. The character of these empires and varying lengths of their dominance were decisive in shaping the social structures and institutions of the various societies—and in setting the boundaries of Europe. The Habsburg empire was the leading German power and a stronghold of Catholicism. It was therefore able to draw its non-German and non-Catholic territories and people within the orbit of 'Europe'. The Ottoman empire, on the other hand, was clearly non-European, and the longer its dominance lasted in the Balkans, the less European these territories became. Turkey has special relations with Europe, but does not belong to it.

Russia is a more complicated case. Long isolated from Western developments, it created an autocratic political system and hierarchical society unknown in 'Europe': and moving to east as well as to the west, it developed not only an empire but its own civilization, much as the Americans did, though of course in different form. To speak of a Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals is as meaningful as to define it as the area between Brest-Litovsk and San Francisco. Europe ends where Russia starts, and where Russia dominated over a long period, the boundaries become unclear.

When we started to plan the series of handbooks in the late 1980s, it still seemed natural to limit it to Western Europe. The revolutionary changes after 1989, however, have also changed our *mental map*. We have tried to extend the coverage of the series towards the east, but these attempts ran up against a variety of difficulties of language, data accessibility, availability of literature and more. Thus, our achievements fell short of our expectations. In some respects, of course, it would not have been meaningful to include Eastern Europe, because institutions and organizations such as free elections and free trade unions simply did not exist. In other respects such as population, labour force and social security, however, we usually have included Poland, the former Czechoslovakia, and Hungary, but other Eastern European countries much less systematically.

Three developments and eight handbooks

The coverage of the series is limited not only in terms of space, but also in terms of time and substance (see Synopsis 1). As to the substance, we have concentrated on various aspects of *three major developments or growth processes* since the nineteenth century: population growth and demographic transition; industrialization and the changing division of labour; democratization and the growth of welfare states. These developmental processes have shaped the social structures and institutions of the European societies for more than a century. For two or more decades, however, they have been approaching an end, and Europe seems to have entered a new historical phase of structural change and institutional adaptation in all three dimensions: family, employment, and social security.

From the mid-nineteenth century up to World War I, Europe was probably the region with the *fastest-growing population* in the world. But it was also the first to start the '*demographic transition*' from high to low birth and death rates, with a first nadir in the 1930s and a second fall since the 1960s. This process was closely linked to changing family structures. (Western) Europe had been characterized for centuries by a specific marriage pattern with a high age at marriage and a high percentage of unmarried adults. This pattern started to change in the late nineteenth century, until marriage and the nuclear family had become almost universal in the 1950s. But then, from the 1960s, there was a radical turn with increasing marriage instability and family variety, and reforms in family law of historic dimensions.

Two volumes of the series are dedicated to *population and family developments*, one for the period from the nineteenth century to the Second World War, and the second for the time after 1945. Data included in the handbooks are limited to those available from the civil or ecclesiastical registers (mainly births, deaths, marriages, divorces) and from the population censuses (mainly population by age, sex, and civil status, later household composition), and for more recent times from microcensuses

SYNOPSIS I Three major processes of development and eight historical data handbooks

Processes of development	Historical handbooks	Period covered	Inclusion of Eastern Europe	Regions
Population growth and demographic transition	I The European Population	1850–1950	limited	limited
	II The European Population	1950–2000	limited	limited
Industrialization and labour force	I The European Labour Force	1870–1940	limited	limited
	II The European Labour Force	1950–2000	limited	extended
	Trade Unions in Western Europe	since 1945	no	no
Democratization and welfare states	I The European Social Security Systems	1885–1945	limited	no
	II The European Social Security Systems	1945–1995	limited	no
	Elections in Europe	since 1815 (1870)	no	extended

and other surveys. The time period covered is defined by the earliest availability of data. In addition, the volumes will also contain an overview of family law developments in the various countries.

Industrialization is the second major development covered by the handbook series. It can be understood in a broader or narrower sense. In the strict sense, industrialization refers to a process of technological progress used to construct new machinery and to open up new sources of energy, leading to an increase in the productivity of work and the volume of production, and ultimately economic growth. In a broader sense, however, industrialization implies a radical transformation of the *social division of labour*: between household and workplace, within the newly established enterprises, and between the newly emerging social classes.

It is this transformation that stands in the middle of the *two volumes* on the *development of the labour force* in Europe, again divided into one volume for the period until the Second World War, and another for the period after. The data presented come from occupation censuses, usually since the late nineteenth century, and in addition from labour force or other surveys, usually since the 1960s. The volumes and supplementary CD-ROMs provide comparative time series, complex cross-tabulations for each census year (such as industry, employment status and sex; sex, age, marital and activity status) and searchable documentation of concepts, definitions and sources.

Until the Russian Revolution, industrialization was identical with the development of *industrial capitalism*. This implied private property, freedom of contract and free choice of work on the one hand, and the development of national labour markets on the other. For a very long period European societies became '*class societies*' in the sense that life chances and living conditions of the mass population were determined by their market position. Class conflict became a predominant political cleavage and gave rise to working-class parties and trade unions everywhere across Europe. The further development was then characterized by varying attempts to 'institutionalize class conflict' through collective bargaining, the welfare state, and mass democracy.

The development of *trade unions* usually started in the late nineteenth century, but the institutionalization of industrial conflict and collective bargaining often took much longer. The rush of membership growth mainly occurred after 1945, and today it seems to have already passed its zenith. The great diversity of the national trade union structures, however, is much older and emerged prior to the Second World War: the differences between industrial, occupational or ideological bases of membership recruitment and organization, the varying levels of centralization and degrees of unionization, and more. The handbook on trade unions, which is the second to be published, represents a unique effort to systematically collect data on the membership development of all the main trade unions across Europe from 1945 until today. We hope in the future to be able to supplement this handbook with another on the earlier developments.

The growth of trade unions and the institutionalization of collective bargaining have changed the functioning of the labour market, but they have not reduced its role as the main distributive mechanism in 'class society'. The development of the *welfare state* instead has introduced a new—political—mechanism. A great variety of public transfer systems and social services has been built across Europe, not only by social democratic and socialist, but also by Catholic, conservative, and liberal

forces. And all these institutions heavily influence the distribution of life chances and living conditions of the mass population, not completely but relatively independent of market differentiations.

Among the variety of welfare state transfers and services, *social insurance*, later expanded into *social security*, was perhaps the major social innovation. Starting in most of Europe during the last three decades before the First World War, it was continuously extended throughout the population and across the continent, and has grown in terms of expenditure to between one-fifth and one-third of GDP today. Again, the enormous growth after the war, especially from the 1960s to the 1970s, has not reduced institutional diversity which originated much earlier: the different bases of entitlement from acknowledged need to insurance contributions to social rights, the varying coverage and differentiation of social risks and population groups, the highly diverse levels of individual benefits and total expenditure, and much more. Within the series, two volumes are dedicated to a detailed institutional and quantitative description of the development of the European social security systems since the late nineteenth century. One volume covers the period up to the Second World War, another the time after 1945.

Elections in Europe Western Europe since 1815—The first volume in the series

It is difficult to think of the transformation of national states into welfare states without the emergence of urban-industrial societies, above all those of a capitalist nature. At the same time, such a transformation of state functions and structures is hardly conceivable without a preceding or concomitant *democratization* of the state, of some form of mass participation in the political system.

The institutionalization of *elections* has been crucial in this respect, and the steps in which the suffrage was extended until it became universal have greatly varied across nations, as have the—majoritarian or PR—electoral systems translating votes into parliamentary seats. With the successive enfranchisement of ever larger population groups, the cleavages existing between them became transfigured into parties and sooner or later stabilized into party systems and voter alignments differing from one nation to the other.

In the present volume, Daniele Caramani traces in detail the development of electoral law in eighteen Western European states and presents the election results (whenever possible) by party for all general elections to the lower houses of parliament since the nineteenth century. There are other handbooks on elections, but the wealth and systematic character of this collection is something new. What makes it really unique, however, is the disaggregation of *election results by constituencies* and/or other sub-national units. This has raised the number of election results to a much higher power; for the first time, it has become possible to systematically investigate the territorial structuring of the vote across Europe.

The development of the *nation-state* has had a standardizing effect on the underlying society, to be sure, and there has been a tendency of territorial cleavages to give way to 'functional' ones cutting across the whole territory. However, this tendency as well as standardization have been far from complete. As mentioned above, the historical overlaying of ethnic-linguistic, religious, economic, and political

boundaries has created a varying *internal heterogeneity* which largely persists until today.

The volume by D. Caramani opens ways for studying the territorial structure of the European nation-states. I wish we could have done more in this direction also in the other volumes (see Synopsis 1). This will remain a major task for the future (as will the use of cartography). The main reason for this lies in the fact that in speaking of the 'European societies' we cannot simply identify them with the 'societies of the nation-states'.

Notes on the prehistory of the handbook series

This series of historical handbooks has had predecessors: two volumes which we published in 1983 and 1987 under the general title *State, Economy, and Society in Western Europe 1815–1975* (Frankfurt: Campus; London: Macmillan; Chicago: St. James). To produce these earlier volumes, since the 1970s we have built up our own data archive with funds from the Volkswagenstiftung. When in 1989 I became founding director of the Mannheim Centre for European Social Research, I brought this archive, now named EURODATA Research Archive, into the new institution.

It has been the explicit goal of this archive to contribute to a Europeanization of the social science data base. We have sought to develop such a contribution, always in co-operation with institutes throughout Europe, in three directions:

1. by developing a European social reporting system (with a family policy databank as a first component);
2. by regionalizing data (with the hope of eventually producing a historical regional atlas of Europe);
3. by producing, on a completely new basis, another series of historical handbooks for the comparative-historical study of European society.

Compared to our earlier efforts, of course, the technological possibilities have been greatly improved. We have therefore included with each of the volumes a CD-ROM which contains much more information than the volumes and which should be easily used for purposes of data analysis. In this way we hope to make a major contribution to improving the European data base which will remain a collective task.

Mannheim, November 1999

Preface and Acknowledgements

This handbook presents the collection of results of national elections to the lower houses of 18 European countries beginning with 1815 in the earliest case and ending with the most recent published election. The election returns have been collected at the level of the single constituencies; for this reason they are not entirely presented in printed form in this handbook (which would take thousands of pages) but instead have been made available in full on CD-ROM.

The handbook can be regarded both as an *independent product*, useful for consultation in its own right apart from the machine-readable data stored on the CD-ROM, and as a *guide* to the results. The documentation collected and arranged in the different country chapters permits the most profitable use of the data stored on CD-ROM. In order to make the data fully comprehensible, for each country the documentation includes the evolution of the electoral systems as well as the trajectories towards the democratization and equalization of voting conditions. The documentation also contains information on political parties, constituency changes, and the official and secondary sources on elections.

While a large number of handbooks on electoral laws and electoral systems are available (see the Introduction below), a thorough and standard collection of disaggregated electoral results is still missing. The only comparative and historical *data* handbook on elections is that of Mackie and Rose (1991, third edition). Unlike their work, however, this collection includes data collected at the *level of single constituencies* and/or other sub-national units, and incorporates additional information. Furthermore, all data have been *computerized*. For the first time the results of the elections held in 18 European countries are brought together according to standard rules making it possible to increase progressively both the quantity and quality of data (by covering new countries, in particular Eastern Europe which, to my regret, I was not able to include in this work).

The work of collecting and documenting European electoral data presented here developed jointly with the comparative research on the formation processes of national electorates in Europe carried out in the framework of a Ph.D. dissertation, first started at the University of Geneva in 1993, written from 1994 to 1996 at the European University Institute of Florence, and finalized at the Mannheim Centre for European Social Research (*Mannheimer Zentrum für Europäische Sozialforschung*, MZES) of the University of Mannheim.

This study required geographically disaggregated data from the earlier periods of modern elections and party systems. In this regard, the data that were machine-readable in existing databases (rare also on a national scale) turned out to be fragmented, often limited to the most recent periods, poorly documented, and characterized by an extremely low degree of comparability since data collectors only rarely referred to similar principles of data gathering.

This was the impetus for starting a standardized and systematic collection of election results accompanied by thorough documentation. This project, which developed into a large amount of material, was carried out at the Mannheim Centre from 1996 to 1999 and transformed into this book and the accompanying CD-ROM.

In preparing this volume and CD-ROM, I am indebted to many persons. However, any errors that may appear in this volume are entirely my own responsibility.

I would like to begin by expressing special thanks and sincere gratitude to Stefano Bartolini of the European University Institute in Florence, especially for all that he gave me as a teacher and friend, and for his amicable and proficient guidance in the early phases of my university life. His approach to empirical comparative and historical research has had an enormous influence on my own academic development as it has on so many of his students. I started the present project when I was one of his graduate students in Geneva and continued later at the European University Institute. Bartolini encouraged this project which would not have been possible without his constant advice and support.

Several colleagues and friends have helped me collect data and information. I would like to thank Birgitta Bader-Zaar of the University of Vienna for her help with the elections under the Habsburg monarchy; Riitta Kyllönen for her help with the Finnish language, Ann-Christina Lauring Knudsen of the European University Institute in Florence for her help in reading Scandinavian languages; José Ramón Montero and Marta Peach of the Juan March Institute in Madrid for their help in retrieving Spanish data; the researchers of the Norwegian Social Science Data Archive in Bergen for the publications of Norwegian results; Tuija Meisaari-Polsa of Swedish Statistics for her help with nineteenth century Swedish elections; Maria Serena Piretti of the University of Bologna for her help in retrieving Italian publications of electoral results; and Christos Tsimpos of the University of Athens for providing me with Greek data. I would like to extend my thanks to those persons working in the various archives, libraries, ministries, and national statistical offices who provided me with data and whose names are too numerous to be listed here. They do an indispensable service for empirical social sciences through their expertise and efficiency.

Several experts read the single country chapters, and I am very grateful for their comments: Bernt Årdal of the Institute of Social Research in Oslo, Birgitta Bader-Zaar of the University of Vienna, Jørgen Elklit of the University of Århus, Gretar Eythorsson and Mikael Gilljam of the University of Göteborg, Michael Gallagher of Trinity College (Dublin), Ólafur Th. Hardarson of the University of Iceland, Helge O. Larsen of the University of Tromsø, Paul Lucardie of the University of Groningen, Peter Mair of the University of Leiden, Wolfgang C. Müller of the University of Vienna, Serge Noiret of the European University Institute, and Jan Sundberg of the University of Helsinki.

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His sharp critiques and congenital dissatisfaction were a constant challenge through all phases of the project. To my despair, he totally reshaped (and rewrote) most of the introductions in the last weeks before completion. I thank him for that now.

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Synopsis 1 Development of electoral law
 Synopsis 2 Dates and type of elections
 Synopsis 3 The [Country] party system tree
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Abbreviations and Symbols

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

HB	Hagenbach-Bischoff formula
LR-Hare	Largest-remainders Hare or simple quota formula
N.a.	Not available
PR	Proportional representation
STV	Single transferable vote
Unc.	Uncontested (unopposed) constituency

LIST OF SYMBOLS

–	Not applicable
...	Data not available (missing)