

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-76530-5 - The Politics of Electoral Reform: Changing the Rules of Democracy

Alan Renwick

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

THE POLITICS OF ELECTORAL REFORM

Changing the Rules of Democracy

Elections lie at the heart of democracy, and this book seeks to understand how the rules governing those elections are chosen. Drawing on both broad comparisons and detailed case studies, it focuses upon the electoral rules that govern what sorts of preferences voters can express and how votes translate into seats in a legislature. Through detailed examination of electoral reform politics in four countries (France, Italy, Japan, and New Zealand), Alan Renwick shows how major electoral system changes in established democracies occur through two contrasting types of reform process. Renwick rejects the simple view that electoral systems always straightforwardly reflect the interests of the politicians in power. Politicians' motivations are complex; politicians are sometimes unable to pursue reforms they want; occasionally, they are forced to accept reforms they oppose. *The Politics of Electoral Reform* shows how voters and reform activists can have real power over electoral reform.

ALAN RENWICK is a lecturer in Comparative Politics at the University of Reading.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-76530-5 - The Politics of Electoral Reform: Changing the Rules of Democracy

Alan Renwick

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

THE POLITICS OF ELECTORAL REFORM

Changing the Rules of Democracy

ALAN RENWICK

*School of Politics and International Relations
University of Reading*



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-76530-5 - The Politics of Electoral Reform: Changing the Rules of Democracy

Alan Renwick

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi

Cambridge University Press

The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.orgInformation on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521765305

© Alan Renwick 2010

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2010

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library**Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication Data*

Renwick, Alan, 1975–

The politics of electoral reform : changing the rules of democracy / Alan Renwick.

p. cm.

ISBN 978-0-521-76530-5 (hardback)

1. Elections. 2. Voting. 3. Representative government and representation.

I. Title.

JF1001.R394 2010

324.6–dc22

2009048078

ISBN 978-0-521-76530-5 Hardback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication, and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-76530-5 - The Politics of Electoral Reform: Changing the Rules of Democracy

Alan Renwick

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

In memory of my grandmother,
Sheila Struthers

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-76530-5 - The Politics of Electoral Reform: Changing the Rules of Democracy

Alan Renwick

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CONTENTS

<i>List of tables</i>	<i>page</i> ix
<i>List of figures</i>	x
<i>List of abbreviations</i>	xi
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xiii
1 Introduction	1
PART I Building blocks	25
2 What motivates actors?	27
3 From motivations to outcomes: exogenous factors	47
4 The reform process: endogenous factors	69
PART II Elite majority imposition	87
5 France: the recurrent game of electoral reform	89
6 Italy: the search for stability	111
7 Japan: the persistence of SNTV	129
8 Elite majority imposition: comparative analysis	138
PART III Elite–mass interaction	167
9 Italy: diluting proportional representation	169
10 Japan: the abandonment of SNTV	179
11 New Zealand: MMP in a Westminster setting	194

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-76530-5 - The Politics of Electoral Reform: Changing the Rules of Democracy

Alan Renwick

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

viii

CONTENTS

12	Elite–mass interaction: comparative analysis	210
13	Conclusions and implications	239
	<i>Appendix: glossary of electoral system terminology</i>	256
	<i>Bibliography</i>	261
	<i>Index</i>	302

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-76530-5 - The Politics of Electoral Reform: Changing the Rules of Democracy

Alan Renwick

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

TABLES

1.1	Types of electoral system	<i>page</i> 4
1.2	Major electoral reforms in established democracies since 1980	6
1.3	Performance of the power-maximization and inherent/contingent factors approaches in relation to major electoral reforms in established democracies	8
2.1	Typology of power-seeking considerations	30
2.2	Values in electoral reform	39
5.1	Summary of major electoral reform in France since 1945	90
5.2	Results of the two constituent assembly elections, 1945–1946	93
6.1	Summary of major electoral reform in Italy since 1945	112
6.2	Election results for the constituent assembly, 1946, and Chamber of Deputies, 1948 and 1953	113
7.1	Summary of major electoral reform in Japan since 1945	130
7.2	Election outcomes and Diet composition in Japan, 1945–1949	133
8.1	Actors' objectives in electoral reform	141
8.2	Legitimacy constraints and electoral reform	148
8.3	Reform by elite majority imposition and the number of parties	164
9.1	Elections to the Italian Chamber of Deputies, 1987 and 1992	175
10.1	Elections to the Japanese House of Representatives, 1986–1993	190
11.1	Elections to the New Zealand Parliament, 1978–1993	197
11.2	Electoral reform referendum results in New Zealand	204
13.1	Electoral system changes in established democracies since 1962	249

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-76530-5 - The Politics of Electoral Reform: Changing the Rules of Democracy

Alan Renwick

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

FIGURES

1 Incidence of major electoral reform since World War II

page 5

2 Types of electoral reform

1

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-76530-5 - The Politics of Electoral Reform: Changing the Rules of Democracy

Alan Renwick

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

ABBREVIATIONS

ACT	Association of Consumers and Taxpayers <i>or</i> the ACT Party
ADN	<i>Alleanza Democratica Nazionale</i> (National Democratic Alliance)
AN	<i>Alleanza Nazionale</i> (National Alliance)
ANC	African National Congress
AV	alternative vote
BA	bonus-adjusted system
BC	Borda count
BV	block vote
CDU	<i>Christlich Demokratische Union</i> (Christian Democratic Union)
CGP	<i>Kōmeitō</i> (Clean Government Party)
CSU	<i>Christlich-Soziale Union</i> (Christian Social Union)
CV	cumulative vote
DC	<i>Democrazia Cristiana</i> (Christian Democracy, generally known as the Christian Democrats)
DPJ	Democratic Party of Japan
DSP	Democratic Socialist Party
ENP	effective number of parties, in terms of either votes (ENPV) or seats (ENPS)
ERC	Electoral Reform Coalition
FDP	<i>Freie Demokratische Partei</i> (Free Democratic Party)
FPTP	first past the post
GHQ	General Headquarters of the Allied Occupation Forces
JCP	Japanese Communist Party
JNP	<i>Nihon Shintō</i> (Japan New Party)
JSP	Japan Socialist Party
JT	<i>Japan Times</i>
LDP	Liberal Democratic Party (of Japan)
list PR	list proportional representation
LV	limited vote
MMM	mixed-member majoritarian
MMP	mixed-member proportional
MRP	<i>Mouvement Républicain Populaire</i> (Popular Republican Movement)
MSI	<i>Movimento Sociale Italiano</i> (Italian Social Movement)
NFP	<i>Shinshintō</i> (New Frontier Party)

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-76530-5 - The Politics of Electoral Reform: Changing the Rules of Democracy

Alan Renwick

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xii

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

NZH	<i>New Zealand Herald</i>
PBV	party block vote
PCF	<i>Parti Communiste Français</i> (French Communist Party)
PCI	<i>Partito Comunista Italiano</i> (Italian Communist Party)
PDS	<i>Partito Democratico della Sinistra</i> (Democratic Party of the Left); <i>Partei des Demokratischen Sozialismus</i> (Party of Democratic Socialism)
PLI	<i>Partito Liberale Italiano</i> (Italian Liberal Party)
PR	proportional representation
PRI	<i>Partito Repubblicano Italiano</i> (Italian Republican Party)
PS	<i>Parti Socialiste</i> (French Socialist Party)
PSDI	<i>Partito Socialista Democratico Italiano</i> (Italian Social Democratic Party)
PSI	<i>Partito Socialista Italiano</i> (Italian Socialist Party)
RC	<i>Rifondazione Comunista</i> (Communist Refoundation)
RPF	<i>Rassemblement du Peuple Français</i> (Rally of the French People)
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SFIO	<i>Section Française de l'Internationale Ouvrière</i> (French Section of the Workers' International, predecessor to the PS)
SMD	single-member district
SMP	single-member plurality
SNTV	single non-transferable vote
SPD	<i>Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands</i> (Social Democratic Party of Germany)
STV	single transferable vote
TRS	two-round system
UDC	<i>Unione dei Democratici Cristiani e dei Democratici di Centro</i> (Union of Christian Democrats and Democrats of the Centre)
UDF	<i>Union pour la Démocratie Française</i> (Union for French Democracy)
UMP	<i>Union pour un Mouvement Populaire</i> (Union for a Popular Movement)

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-76530-5 - The Politics of Electoral Reform: Changing the Rules of Democracy

Alan Renwick

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I have incurred many debts while researching and writing this book. At the very beginning, Alan Ware encouraged me to turn what I had envisaged as an article into a larger project; he has continued to offer invaluable guidance ever since. Numerous colleagues and friends have offered support, kindness, and probing questions, including Nancy Bermeo, Nigel Bowles, Martin Ceadel, David Erdos, Elizabeth Frazer, David Goldey, Desmond King, Iain McLean, Marina Popescu, Gábor Tóka, Stephen Whitefield, and Laurence Whitehead.

As a comparativist, I have often leant upon the greater expertise of others in each of the countries I study. On France, I am particularly indebted to David Goldey and Andy Knapp; Ben Clift also gave valuable help. On Italy, Martin Bull, Chris Hanretty, and David Hine answered my questions with knowledge and patience. Ian Neary gave me invaluable initial orientation in Japanese politics, and Sarah Hyde and Arthur Stockwin have provided great advice and encouragement throughout. While in Japan, I spoke with Kentaro Fukumoto, Hiroshi Hirano, Takashi Inoguchi, Ikuo Kabashima, and Steven Reed, and from each conversation I gained new insights. The people of New Zealand deserve a collective medal for their openness and hospitality. During a wonderful month based at the Political Science and International Relations Programme of Victoria University of Wellington, I gained immeasurably from the kindness and insightfulness of numerous colleagues, especially John Leslie, Stephen Levine, Elizabeth McLeay, and Kate McMillan. I also met Peter Aimer and Jack Vowles in Auckland, both of whom have been immensely helpful and encouraging as my work has proceeded. I interviewed many politicians and other public figures while in New Zealand or by telephone afterwards. Many of these interviews are listed in the bibliography; even those not listed contributed to my understanding of New Zealand politics. I am particularly grateful to Murry McCully, who granted me access to his papers in Archives New Zealand,

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-76530-5 - The Politics of Electoral Reform: Changing the Rules of Democracy

Alan Renwick

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

and Phil Saxby, who has continued to show great interest in the project since we met. Beyond these four core countries, I am grateful to Sarah Birch, André Blais, Ken Carty, Patrick Dunleavy, David Farrell, Richard Katz, Shaheen Mozaffar, Jean-Benoit Pilet, Gideon Rahat, and Ben Reilly for sharing their ideas and enthusiasm for the subject.

I have presented papers on matters relating to this book at various seminars and conferences. Many who attended these events asked questions that forced me to clarify or alter my ideas, and I am especially grateful in this regard to Nancy Bermeo, Philip Giddings, Jonathan Golub, Xiaoming Huang, Des King, Tim Power, Thomas Saalfeld, Michael Steed, Oisín Tansey, Jack Vowles, and Laurence Whitehead.

I am particularly indebted to those who read and commented on previous drafts of the manuscript in whole or in part: Peter Aimer, Sarah Birch, Nigel Bowles, Martin Ceadel, David Erdos, David Farrell, David Goldey, Chris Hanretty, Richard Katz, Maria Pretzler, Gideon Rahat, Ben Reilly, Arthur Stockwin, Alan Ware, and Stephen Whitefield. All made suggestions that greatly improved the book.

I could not have completed this research without the kindness and hospitality of numerous friends and colleagues who supported me in Oxford and on my research trips around the world. I thank Willie Booth, who sadly passed away while this book was in production, as well as Pam and Steve Edwards, Kate Heard, Kerensa Heffron, Cameron and Silvie Hepburn, Sam Kessler, Duncan McGillivray, Jim and Mary McGillivray, John Meade, Catherine Muller, Adrienne Nolan, Sarah Ogilvie, Maria Pretzler, Yasuko Goto, Mark Schaan, Jane Shaw, and Richard Taunt. I finished most of the work for this book while a Junior Research Fellow at New College, Oxford. New College is an extraordinary community of scholars and friends, and my work and life have been immeasurably enriched by my time there. I moved in the final stages of the project to the University of Reading, where colleagues have been warm, supportive, and intellectually challenging.

Finally, I should like to thank John Haslam, Christina Sarigiannidou, Carrie Parkinson, and Fiona Sewell at Cambridge University Press. They have been remarkably supportive, efficient, and helpful throughout our dealings.

To all these people I am truly grateful. I remain wholly responsible, of course, for all errors and deficiencies that remain.