



POLITICS IN EUROPE

THIRD EDITION

M. DONALD HANCOCK

DAVID P. CONRADT, B. GUY PETERS, WILLIAM SAFRAN,
STEPHEN WHITE, RAPHAEL ZARISKI

Politics in Europe

An Introduction to the Politics of the United Kingdom,
France, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Russia, and
the European Union

THIRD EDITION

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Preface

THIS THIRD EDITION of *Politics in Europe* constitutes a major departure from previous versions. A principal innovation is the inclusion of Russia alongside the established West European democracies of Britain, France, Germany, Italy, and Sweden. Russia's transition since the early 1990s from an authoritarian communist regime to a pluralist democracy and market economy is one of the most profound transformations in recent political history, equivalent in scope and depth to the Bolshevik revolution of 1917 (albeit in a diametrically opposed direction). The Russian experience offers compelling counterpoints to historical patterns of democratization, discontinuity, and regime stabilization in Western Europe.

Another change in this edition is a fundamental revision of the chapters on the European Union to correspond with the analytical framework applied throughout the country sections in the remainder of the volume. An especially daunting challenge was exploring the question "Who Has the Power?" with respect to multiple national, institutional, and organizational actors, all of whom play important roles in EU policymaking and implementation. Increasingly, the European Union has come to dominate domestic policy agendas among its member states, particularly with respect to Economic and Monetary Union (and, with it, the implementation of a common currency, the euro). This prospect has galvanized the domestic political debate in Britain, Denmark and Sweden, all of which have yet to choose to adopt the euro. Moreover, the prospective expansion of the EU to include a number of Central European nations will inevitably transform the fabric of European politics in the years ahead.

In addition, each of the country sections has been substantially updated to reflect recent election results and political developments, including the April–June 2002 presidential and parliamentary elections in France. Chatham House has established a web page to accompany this volume that will contain future election outcomes, analyses of current political and economic trends in Europe and important activities of the European Union (including high-level aspirations to craft a constitution), and links to websites dealing with European government and politics (see www.sevenbridgespress.com/chathamhouse/hancock).

In a rapidly changing political and economic world, Europe continues to command the attention of students, informed citizens, scholars, and other professionals. Democratic principles and the postwar economic performance of the West European nations helped inspire the dramatic events during the late 1980s and early 1990s that led to the transformation of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet

Union into fledgling market economies and democratic political systems. Domestically, national politics have assumed new and, in some cases, unsettling dimensions in response to globalization, increased electoral volatility, the increased salience of the European Union, and an ever-evolving political agenda.

An emergent "New Europe" encompasses both continuity and change. Democratic constitutional principles and institutional arrangements—well established on the basis of historical experience in the United Kingdom, France, and Sweden and the product of postwar consensus in Germany and Italy and the demise of Communism in Russia—remain firmly entrenched throughout Europe. Traditional political parties and organized interest groups continue to occupy center stage, with the exception of Italy and Russia. At the same time, resurgent social-political movements—ranging from Communists in Russia to right-wing nationalist parties in France, Italy, and Germany—continue to challenge the established political order. While familiar conflicts over economic management and social welfare continue to animate national electoral campaigns, new issues have arisen concerning immigrants, crime, globalization, and international terrorism. An important consequence is increased electoral volatility.

Contributors to this volume address these disparate themes of contemporary European politics with an empirical focus on the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, Sweden, Russia, and the European Union. The volume is organized to facilitate both single-country analysis and cross-national comparison. Figures dispersed throughout the text display cross-national comparisons at recent points in time. Their purpose is to present visually useful "snapshots" of salient demographic, political, economic, and social characteristics of each country. In addition, detailed statistical tables on postwar elections, executive leadership, and socioeconomic performance are included in the appendix to make possible systematic comparisons among the various countries over time. For the benefit of students of comparative politics, the data in these tables also serve as a basis for generating hypotheses and conducting preliminary research.

This volume is dedicated to students of comparative politics who seek enhanced knowledge of the new Europe at a time when all European democracies confront the challenge of adaptive economic, social, and political response to domestic, regional, and global changes. We would like to thank our students, colleagues, and others who have contributed to our own understanding of European affairs, among them Norman Furniss and Timothy Tilton, both at Indiana University, and the late Arnold Heidenheimer. For their research and editorial assistance, we are grateful to Larry Romans and Gretchen Dodge at the Heard Library at Vanderbilt University, John Logue at Kent State University, Victor Supyan at the Institute for the Study of the United States and Canada of the Russian Academy of Science in Moscow, Erwin Hargrove at Vanderbilt University, and Francesco Giordano at the University of Chicago. Special thanks for their timely insights into European politics in general and British politics in particular are due Andrew Hughes Hallett, formerly of Glasgow University and now a colleague at Vanderbilt University, and David Coates at Wake Forest University.

—M. Donald Hancock
Vanderbilt University

Introduction

THE STUDY OF comparative politics serves multiple purposes. They include acquiring greater knowledge about similarities and differences among nations and their subsystems, testing various scientific propositions, and deriving political lessons from the experience of others that might usefully be applied or studiously avoided in one's own place and time.¹ Throughout the evolution of comparative politics as a core field within political science, this endeavor has involved varying degrees of empirical, normative, and theoretical analysis.² Traditionally, Western scholars concentrated on constitutional norms and institutional arrangements in the established democratic systems of the United Kingdom, the United States, France, and, for a time, Weimar Germany. After World War II, many of the most creative comparative scholars turned their attention to problems of modernization, leadership, and revolution in the Third World countries of Asia, Latin America, the Middle East, and Africa in an effort to devise more rigorous concepts and methods of comparative political analysis.³ More recently, scholars have reincorporated European politics into the mainstream of comparative politics as they have sought to extend and refine basic concepts of the field.⁴ This volume of country surveys is testimony to the renewed relevance of the European political experience for comparative purposes. A key example is the attainment of democracy under vastly different historical and political conditions in Western Europe and Russia. Their similarities and contrasts offer important insights into processes of democratization elsewhere in the contemporary world of nations.

A compelling justification for the comparative analysis of European politics lies in the historical contributions of nations such as Britain, France, Germany, Italy, and Sweden to basic philosophical, cultural, and institutional tenets of Western civilization. Immigrants from throughout Europe (including Russia and Central Europe) have helped create new nations in the United States, Canada, Israel, and elsewhere. Many of their descendants understandably look to Europe to comprehend the significance of their national origins and the European roots of their own countries' constitutional and political development.

From a historical perspective, Europe also offers important insights for the comparative study of different "paths to modernity." The striking contrast between the success of Britain and Scandinavia in sustaining an evolutionary pattern of political change and the far more tumultuous experiences of France, Germany, Italy, and Russia during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries provides crucial knowledge about underlying factors of

system stability and political effectiveness.⁵ In the contemporary world of nations, Europe's postwar political and economic achievements—including its democratic convergence and unprecedented material growth—constitute a series of “most similar cases” broadly comparable to other advanced industrial democracies in North America, Japan, and parts of the British Commonwealth. As such, Europe provides a rich laboratory for the comparative study of political parties and organized interest groups, political culture, institutional arrangements, economic management, social services, and public policy.⁶

A COMMON ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

Consistent with these multiple purposes of comparative political inquiry, this volume addresses fundamental features of modern European politics on the basis of a common analytical framework designed to facilitate both single-country and crossnational analysis. Various country specialists address six important European nations according to the following criteria: (1) the context of national politics (including basic geographic and demographic factors, history, and political culture); (2) formal decision-making and implementation structures; (3) political parties, organized interest groups, and electoral behavior; (4) the uses of political power; and (5) the future of politics under changing domestic and international conditions.⁷ Accompanying the country sections are photographs as well as tables, graphs, and statistical appendixes containing empirical comparative data.

The choice of country studies is based on a variety of considerations. One is the traditional inclusion of the United Kingdom and France in most comparative courses on European politics. Both countries have provided major contributions to the emergence of Western democracy and continue to play important political and economic roles in regional and world affairs. A second consideration is the significance of Germany as a compelling instance of fundamental system transformation over time. Theoretically and empirically, the German case offers crucial insights into processes of socioeconomic and political development under successive historical conditions of regime discontinuity, postwar stability in the West, the failure of communism in the former German Democratic Republic, and unification in 1991. Third, the inclusion of Italy and Sweden provides important systemic contrasts to more familiar case studies with respect to their distinctive patterns of postwar political dominance—Christian Democratic (until the early 1990s) versus Social Democratic, respectively—and the central role of civil servants and organized interest groups in the policymaking process. Finally, Russia's simultaneous transitions to democracy and a market economy pose fundamental questions concerning system transformation and performance. Russian experiments, first with communism and now with a distinctive form of democracy, are of a sweeping scale daunting to comparative analysis.

The seventh section of this volume deals with the European Union (EU). Since the early 1950s, institutionalized economic cooperation among principal European nations has resulted in the emergence of the EU as an increasingly important regional political system. The completion of an integrated regional market by the early 1990s and the more recent attainment of economic and monetary union among a majority of the EU member states underscore the Union's importance as a key economic and political actor in its own right.⁸

CONTRASTING SYSTEM TYPES

While each of the contributors concentrates on single countries, their analysis illuminates contrasting features of three basic types of democratic polities that transcend national boundaries: (1) pluralist (the United Kingdom, Italy, and the EU), (2) étatist (France and Russia), and (3) democratic corporatist (Sweden and, to a lesser extent, Germany).⁹

The first of these types—pluralist democracies—is characterized by dispersed political authority and a multiplicity of autonomous organized interest groups representing employers, farmers, labor, and other special interests vis-à-vis the state. In such systems competitive economic and electoral relations dominate intergroup relations, with most groups oriented more toward short-term material and social gains than intermediate or long-term goals of system transformation. A dominant feature of pluralist systems is group reliance on coalition formation, often with respect to specific policy issues, as a means to maximize a group's economic and/or political influence. The structure and dynamics of pluralist democracies vary according to the distribution of political power among key policy actors. Majoritarian pluralism characterizes political systems dominated by a majority party in parliament, as has been the case during alternative periods of Conservative and Labour governance in the United Kingdom. Fragmented pluralism, in contrast, characterizes systems in which power is dispersed among a multiplicity of parties (none of which is able to command a sustained legislative majority in its own right). Policymaking in majoritarian pluralist systems can yield decisive policy outcomes (witness Thatcherism and recent constitutional reforms under “New Labour” in Britain), whereas political outcomes tend to be incremental and oftentimes tentative in fragmented pluralist regimes, with successful outcomes dependent on the strength (or fragility) of winning coalitions. Fragmented pluralism characterizes both Italy and the European Union as well as non-Europeans polities such as the United States and Canada.

In contrast, étatist systems are political regimes that embody more centralized authority structures and policymaking processes. A chief feature of étatist regimes is the concentration of bureaucratic power at the apex of the political system, as is the case in Italy despite its postwar record of successive changes of government. If accompanied by a parallel concentration of executive power (as in the Fifth Republic of France and in Russia under President Putin), the likely result is a high degree of institutional efficacy in the political process. Thus, forceful policies can be more efficiently decided and implemented in étatist regimes than is typically the case in pluralist systems, but for that very reason they can also be more readily reversed by an incumbent or a successor government (as proved the case with successive phases of nationalization and privatization during the 1980s and 1990s in France). Such policies may also be subject to less legislative control than in pluralist systems.

Democratic corporatist systems, finally, encompass institutionalized arrangements whereby government officials, business groups, and organized labor jointly participate in making (and in some cases implementing) economic and social policies. Such decisions are subsequently enacted through executive decrees, legislative endorsement, or both.¹⁰ Democratic corporatism is more highly developed in Sweden, the other Scandinavian countries, and Austria than in other European countries; yet, primarily in the sphere of

national economic policymaking, corporatist linkages exist in the Federal Republic of Germany as well.¹¹ By facilitating institutionalized participation by organized interest groups in the political process, democratic corporatism encourages a "partnership" approach to problem solving in specified policy areas (such as economic reconstruction in eastern Germany). Critics, however, fault corporatist arrangements because they tend to bypass legislative channels of representation, impede leadership accountability, and discourage democratic participation on the part of rank-and-file members of trade unions and other mass organizations.¹²

These different system types are relevant for explaining contrasting patterns of socio-economic and political performance on the part of modern democracies. Without question, many aspects of system performance—including those measured by basic indicators such as annual rates of economic growth, inflation, and unemployment levels—are influenced by external economic and other factors beyond the direct control of national policy actors. Nonetheless, national policymaking institutions and processes mediate the domestic economic and social consequences of exogenous trends and events. As Hugh Heclo has observed in commenting on different national responses to the international crisis of stagflation during the 1970s and early 1980s, "Each nation has embarked on a search for innovations in economic policymaking, although each has done so in its own way. This recent agitation for economic policy innovation in the midst of constraints provides a good example of what [has been] termed 'structured variation' in public policy."¹³ As contemporary European politics demonstrates, 'structured variations' among nations with respect to policy choices and their effects on socioeconomic performance are products of contrasting patterns of institutionalized power, different ideological preferences on the part of governing political parties, and varying degrees of access by the principal organized interest groups to national policy councils.

The central questions of comparative political analysis remain, in short, who governs, on behalf of what values, with the collaboration of what groups, and with what socio-economic and political consequences. The experience of the six European democracies included in this volume and the European Union reveals illuminating answers.

NOTES

1. This definition of comparative politics is based on Robert Dahl, *Modern Political Analysis*, 4th ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1984); and Lawrence C. Mayer, *Comparative Political Inquiry: A Methodological Survey* (Homewood, Ill.: Dorsey, 1972).
2. Dahl, *Modern Political Analysis*.
3. For a summary overview of innovation in postwar approaches to comparative political analysis, see Ronald H. Chilcote, *Theories of Comparative Politics: The Search for a Paradigm* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1981). A critical assessment of the failure of the behavioral revolution to live up to many of its promises can be found in Lawrence C. Mayer, *Redefining Comparative Politics: Promise Versus Performance* (Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage Library of Social Research, 1989). Standard sources on the methodology of comparative research include Mattei Dogan and Dominique Pelassy, *How to Compare Nations: Strategies in Comparative Politics*, 2d ed. (Chatham, N.J.: Chatham House, 1990); Adam Przeworski and Henry Teune, *The Logic of Comparative Social Inquiry* (New York: Wiley-Interscience, 1970); and Robert Holt and John Turner, eds., *The Methodology of Comparative Research* (New York: Free Press, 1970).
4. Note, in particular, the increased relevance of European politics for the comparative study of public policy. See Arnold J. Heidenheimer, Hugh Heclo, and Carolyn Teich Adams, *Comparative Public Policy: The*

- Politics of Social Choice in America, Europe, and Japan*, 3d ed. (New York: St. Martin's, 1990). See also Francis Castles, *Comparative Public Policy: Patterns of Post-War Transformation* (Northampton, Mass.: Edward Elgar, 1998).
5. See Barrington Moore Jr., *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966); and Charles Tilly, ed., *The Formation of National States in Western Europe* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1975).
 6. Important examples of comparative studies of groups, institutions, democracy, and culture incorporating European data include Francis G. Castles, *The Impact of Parties: Politics and Policies in Democratic Capitalist Society* (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage, 1982); Giovanni Sartori, *Parties and Party Systems: A Framework for Analysis* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1976); Russell Dalton et al., *Electoral Change in Advanced Industrial Democracies: Alignment or Realignment?* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984); Peter H. Merkl, ed., *West European Party Systems* (New York: Free Press, 1979); Kay Lawson, *Comparative Study of Political Parties* (New York: St. Martin's, 1976); Suzanne Berger, ed., *Organizing Interests in Western Europe: Pluralism, Corporatism, and the Transformation of Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981); Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1963, 1988) and Almond and Verba, eds., *The Civic Culture Revisited* (Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage, 1980); Ronald Inglehart, *The Silent Revolution: Changing Values and Political Styles among Western Publics* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1977) and *Culture Shift in Advanced Industrial Society* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1990); Robert Dahl, *Dilemmas of Pluralist Democracy: Autonomy vs. Control* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1982); Arend Lijphart, *Democracy in Plural Societies: A Comparative Exploration* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1977); Lijphart, *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1999); Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, and China* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979); Peter Hall, *Governing the Economy: The Politics of State Intervention in Britain and France* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986); Douglas A. Hibbs Jr., *The Political Economy of Industrial Democracies* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1987); Gösta Esping-Andersen, *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1990); and Adam Przeworski et al., *Democracy and Development: Political Institutions and Well-Being in the World, 1950-1990* (Cambridge, U.K., and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000).
 7. The same conceptual framework was utilized in the original edition of this book.
 8. The original signatories of treaties establishing the European Coal and Steel Community in 1951 and the European Economic Community in 1957 included France, West Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg. The United Kingdom, Denmark, and Ireland joined the Community in 1972 and were followed by Greece in 1981 and Spain and Portugal in 1987. Austria, Finland, and Sweden became members in January 1995.
 9. The distinction between *étatist*, pluralist, and democratic corporatist regimes is utilized to help explain contrasting patterns of economic policy management in M. Donald Hancock, John Logue, and Bernt Schiller, eds., *Managing Modern Capitalism: Industrial Renewal and Workplace Democracy in the United States and Western Europe* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood-Pracger, 1991).
 10. Excellent compilations of reprinted articles and original research on varieties of democratic corporatism can be found in Philippe Schmitter and Gerhard Lehmbruch, eds., *Trends toward Corporatist Intermediation* (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage, 1979); and in Gerhard Lehmbruch and Philippe Schmitter, eds., *Patterns of Corporatist Policy-Making* (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage, 1982). Also see Reginald J. Harrison, *Pluralism and Corporatism: The Political Evolution of Modern Democracies* (Boston: Allen and Unwin, 1980).
 11. Democratic corporatism was most fully institutionalized in former West Germany in the form of "concerted action," which involved high-level consultations focusing on economic policy among government officials and representatives of employer associations and trade unions from 1967 to 1977. Since then, formal trilateral policy sessions have been replaced by much more informal policy discussions among key economic actors that are periodically convened at the behest of the federal chancellor. See M. Donald Hancock, *West Germany: The Politics of Democratic Corporatism* (Chatham, N.J.: Chatham House, 1989).
 12. From a critical ideological perspective, Leo Panitch argues that corporatism in liberal democracies promotes the "co-optation" of workers into the capitalist economic order and thus impedes efforts to achieve greater industrial and economic democracy. Panitch, "The Development of Corporatism in Liberal Democracies," *Comparative Political Studies* 10 (1977): 61-90.
 13. Heidenheimer, Hecllo, and Adams, *Comparative Public Policy*, 136.

PART I

The United Kingdom

B. Guy Peters

ATLANTIC
OCEAN

NORTH
SEA

SCOTLAND

GRAMPIAN MTS.

Glasgow

Edinburgh

NORTHERN
IRELAND
Belfast

IRELAND

Dublin

UNITED
KINGDOM

• Manchester

• Liverpool

ENGLAND

• Birmingham

The Wash

NETHERLANDS

WALES

CAMBRIAN MOUNTAINS

Cardiff

Thames R.

London

Bristol

Bristol Channel

English Channel

BELGIUM

FRANCE

0 50 100 150 Miles
0 50 100 150 Kilometers

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