

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910827668203321
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Titolo	Democracy and the politics of electoral system choice : engineering electoral dominance // Amel Ahmed [[electronic resource]]
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Cambridge : , : Cambridge University Press, , 2013
ISBN	1-139-85444-5 1-107-23780-7 1-139-84619-1 1-139-84063-0 1-139-84300-1 1-139-38213-6 1-139-84536-5 1-283-74670-0 1-139-84182-3
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (xii, 228 pages) : digital, PDF file(s)
Classificazione	POL000000
Disciplina	320.6
Soggetti	Democratization Democracy Elections Representative government and representation
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Title from publisher's bibliographic system (viewed on 05 Oct 2015).
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Contradictions and ambiguities of democratization -- Strategies of containment : the role of repression and accommodation -- Strategies of competition : the logic of electoral system choice, single member plurality (SMP) vs. proportional representation (PR) -- The United States : pre-industrial democratization and the origins of SMP -- The United Kingdom : safeguarding the Reform Acts with SMP -- France : the tumultuous path of electoral system choice in the Third Republic -- Belgium : minimizing the existential threat with PR -- Rethinking democracy's determinisms -- The existential threat : electoral viability and ideological radicalism.
Sommario/riassunto	Amel Ahmed brings new historical evidence and a novel theoretical

framework to bear on the study of democratization. Looking at the politics of electoral system choice at the time of suffrage expansion among early democratizers, she shows that the electoral systems used in advanced democracies today were initially devised as exclusionary safeguards to protect pre-democratic elites from the impact of democratization and, particularly, the existential threat posed by working-class mobilization. The ubiquitous use and enduring nature of these safeguards calls into question the familiar picture of democracy moving along a path of increasing inclusiveness. Instead, what emerges is a picture that is riddled with ambiguity, where inclusionary democratic reforms combine with exclusionary electoral safeguards to form a permanent part of the new democratic order. This book has important implications for our understanding of the dynamics of democratic development both in early democracies and in emerging democracies today.
