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0521829739 - Retribution and Reparation in the Transition to Democracy

Edited by Jon Elster

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Retribution and Reparation in the Transition to Democracy

The contributions in this volume offer a comprehensive analysis of transitional justice from 1945 to the present. They focus on retribution against the leaders and agents of autocratic regimes preceding democratic transitions and on reparation to victims. Part I contains general theoretical discussions of retribution and reparation. The essays in Part II survey transitional justice in the wake of World War II, covering Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, the Netherlands, and Norway. In Part III, the contributors discuss more recent transitions in Argentina, Chile, Eastern Europe, the former German Democratic Republic, and South Africa, with a chapter on the reparation of injustice in some of these transitions. The editor provides a general introduction, a brief introduction to each part, and a conclusion that looks beyond regime transitions to broader issues of rectifying historical injustice.

Jon Elster is Robert K. Merton Professor of Social Science in the Department of Political Science at Columbia University. He has also taught in Paris, Oslo, and Chicago. His publications include *Ulysses and the Sirens*, *Sour Grapes*, *Making Sense of Marx*, *The Cement of Society*, *Solomonic Judgements*, *Nuts and Bolts for the Social Sciences*, *Local Justice*, *Political Psychology*, *Strong Feelings*, *Alchemies of the Mind*, and *Ulysses Unbound*. His research interests include the theory of rational choice, the theory of distributive justice, and the history of social thought.

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Preface and Acknowledgments

Most of the chapters in this volume originated in a seminar on retroactive justice (the now-standard term *transitional justice* had not yet taken hold) held at Columbia University in 1998–99. To improve the balance of the volume, two additional contributions have been included. The chapter by David Cohen on transitional justice in Germany after 1945 was specially written for this volume. To cover the trials and purges that took place in France after the Liberation in 1944, there was no better solution than to translate the most up-to-date essay by the foremost specialist on the topic, Henry Rousso. My own editorial contributions have been kept relatively brief, to reduce the overlap with my monograph *Closing the Books: Transitional Justice in Historical Perspective* (Cambridge University Press, 2004). Because I thought the present book should also be able to stand on its own, however, some redundancy was inevitable.

My thanks go first to the Mellon Foundation for its generous support of the Columbia seminar and of other related activities. I am also grateful to the Research Council of Norway for offering a subvention to cover the costs of translating Henry Rousso's essay and other publishing expenses. I would also like to thank the anonymous referees of Cambridge University Press, who pointed out the need for the chapters on Germany and France, as well as making a number of other valuable comments. Monika Nalepa offered superb research assistance. Finally, I would like to offer thanks to my collaborator over four decades, Hans Fredrik Dahl, who joined me in this effort as in so many others.

J.E.
Villiers-Nonains,
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