

**Democracies and Dictatorships in Latin America:
Emergence, Survival, and Fall**

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Rules for Coding Independent Variables based on Historical Sources

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Rules for Research Assistants for the Mainwaring/Pérez-Liñán book

You should code three independent variables for each political actor: its normative preference for democracy, its normative preference for dictatorship, and its policy radicalism/moderation. Please suggest a score for each of these three variables, and indicate if the scoring for an actor or one or more of the three variables is not obvious to you. We use a simple trichotomous score for each variable:

- An actor strongly normatively prefers democracy; the actor has a solid but less unambiguous normative preference for democracy; the actor has no meaningful normative preference for dictatorship.
- An actor strongly normatively prefers some kind of dictatorship; the actor has a solid but less unambiguous normative preference for dictatorship; the actor has no meaningful normative preference for democracy.
- The actor is radical, somewhat radical, or moderate.

Please organize your discussion of each actor to support your score for *each* independent variable for each actor. For example, justify why you coded a certain actor as having a strong normative preference for democracy. Provide quotes from secondary and (if possible) primary sources to justify/document your reasons for coding the actor as you do. *Link your quotes to specific coding rules in the operational definitions discussed below.* Also, please carefully compile a list of references. Keep quotations in the Spanish or Portuguese original. At the end of each administration, please provide a table with the following format:

Administration	Start	End	Actors	Government, other pro- government actors, or opposition?	Pro- democracy	Pro- dictatorship	Radical
President X	1916	1922	Actor Y		1	0	0
		
			Actor Z		0	0.5	1

Start indicates the first year of the administration. *End* indicates the end of the period.

For each of the three variables, 1 indicates the presence of the attribute (strong normative support for democracy, strong normative support for dictatorship, or radical policy preferences), 0 indicates the absence of the attribute, and 0.5 indicates an intermediate situation (e.g., the actor is somewhat radical). Do not use any other scores, but if you have a doubt about how to code an actor, please contact us.

For practical purposes, make sure that put your name and date the draft at the beginning of the file, and please make sure that the pages are numbered. When you send a revised report, use track changes.

I. General Considerations

Coding by administration

- i. Code by administration for every administration in office at the end of a year between 1944 and 2010. Indicate clearly the initial year and the final year of the administration. If a president was reelected several times and the sources indicate that actors changed over time, you may treat each term as a separate entry.
- ii. Some dictatorships lasted a long time (e.g., Pinochet 1973-90, Stroessner 1954-89). The relevant actors, their normative preferences toward democracy and dictatorship, and their policy radicalism/moderation might change during these long periods. Please identify such changes. If the primary actors in regime dynamics change considerably over time during a lengthy dictatorship, we should break the dictatorship up into different periods, as if they were different administrations. For example, we divided the Pinochet dictatorship into two different periods: 1973-86 and 1987-90. During the latter period, political parties again became important actors.
- iii. Skip administrations that came into office in a given year and did not last until the end of the year.

Identifying the Most Important Actors

Within each administration, please organize the list by the main domestic actors. We need a parsimonious set of actors (in our experience, usually 3 to 7 per administration). The historiography for each administration serves as the best guide to determine who the main actors were. Main actors consistently appear in the main works.

Please briefly justify your selection of actors except for the president and the main political parties, who we always consider important actors under competitive regimes. For example, in Argentina 1973-76, the guerrilla left constituted an important actor, and you could justify this inclusion with a very brief statement about its impact in politics and with the fact that every meaningful book about the period discusses them. The important actors in one period are not always the important ones in the next. In the Argentine example, the guerrilla left ceased being an important actor after 1978 or so. Some actors are very important during part of an administration but not during the whole time period, e.g., the Catholic Church under Perón, 1954-55.

Rules for Identifying the Most Important Domestic Actors:

- iv. Political actors are powerful individuals (especially the president), organizations (parties, unions, business associations, the military, NGOs, media organizations, international organizations), or movements that control political resources and therefore exercise influence in the competition for power.
- v. We focus on a parsimonious set of the most important political actors. In democratic regimes, the president and the largest parties are usually the most important actors. On occasion, the military, guerrilla organizations, social movements, nongovernmental organizations, unions, or other actors can be major actors in regime politics.¹ In authoritarian regimes, the most important actors always include the president and often include a hegemonic party (if there is one and if it is reasonably independent with respect to the president), the main opposition party, and the military.

¹ Congress is an important decision-making arena in competitive political regimes, but it is not sufficiently united to be an actor. In conflicts about political regimes, legislatures are usually divided along party lines, so the parties, not congress per se, are the actors.

- vi. Social classes are not sufficiently organized or sufficiently politically cohesive on a consistent basis to form political actors except insofar as this cohesion is forged by class organizations (labor unions, owners' associations, class-based parties, etc) or by a particular circumstance that generates temporary class unity. For us, labor-based political parties and labor unions are actors, but the working class per se is not. Similarly, capitalists per se are usually not a unified political actor; they have many competing interests and usually lack a single organization that speaks for all of them. When their interests are deeply threatened, business owners might forge a temporary unity that enables them to function like an actor. Social classes can for short periods function almost like actors when they respond almost uniformly to a political event or process, but such uniformity is the exception. The norm, however, is that social classes face very difficult collective action problems (Olson 1965), that they are internally divided both structurally and politically, and that they are only exceptionally unified or cohesive actors.
- vii. Our treatment of actors also diverges somewhat from that of pioneering contingent action approaches such as Linz (1978) and O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986). Both of these works focus primarily on *blocs* of actors based on political positions. They conceptualize the actors partly according to their positions regarding the existing regime. For example, Linz's loyal, semi-loyal, and disloyal oppositions are blocs of actors that share a common orientation toward the democratic regime. It is entirely reasonable to build theory based on blocs with common positions--this is what Linz (1978), O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986), and Przeworski (1991) all did. Our theory involves a step antecedent to this: it develops a theory about how organizational and individual actors come to share common positions. Therefore, it is theoretically inconsistent for us to some times conceptualize actors as

organizations and individuals, and other times conceptualize them as coalitions or blocs with common positions.

- viii. Public opinion is not an actor because it cannot per se act. Likewise, electoral support is a hugely important asset for actors in democracies, but voters do not constitute an actor; they are almost always divided and not capable of cohesive action.
- ix. In exceptional cases (perhaps Ecuador in the 1980s and 1990s), parties that are part of a coalition act in very cohesive ways, and the parties that form the coalition score the same way on the three variables we are coding. In this circumstance, you may code the coalition rather than each specific party as the main actor. However, the default is to treat each major party as a separate actor. Please justify any exception to this rule.
- x. In most cases, we consider the president and the president's party to be one actor because usually the president's party follows the president on the three independent variables we are coding. However, there are some exceptions in which the president and his/her party diverged significantly either politically (e.g., Carlos Andrés Pérez and Acción Democrática in 1992) or in terms of the three independent variables you are coding (President Salvador Allende and the Chilean Socialist Party are an example). In these cases, especially if these differences had consequences for the political regime, please code them as separate actors.
- xi. Few individuals except for the president are important enough to regard as actors. However, there are some exceptions. In Argentina, Perón was such a major figure from 1955 until 1973 that we include him.
- xii. In most circumstances, we treat an organization as a unitary actor. If, however, there are factions within a party or military that a) are powerful enough to have an impact on national politics and b) have different positions on the three independent variables, it is reasonable to

treat the factions as two different actors. Please provide a justification if you treat one organization as a divided actor.

- xiii. In some cases, we treat two or more organizations of the same kind (e.g., two political parties or two guerrilla organizations) that have the same score on the three variables you are coding and a similar impact on the political regime as one actor. For example, in Argentina between 1916 and 1930, we treat the conservative parties as one actor, and between 1969 and 1976 we treat the various guerrilla organizations as one actor. However, the default is to treat each organization separately. Please justify any exceptions.
- xiv. In unusual circumstances, it is reasonable to code two or more organizations of different kinds as one actor because a) none of the organizations by themselves seems sufficiently important to treat as an actor; b) the organizations all have the same scores on the independent variables; and c) the organizations sometimes acted together. These cases should be justified.
- xv. We focus on domestic actors because we are coding foreign actors as part of our variables for US foreign policy and regional political environment. International actors that are simultaneously domestic actors, such as the Catholic Church, can be coded as domestic actors. You could treat a local branch of a multinational corporation as a domestic actor because it has a domestic office. However, you (obviously) could not treat a foreign government as a domestic actor.
- xvi. Puppet presidents should not be treated as actors.

Special Considerations

Coding Actors Who Change Positions During an Administration

xvii. Some actors clearly change positions during an administration. For example, the Chilean Christian Democrats began the Allende period with a strong normative preference for democracy, but that normative preference weakened during the course of the Allende years. We code such actors based on their positions at the end of the administration.

Coding Actors When Information is Sparse

xviii. If there is no information about an actor during a given administration, especially if the administration is of short duration, it is reasonable to assume stability in its positions from earlier and later periods. Usually some of the historiography will note major changes in major actors' normative preferences about democracy and dictatorship and their policy moderation/radicalism.

II. Coding the Independent Variables

Rules for Coding Normative Preference for Democracy and for Dictatorship

We code two related but analytically distinct concepts: normative preference for democracy and normative preference for dictatorship. The two concepts are distinct because a low normative preference for democracy *does not necessarily entail* high normative preference for dictatorship, and they are related because a coherent actor cannot simultaneously normatively prefer both democracy and dictatorship.² Assuming that actors have logically consistent preferences, a strong normative preference for democracy is sufficient to preclude a normative

² “Disloyal” actors may publicly embrace democracy while they privately embrace dictatorship, but this is a tactical issue, not a sincere preference.

preference for dictatorship (and vice-versa), but it is not necessary to prevent support for a dictatorship. *Operationally, if you give an actor a value of 0.5 or 1 for normative preference for democracy, you must give a 0 to that actor for normative preference for dictatorship, and if you give an actor a 0.5 or 1 for normative preference for dictatorship, you must give a 0 to that actor for normative preference for democracy.* If an actor evinces ambivalence resulting in some statements or actions that indicate a normative preference for democracy and others from the same time that indicate a normative preference for dictatorship, the actor does not have a substantial normative preference for either regime type. You should code 0 for both variables; many actors do not have a strong normative preference for one regime type over the other (you may not code 0.5 for both variables, though).

A normative preference for a regime type (democracy or dictatorship) is the opposite of strategic, instrumental, or opportunistic support for a regime. It means that an actor is willing to accept policy sacrifices in order to achieve or preserve the regime type.

1. Normative Preference for Democracy

A normative preference for democracy means that an actor values democracy intrinsically, i.e., above any political outcomes; the actor has an ideological commitment to democracy as the best kind of political regime. A score of 1 means that an actor displays a consistent and strong normative preference for democracy. A score of 0.5 shows fairly strong but not entirely consistent normative support for democracy. A score of 0 means that the actor shows ambivalence about whether to value democracy on normative grounds, or else is downright hostile to liberal democracy.

Inferring the *presence* of a normative preference for democracy. Some behaviors and discourse show a clear normative preference for democracy if they are consistent.

- 1.1. If an actor consistently expresses support for liberal democratic procedures above specific policy outcomes.
- 1.2. If an actor accepts outcomes as legitimate because of the democratic process even though the actor did not prefer this outcome.

Inferring the *absence* of a normative preference for democracy. We also looked for indicators of *low* preference of democratic norms. Indicators of low normative preference for democracy typically signaled that actors would be willing to accept violations of at least one the four democratic principles in order to achieve their goals. We coded actors as not normatively preferring democracy if they displayed at least one of the following characteristics:

General Rules to Assess the Behavior of All Actors

- 1.3. Actors with weaker normative preferences express indifference or ambivalence toward democracy or indicate that they value some policy outcomes above following democratic rules of the game. For instance, an actor may express doubts about a merely “bourgeois”, “liberal”, or “formal” democracy.
- 1.4. An actor justifies the need for an encompassing “national movement” and questions the legitimacy of any opposition that is outside of this movement. Such claims do not intrinsically degrade the competitive regime, but they signal a low normative preference for or opposition to democratic pluralism.
- 1.5. An actor questions the validity of democratic procedures when they produce unfavorable policy or political results.

- 1.6. An actors' discourse indicates indifference or hostility toward the basic institutions of democracy (political parties, legislatures, supreme courts, constitutional tribunals, electoral bodies, etc.). Some actors view these institutions as intrinsically illegitimate, rather than challenging their specific decisions.
- 1.7. An actor's discourse shows clear signs of anti-liberal or anti-democratic elements.
- 1.8. A leader or organization views other non-violent actors that oppose his/her/their preferences as illegitimate, the enemy, enemies of the people or country, etc. Such attitudes indicate equivocal or no normative preference toward democracy. (Note: Even those committed to democracy might reasonably claim that violent actors are illegitimate, etc.)
- 1.9. An actor claims to be the sole bearer of the truth, the people, the country, etc.
- 1.10. An actor readily accepts (and perhaps even supports) practices that undermine democracy.

Specific Rules to Assess Non-Governmental Actors

- 1.11. A non-governmental actor expresses willingness to subvert the constitution, democratic procedures, or democratic checks and balances. Such attitudes do not intrinsically affect the regime—i.e., they are independent of the dependent variable—but they express low commitment to democracy. (Governmental willingness to subvert the constitution, democratic procedures, or democratic checks and balances also express a low normative preference for democracy, but we do not include these indicators because they are part of the dependent variable.)
- 1.12. An actor accepts electoral fraud or supports patently anti-democratic exclusions (e.g., proscribing major parties).

- 1.13. An actor employs or legitimizes the use of violence in the context of a competitive political regime.
- 1.14. An actor supports a coup against a competitive political regime.
- 1.15. An actor engages in practices that undermine democracy.

Specific Rules to Assess Governments

- 1.16. The president with some frequency tries to change some rules of the game, e.g., by changing term limits (especially past two terms), by seeking to have a new constitution written, by changing electoral rules, by violating or undermining the constitution. Such changes in the rules of the game do not intrinsically cause erosion in the competitive regime, but when they are used more than rarely, they indicate a cavalier attitude toward democracy. An effort to change term limits from one term to two, for example, does not always indicate a low normative preference for democracy, but an effort to change term limits to extend beyond two terms, coupled with other self-interested behavior to change the rules of the game, usually indicates a low normative preference for democracy.
- 1.17. The government introduces programs of partisan indoctrination into the public school system, the military, or other public institutions.

We code normative preference for democracy as 0.5 if an actor generally demonstrated a clear normative preference for democracy but with occasional minor caveats. If an actor exhibited some of the positive dispositions and none of the negatives, we coded the actor as having a strong normative preference for democracy.

2. Normative Preference for Dictatorship

A normative preference for dictatorship signals that actors actually embraced a non-democratic regime as their first choice *in principle*. A normative preference for dictatorship is not the same as a situational preference in which an actor supports a dictatorship at a given historical moment because the dictatorship will yield some policy or personal benefits or prevent some bad outcomes under a competitive regime. The fact that an actor supported a dictatorship at a particular moment in time does not mean that the actor has a normative preference for dictatorship *in principle*. Likewise, the mere fact that a government engages in repression does not demonstrate a normative preference for dictatorship. Nor does conspiring against a democracy necessarily show a normative preference for dictatorship. If an actor believes that some kind of dictatorship is *generally* superior to democracy because it offers the opportunity for efficient, technocratic decision-making without interference by politicized non-rational actors (legislatures, parties), this would be one example of a normative preference for dictatorship. Advocates of revolutionary Leninist regimes, of Fascist regimes that venerate the powerful leader, of Islamic theocratic regimes, or of Plato's philosopher king all exhibit a normative preference for some kind of dictatorship. We coded actors as normatively preferring dictatorships if they displayed at least one of the following characteristics:

General Rules to Assess All Actors

- 2.1. An actor expresses principled hostility toward democracy or explicitly advocates a new form of government to transcend modern democracy (as defined in Chapter 1).
- 2.2. An actor praises authoritarian rulers or regimes (not just some specific policies) as models to be emulated. For example, admiration of the Soviet Union Franco, or

Mussolini indicate a normative preference for dictatorship. Similarly, expressions of admiration of intellectuals known for authoritarian ideologies (e.g., Charles Maurras) show a normative preference for dictatorship.

- 2.3. An actor expresses loyalty to a single individual, presented as the only person who deserves to be ruler of the country in the foreseeable future, with no time bound. The loyalty is expressed in personal terms (i.e., it is not based on the fact that the ruler has achieved power in a legal or legitimate way). Any leader who challenges this (current or potential) ruler is treated as illegitimate.
- 2.4. An actor expresses loyalty to a single party, which is presented as the only organization with a legitimate right to rule the country in the foreseeable future, with no time bound. The loyalty is expressed in ideological or organizational terms (i.e., it does not depend on the claim that the party has achieved office in a legal way). Any organization that challenges this (current or potential) ruling party is considered as an illegitimate political actor.

Specific Rules to Assess Non-Governmental Actors

- 2.5. A non-governmental actor voices preferences for positions that, if carried out, would compromise the democratic regime. For example, an actor might advocate restrictions to the four dimensions of democracy introduced in Chapter 1, such as the elimination of an elected Congress, restrictions in voter rights (given the prevailing standards in a given historical moment), the suspension of constitutional rights; or an active role of the military in domestic politics.

Specific Rules to Assess Governments

- 2.6. The government justifies the need for concentrating power beyond constitutional rules, or for extending its hold of power into an indefinite future.

We coded normative preference for dictatorship as “limited” if an actor had ambiguous or fluctuating positions on these issues, or if a collective actor showed internal divisions on those questions. In all other cases, we assumed that actors did not normatively prefer dictatorships.

3. Rules for Coding Radicalism

In Chapter 1, we defined radicalism as the combination of policy preferences toward one pole of the policy spectrum in conjunction with an intensity of these preferences where they do not represent the status quo or with an intransigent defense of these positions where these positions represent the status quo. Radical policy preferences need not be on the extreme left (i.e., the revolutionary left) or extreme right, but they must be far enough from the center of the policy spectrum to create some polarization. It is helpful if you can identify specific policy preferences or positions that justify the coding of this variable.

Radical actors must meet two separate criteria: they must have policy preferences toward a pole of the policy spectrum, and they must exhibit impatience or intransigence to achieve their policy goals. Accordingly, we need information both about actors’ policy preferences or ideological positions and their impatience/intransigence/intensity.

If a party is fairly consistently centrist or amorphous on policy issues, policy radicalism *must* equal 0. It doesn't matter where the party scores on the impatience/intransigence scale. A

party that overall is centrist could nevertheless have (salient) positions toward a pole of a policy spectrum on some salient issues and hence score > 0 on our radicalism scale.

Assessing Actors' Policy Positions: You can use conventional indicators such as position toward the left or right of the political spectrum or positions on specific important issues that are toward a pole of a policy spectrum (e.g., trenchant anti-communism).

Assessing Intransigence/Impatience: Willingness to use violence or repression, willingness to trample on the rules of democratic politics, and inflammatory rhetoric to achieve a goal or preserve a position are almost always indicators of policy intransigence/impatience. In some cases, radical actors might refrain from such actions only for short-term strategic reasons—for example, they believe that they will suffer repression and have almost no chance of achieving what they want through these actions—but still they fundamentally remain willing to resort to such behavior to achieve their policy preferences.

Although we define radicalism in the realm of preferences rather than behaviors, some behaviors typically are expressions of underlying radical preferences. Therefore, we code both direct expressions of radical preferences and behaviors that usually or always reflect radical preferences.

We code an actor as radical if it meets any of the following conditions:

Rules to Assess All Actors:

- 3.1. An actor is radical if its discourse expresses a preference to achieve leftist or rightist policy positions in the short to medium term or to preserve extreme positions where they are already in place.

- 3.2. An actor is radical if its discourse expresses a willingness to subvert democratic procedures to achieve leftist or rightist policy positions or to preserve such positions where they are already in place.
- 3.3. Behavior by any actor or government policies oriented toward achieving or preserving positions toward the left or right in the short to medium term expresses radical preferences. We code the government as radical if it implements policies that are toward the left or right and if the government exhibits impatience or intransigence in realizing these policy goals. Such policies redistribute resources and thereby impose substantial costs on some actors (e.g., expropriation of property of powerful corporations or sectors of the economy without full compensation; intimidation to push property owners to sell assets; labor-repressive regulations to increase labor supply; nationalization of important sectors of the economy; draconian increases in regulation that impose new costs on some actors). The government expects that some actors will pay a substantial cost; the cost is not the unintended consequence of policies (as is usually the case, for example, with high inflation or high unemployment).
- 3.4. Whether government policies are radical depends somewhat on the international context. Market-oriented policies were common throughout Latin America in the 1980s and 1990s. In this context, policies that would have been somewhat radical in earlier decades were not *necessarily* radical in the 1980s and 1990s. If a government's economic policy was polarizing, clearly to the right of the policy spectrum, and the government showed impatience/intransigence in achieving its policy goals, these policies should be coded as radical or somewhat radical.

Rules to Assess Non-Governmental Actors:

3.5. The actor undertakes violent acts aimed at achieving or preventing significant policy change under a democratic or semi-democratic regime. For example, labor unions and/or other popular organizations might use violent protests to achieve some policy gains. In Colombia, since the 1980s, organized right wing landowners have used violence to protect their property and increase their political power. Violent acts against dictatorships are radical if the actor uses them to achieve policy positions toward one pole of the policy spectrum. If the actor is centrist and is using violence only because it seems to be the only way to get rid of a dictatorship, then violence does not signal radicalism.

There is an asymmetry in the coding rules between the government and nongovernmental actors: we do not count governmental violence intended to accomplish significant policy change as radical behavior. The reason for the asymmetry is that the coding rules must clearly separate radicalization (as an independent variable) from the political regime (the dependent variable). Governmental use of violence to achieve policy goals intrinsically affects the dependent variable.

Although for analytical purposes we treat radicalism as distinct from normative regime preferences, the two factors are empirically related. The urgency or impatience displayed by radical actors to achieve their policy preferences typically indicates a low commitment to democracy. The compromise required in democratic politics is often incompatible with the rapid change (or the recalcitrant status-quo) that radical actors seek. Radical actors prioritize policy outcomes over democratic process. Thus, radical actors are a subset of those with a low commitment to democracy, but they do not necessarily have a strong commitment to particular forms of authoritarian rule.

We code radicalization as “limited” if an actor had ambiguous or fluctuating positions on these issues.

Stability as the Default for Coding All Three Variables

Usually, actors do not radically change their normative preferences for democracy or dictatorship or their policy radicalism/moderation from one administration to the next. The default in coding all three variables is stability. Be wary of sharp fluctuations in a short time span. They often suggest instrumental/opportunistic/strategic choices rather than a more fundamental normative preference for the political regime.

4. Government, pro-Government, Opposition, Neutral/Divided

1. Government: This always includes the president and unless you counted his/her party as a separate actor, we are also including his/her party and any other forces that are so subordinated to the government that you considered it a single actor.

2. Pro-government but independent actor. Any actor that usually supported the government but that is independent enough to consider a separate actor.

3. Opposition: Any actor that generally opposed the government.

4. Neutral/divided. Any actor that neither clearly supported nor opposed the government, or was internally divided.

Usually this information is fairly common knowledge and requires no or only minimal documentation. Please let us know about more complex cases so that we can help think about the coding.