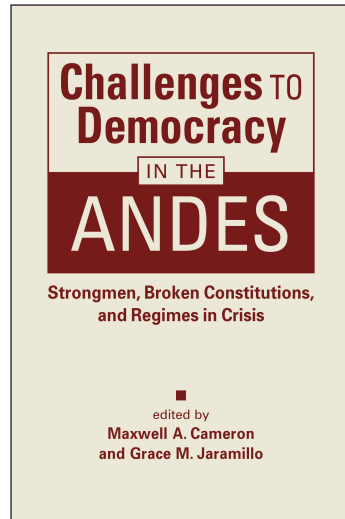


EXCERPTED FROM

Challenges to Democracy
in the Andes:
Strongmen,
Broken Constitutions,
and Regimes in Crisis

edited by
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Grace M. Jaramillo

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ISBN: 978-1-955055-42-0 hc



LYNNE RIENNER PUBLISHERS

1800 30th Street, Suite 314
Boulder, CO 80301 USA
telephone 303.444.6684
fax 303.444.0824

This excerpt was downloaded from the
Lynne Rienner Publishers website
www.rienner.com

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1

The Dilemmas of Democratization in the Andes

*Maxwell A. Cameron and
Grace M. Jaramillo*

“DISOLVER!” PROCLAIMED ALBERTO FUJIMORI WHEN HE APPEARED ON national television on April 5, 1992; “dissolve,” he repeated for emphasis, “the Congress of the Republic.” This was the most dramatic of several exceptional measures to “restructure” the state, but the president of Peru also announced he was reorganizing the judiciary, the Constitutional Tribunal, the Public Ministry, and the office of the comptroller general.¹ To the surprise of many observers, Fujimori’s “self-coup” (or *autogolpe* in Spanish) met with broad public approval and was backed by the armed forces. Since his actions were unconstitutional, however, they were subject not only to legal objections by the democratic opposition but also to resistance from members of his own cabinet, some of whom had strong international connections and influence among creditors.

In an attempt to placate critics and remain in good standing with the international community, Fujimori announced at a meeting of the Organization of American States (OAS) that he would convene a constituent body, called the Democratic Constituent Congress (CCD), to replace the dissolved legislature and to rewrite the 1979 constitution. A newly drafted constitution, with broader executive powers, was produced by that body and submitted for approval by referendum in 1993. A key article of the 1993 constitution was a provision for one immediate reelection, thereby opening the door for Fujimori to run for another term in office in 1995.²

Fujimori’s self-coup broke constitutional arrangements—what Machiavelli called “dikes and dams”—designed to disperse, balance, and prevent the abuse of power.³ The result was to concentrate power in the executive branch of government and erode mechanisms of accountability. The

Supreme Court, Tribunal of Constitutional Guarantees, and office of the Public Prosecutor were neutralized and brought under the control of the executive. The National Intelligence Service under Fujimori's corrupt spymaster, Vladimiro Montesinos, became so powerful that Fujimori made its headquarters, the "little Pentagon," his domicile.⁴ A series of mafias emerged inside the state which began to assume functions of government hidden from public scrutiny or control. Fujimori's government collapsed when the president resigned and fled to Japan in the wake of a massive corruption and bribery scandal that broke in the middle of his efforts to seek an unconstitutional third term in 2000 (see Carrión 2006).

Why did Peruvians place their trust and faith in a strongman who tore up their constitution?⁵ For starters, the country was in an existential crisis.⁶ Many people feared that the state had entered a "strategic equilibrium" with the fanatical Shining Path insurgency.⁷ Much of rural Peru was already under *de facto* military rule, and the insurgency, following a "prolonged peoples' war" strategy of surrounding the cities from the countryside, seemed to be strangling Lima. Voters had chosen Fujimori in 1990 because he promised to address problems that establishment politicians had neglected—including the need for a more efficient counter-insurgency effort. To achieve this, the temporary suspension of Congress did not seem like a high price to pay, and few people denied that Peru's notoriously corrupt judiciary needed reorganization. The capture of the Shining Path's leader Abimael Gúzman just a few months after Fujimori's *autogolpe* seemed to confirm that the self-coup had been a good decision.⁸ Buoyed by this success, Fujimori's electoral vehicle *Cambio 90-Nueva Mayoría* won 44 of 80 seats in the CCD. The new Magna Carta was approved by 52 percent of the ballots cast in a referendum. After years of political violence and economic depression, Peruvians began to experience a sense of optimism about the future. Fujimori was reelected with 64 percent of the vote in 1995, securing 67 of 120 seats in the new Congress.

Fujimori was shrewd, if not prudent.⁹ Growing up, he acquired the qualities of audacity and cunning that are celebrated in Peru's popular culture. He reveled in the role of the outsider, someone who had never been a member of an established party or held public office at any level of government. Once in office, he did not hesitate to use his power in a manner incompatible with his oath to uphold the constitution. Nor did he hesitate to make what Max Weber called alliances with "diabolical forces."¹⁰ A few months before he closed Congress and suspended the constitution in 1992, Fujimori authorized a horrific massacre in the Barrios Altos neighborhood of Lima. Thus, he knew, even though most Peruvians did not, that he was in legal jeopardy. He had thrown his lot in with the most dangerous and ruthless elements of Peru's armed forces. By weakening mechanisms of accountability within an already precarious constitutional order, Fujimori

sought to guarantee impunity for himself and his allies in the armed forces. Ultimately, however, it would be systematic, egregious, and publicly unpalatable abuses of power committed by Fujimori and the security apparatus that would bring down his regime.

Although Fujimori's *autogolpe* provided a template for other leaders—including Russia's Boris Yeltsin¹¹ and Guatemala's Jorge Serrano¹²—its greatest weakness was the stain of illegitimacy that accompanies blatantly unconstitutional interruptions of the constitutional and democratic order.¹³ It could not be said that the Peruvian *autogolpe* was wholly incompatible with popular sovereignty. On the contrary, to prevail, the president who carries out a self-coup must enjoy substantial popular support, as well as the backing of the military, and their actions may be retrospectively legitimated through elections and constitutional referendums. The core problem of the *autogolpe* is its indisputable unconstitutionality. This limited the likelihood that other leaders would copy Fujimori. Within a few years, however, a new script began to emerge, one of executive aggrandizement no less effective but harder to reject on constitutional grounds, and thus less risky to execute. It was a script that did not require a state of exception, and yet it put the executive in a position of the sovereign "who decides on the exception" (Schmitt 1996: 5).

In Venezuela, a former lieutenant colonel named Hugo Chávez Frías led a military coup attempt in February 1992. Born to a modest provincial family of school teachers in Venezuela's lowlands, Chávez joined the military where he was recruited into conspiratorial circles.¹⁴ A defining moment in his life was the *Caracazo*, a week of rioting in February 1989 during which the Venezuelan military restored order through heavy-handed repression. Chávez saw it as a lost opportunity to support the insurrection and thereby forge a popular-military alliance for political change. He accelerated preparations for a military coup, in the hope of instigating a popular insurrection, which was set in motion in February 1992.

The coup failed, but Chávez's televised admission of failure ("lamentably, for now," as he put it) helped turn him into an instant folk hero.¹⁵ Meditating on his future in a Yare Prison cell, he came up with a new strategy: he would run for office with the promise that, if elected, he would rewrite Venezuela's constitution, creating a constituent assembly with full sovereign power. The novelty of the proposition was that the change in the constitution was announced as part of an election campaign, conferring upon it a certain electoral legitimacy. It proved to be a winning proposition. Chávez was elected in 1998, held a referendum in 1999, which prompted the resignation of the head of the supreme court, and won an overwhelming majority of the seats in the constituent assembly. As a formula of executive aggrandizement, this involved fewer risks for the executive and more difficulties for the opposition. The new script also

enabled the government to accompany constitutional change with opportunities for a more participatory politics.

Stripped of the rhetoric of Bolivarian radicalism, the case for Chávez's ostensibly democratic and constitutional revolution was similar to Fujimori's self-coup in one respect: the transformation Chávez wished to bring about demanded the accumulation of sovereign power in the hands of the executive. Although Chávez talked about constituent power and popular sovereignty, in practice the power accumulated fell into his own hands. And although Chávez took pains to emphasize that the revolution was more than his personal project, it was clearly a project that was driven by the aggrandizement of executive power, even if that power was matched, and to some degree replicated, by participatory processes of social mobilization. The case for change was that without a powerful and enduring connection between the leader and the masses, it would be impossible to destroy the *ancien régime*. The justification for this assault on democracy was that the existing constitutional order was "moribund" (a phrase Chávez used during his investiture to signal a rupture with the 1961 constitution). The "moribund" system was based on a pact between two major parties—named *Puntofijo* after the residence of Rafael Caldera where it was signed—in which the spoils of power were shared. The pact was intended to avoid a return to military rule, but it reduced the meaningfulness of the choice for voters. No matter who Venezuelans voted for, the collusive system of party government ended up winning.¹⁶ The system was described as a *partyarchy* (in Spanish, *partidocracia*), or rule of the parties, by political scientist Michael Coppedge, to highlight the contrast with Robert Dahl's "pol-yarchy," or rule of the many.¹⁷

Venezuelans who supported Chávez were enamored by his empathic capacity to connect with everyday citizens. As one working class Venezuelan told Cameron during a visit to Caracas in 2000: "in the past, when I heard politicians on the radio, they seemed to be talking to each other. When I listen to Chávez, I feel he is talking to me." Chávez was also a man of contradictions. He saw himself as a revolutionary and a democrat, but he was first and foremost a military man. As such, his conception of democracy was devoid of citizenship rights and replete with militaristic metaphors and tropes. Nevertheless, Venezuelans were tired of corruption, and they longed for a leader who would restore the prosperity of their oil-rich nation. Like Fujimori, Chávez was an outsider and that was part of his appeal: he was not contaminated by the corruption associated with the status quo. Many of Chávez's supporters yearned for a return to the era of *Venezuela Saudita*—the period of petrodollar-soaked prosperity and stability that ended with the stock market crash of 1983 and the subsequent neoliberal *gran viraje* (great turn) of 1989, when President Carlos Andrés Pérez (known by his initials as CAP) implemented the austerity measures that

provoked the *Caracazo*. This was followed by corruption scandals that led to the impeachment of CAP.

No fact is more essential to understanding Venezuelan politics than its possession of oil, not only because its proven reserves are greater than any other country in the world, but also because oil revenues feed the perception of natural resource wealth in the midst of endemic poverty. How can this contradiction be explained? For many Venezuelans the answer was clear: the nation's oil wealth had been plundered by economic and political elites—corrupt bankers, self-dealing politicians, and top bureaucrats working in the so-called “meritocracy” of the state-run oil company.¹⁸ Moreover, if Chávez was not exactly a by-the-book politician, he was nonetheless committed to peaceful revolution by creating a new constitution. Like Fujimori, he used presidential powers to reorder the political system in accordance with his interpretation of the mandate voters had given him.

And yet the new constitution of 1999 significantly enhanced executive and military powers and set in motion a process that would culminate with the construction of an electoral authoritarian regime. This would not happen all at once, and the worst excesses of the regime Chávez helped build would occur after his death due to cancer in 2013. But under Chávez, the constitution was changed yet again in a 2009 referendum to allow indefinite reelection, and over time the government captured and took control over all other branches of government and independent agencies, thereby undermining democratic accountability. Many of the same dynamics that turned Peru into an electoral authoritarian regime after the 1992 self-coup were also played out in Venezuela, including the growing abuse and corruption that accompanies the concentration of power. Perhaps the most critical tension in the Venezuelan regime was between its revolutionary aspirations and its desire for electoral legitimacy. As a revolutionary project aimed at tearing down the *Puntofijo* pact, Chávez's Bolivarian process identified the establishment parties as the enemy, and thus denied them the legitimacy of an opposition entitled to serve in public office should they win enough votes. Under Chávez, every election became a battle to defend the revolution against its enemies. The opposition parties, for their part, questioned the electoral legitimacy of Chávez and especially his successor, Nicolás Maduro.

Just as Fujimori's self-coup provided a template for similar events in Russia and Guatemala, the Bolivarian script was reenacted in Bolivia and Ecuador—but with modifications.¹⁹ Ecuador followed the Venezuelan model, but with an important caveat: the strongman who emerged there was an academic, not a former military officer. Rafael Correa adopted a Venezuelan-style reform process, but without strong military participation or a desire to establish a civil-military regime. Correa nevertheless shared with Chávez a deep hostility to established parties. This he demonstrated by

running for office without a congressional slate and then quickly staging a referendum for a constituent assembly. A conflict immediately erupted between the president and the sitting Congress. The Congress attempted to impeach the president, who in turn dismissed opposition members of Congress who opposed him. Having prevailed over his adversaries, Correa's Constituent Assembly was convened in 2007, and the new constitution was approved in a 2008 referendum.

Correa's supporters pointed to his remarkable popularity during his tenure in office, which was due in no small measure to his willingness to spend on social programs. Correa described his version of political change as a "citizens' revolution." The constitutional reform in Ecuador was one of the most participatory processes ever undertaken to write a constitution in Latin America. The result was a decade of relative stability—in sharp contrast to the previous decade when seven different presidents rotated through the government palace. Yet despite the initial emphasis on citizenship and participation, Correa violated the spirit and letter of his own constitution, criminalizing dissent and bullying opponents. What started as a participatory style of rule became increasingly autocratic.

Critics pointed to Correa's authoritarian personality.²⁰ Even at an early age he enjoyed playing at being president and would designate friends as members of his imaginary cabinet. The son of a negligent and unsuccessful provincial *hacienda* owner who served jail time in the United States for drug running, he was brought up by a dignified, devout, and self-sacrificing mother. Exposure to rural poverty and liberation theology as a catechist gave Correa a social justice orientation. After studying economics, he became intensely critical of neoliberal policies like dollarization that, he believed, had wrought debt, economic destruction, indignity and a loss of sovereignty on Ecuador. His passionate views made him intolerant of opposition and unwilling to share or negotiate power. Correa governed in a highly plebiscitary manner for two terms.²¹ In 2017, in accordance with the constitution he helped design, he stepped down. In this respect, he was unlike Chávez. He did so, in part, because he believed his successor was loyal and would clear the path for him to return to power at a later date. As it happened, Lenín Moreno had his own plans. Once elected, he not only broke with Correa but also convened and handily won a referendum in 2018 to eliminate the possibility of reelection, thereby blocking Correa's path to a future electoral victory.

Perhaps the most intriguing variation on the pattern of executive aggrandizement came from Bolivia's Juan Evo Morales Ayma, who was elected president in 2005. If ever there was an improbably journey from humble beginnings to the apex of political power, it is the story of the rise of Morales to the seat of Bolivia's presidential palace.²² It is not a story told to burnish a myth of individual social mobility or national exceptionalism. It is the story

of the partial fulfillment of generations of collective effort to end colonial domination and minority rule. It is also the story of the struggle for democracy and citizenship in a land of many cultures, languages, and nations.

Evo, as he is popularly known, was born in the village of Isallawi in the canton of Orinoca, near Lake Poopó (now dry due to climate change) in the highlands. He grew up among the poorest people in one of the poorest countries in the Western Hemisphere. Only three of the seven children to whom his mother gave birth survived. His father was a shepherd of llama and sheep, and Morales worked in the fields and traveled with his father as far as northern Argentina for seasonal work. From his earliest years, Morales came to appreciate the power of the spoken word. His first language was Aymara, the tongue of his parents (who could neither read nor write in Spanish). "When I first went to school in the city, the other children would laugh at me and call me ugly because I was Aymara. If I spoke my language, they would laugh and know I was Indian, and at that time, I didn't speak Spanish, so to avoid being laughed at, for a long time, I didn't speak at all." Morales was told that, during the time of his grandparents, Aymara people who learned to read could be blinded, and those who learned to write could have their fingers chopped off.²³

Morales's experience with community activism began after his parents migrated to the Yungas and then to Cochabamba, where many peasant families were resetting in order to take advantage of the opportunity to cultivate the lucrative coca leaves. As a coca cultivator, Morales became a member of the *sindicato*—an organized civil society movement inspired by early-twentieth-century European syndicalism—to which his plot of land, or *chaco*, both entitled and obligated him. As a member of the *sindicato*, Morales learned to speak in public and to organize his fellow peasants. He was appointed secretary of sports in 1981, and in 1985, at the age of 29, he became the leader of a peasant federation. For Morales, the federation of the *sindicatos*, with its emphasis on grassroots participation, shared leadership, constant communication and consultation with the rank and file, and a decentralized organizational structure, was a model of direct democracy and of leadership based on service. A key principle governing the social movements that constituted the Movement Toward Socialism (MAS) was *mandar obedeciendo*, leading by obeying.

Evo's commitment to grassroots democracy did not impede him from running successfully for congressional office in 1997. He was buoyed by the social movements that mobilized in opposition to privatization of water and the selling off of Bolivia's natural gas to foreign multinationals. In 2005 he was elected president with 54 percent of the vote. Morales's earlier work in the coca-cultivating *sindicato* had brought him into conflict not only with Bolivia's law enforcement agencies but also with the United States, which was committed to coca eradication. In office, he committed to

ending the war on coca-cultivating peasants, land reform, and nationalizing the gas industry.

Like Chávez and Correa, Morales was propelled into power from below by dint of widespread admiration for his capacity for sacrifice and trust in his commitment to serve the people. Morales's willingness to negotiate and find compromises is reflected in the way he balanced different pressures while in office. Under Morales, as Santiago Anria and Jennifer Cyr argue in this volume, Bolivia became a more inclusive and participatory democracy even as it became less liberal. Morales's promise to rewrite the Bolivian constitution was not a matter of emulating Venezuela—it was a demand of Bolivia's popular and Indigenous movements which had been left out of the constitutional reforms in previous decades. Morales convened a new Constituent Assembly in 2006 but lacked the supermajority necessary to pass the constitution drafted by his party, the MAS. To break the impasse, the draft document was sent to the Congress, which had not been dissolved, where it was approved with modifications before being submitted to referendum in 2009. The constitution was approved, and Morales submitted himself to reelection at the same time.

And yet even in the case of Bolivia, where the president seemed to be constrained by accountability to social movements, if not to independent branches of power, the temptations of personalism and desire for reelection proved irresistible. When Morales's second term ended in 2009, he made the case, as Fujimori did before him, that notwithstanding the provisions of the constitution of 2009 that presidents can only be reelected once, he should be able to serve again because his first term was prior to the new constitution. The Constitutional Tribunal accepted the argument, allowing Morales to serve another term starting in 2014. Yet this was not enough. Claiming that grassroots supporters wanted him to run yet again, for what was, in effect, a fourth term, Morales put the question to a referendum in February 2016. When he lost, he challenged the results in Constitutional Tribunal again, and compliant judges again ruled in his favor, saying that the referendum result violated his right to run for office.

Morales's attempted reelection in 2019 raised fears that he was unwilling to relinquish power. When the election was marred by seemingly credible allegations of fraud, these fears intensified. Whether Morales won enough votes in the 2019 general election to assume office, as he claimed, or fell short and would have faced a runoff, remains hotly contested. But the appearance of irregularities in the election, following upon the manipulation of the courts to allow him to run despite losing a referendum on his candidacy, was enough to lead to widespread protests. A civic struggle to defend democracy was unleashed. The withdrawal of military and police support produced the inevitable result: Morales fled the country and the government fell. Although it was a shabby denouement for an historic leader, the

removal of Morales had the positive consequence of restoring alternation in power by preventing the circumvention of term limits. Luis Arce, Morales's minister of the economy, who was widely praised for his management of the economy, joined forces with David Choquehuanca, a politician with considerable credibility among Indigenous movements, to rejuvenate grassroots support for the MAS without Morales at the helm. The promise of MAS's policies without Morales's personalism proved attractive enough to win with an absolute majority of the vote, 54 percent, in 2020.

In each of the above cases, presidents have sought to expand their powers, encroaching on other constitutionally independent branches of government. As Guillermo O'Donnell argued, encroachment involves violations of the mechanisms through which public agencies hold each other accountable. This is often motivated by the desire to eliminate term limits. Fortunately, executive encroachment does not always succeed. In the case of Colombia, Álvaro Uribe Vélez, elected president in 2002, eliminated the prohibition on re-election in Colombia's 1991 Constitution, thereby allowing him to run again in 2006. He did not succeed, however, in his bid for a third term. Colombia's powerful constitutional court, which was created by the 1991 Constitution, ruled that such an extension of the presidential term would undermine the separation of powers. Even so, Uribe's two consecutive terms meant that, since independence, no other leader—not even a dictator—had held power in Colombia for so long (Posada-Carbó 2011).

It is puzzling, as Jan Boesten notes in his chapter, that Colombia has a well-constitutionalized political system, with a robust separation of powers and a rule of law that regulates political life at the elite level, even as the society, particularly in its poorer and more vulnerable segments, is beset by violence and crime. Oligarchical forces linked to the two major political parties with roots in the nineteenth century, the Liberals and Conservatives, have used violence to thwart reformist impulses. Thus, although Colombia has been spared the typical Latin American sequence of changes—the breakdown of the oligarchic state, followed by populism and the pursuit of import substitution industrialization (ISI), and then the crisis of ISI, debt, and neoliberalism—this has come at a high cost. Populism was prevented by the assassination of the populist leader of the Liberal Party, Jorge Eliécer Gaitán, in 1948, followed by a decade of partisan violence known simply as *La Violencia*. A political pact, the National Front, much like Venezuela's *Puntofijo* pact, put an end to the violence and enabled alternation between the two major parties, but it excluded the left which initiated decades of guerrilla warfare. Without a national-popular coalition in power, ISI was never vigorously pursued, which meant Colombia largely escaped the debt trap and thus neoliberal reforms in the 1980s were less wrenching. However, Colombia was left with an oligarchic polity, in which the law and constitutionalism

effectively regulated official political life, while massive social violence troubled the *pais profundo*.

Uribe's own biography reflected the tensions and contradictions of Colombian politics.²⁴ He was born in 1952 into a family of landowners and ranchers in Antioquia department, in the town of Salgar, several hours from Medellín. There he began his political career, financed by the Medellín cartel. In 1982, at the age of thirty he became mayor of Medellín. In 1983 his father, a friend of Pablo Escobar, was killed on one of his estates as he resisted a kidnapping attempt by guerrillas of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). As Uribe moved up politically, from municipal politics to the Senate and then Governor of Antioquia, his ties to paramilitary organizations—groups formed to defend rural landowners against kidnapping attempts by the guerrillas—made him the target of multiple assassination attempts. He developed close connections with elements within the military that were in league with the paramilitary groups unified under the name United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC). In Antioquia, Uribe developed a strategy of enlisting civilians in the fight against the guerrillas. He won the presidency with a promise of providing “democratic security,” a made-in-Colombia version of the war on terror that emphasized strengthening the military through the US-funded Plan Colombia, negotiating a truce with the paramilitaries, and creating networks of civilians to provide intelligence to the armed forces. His strong-arm approach won wide approval and he was reelected in 2006.

Although Uribe and Chávez were ideological opposites, in some respects they were similar—they were both Caesarist leaders. Indeed, both espoused a Bolivarian conception of politics. Uribe admired Bolívar's “concept of order”²⁵ and professed to have memorized part of his “Message to the Convention of Ocaña,” a text that contains key elements of Caesarism in politics: the need for strong executive authority, including veto power over the legislature; a corresponding reduction in the power and prerogatives of Congress and the courts; respect for martial virtues; and separate courts for the military.²⁶ Like Chávez, he used executive power aggressively, built linkages between the military and civil society, and did not hesitate to ride roughshod over the Congress and courts. Also, like Chávez, Uribe used community councils to build a direct connection between the executive and the local communities.

Several major scandals dogged Uribe while in office. In 2006, the media revealed that many of Uribe's supporters Congress had ties to paramilitary groups, and further investigations revealed that they received funding from these illicit organizations. At the same time, evidence emerged that Uribe was wire-tapping magistrates and members of the opposition. Uribe's administration was also damaged by extrajudicial executions. Motivated by lucrative benefits and promotions, members of the armed forces were killing

innocent civilians and claiming them as war casualties. Over 800 soldiers were ultimately convicted, but no senior brass.²⁷ And yet, despite the extraordinary criminality of the Uribe government, the president was unsuccessful in fundamentally altering the constitutional order in order to perpetuate himself in power. Therein, once again, lies the Colombian paradox.

Three Puzzles, Three Dilemmas, and Three Challenges

Puzzles

The history of self-coups, executive aggrandizement, and constitutional ruptures poses three empirical puzzles for students of democracy. The first is that in the post–Cold War era, crises of democracy have tended to be the result of subtle threats rather than overt military coups. During the Cold War, military coups (such as in Argentina in 1966 and 1976; Brazil in 1964; Chile in 1973) typically occurred when ruling elites responded to revolutionary threats with repressive measures. Such coups were often supported, sponsored, or even initiated by the United States, as in the case of Guatemala in 1956. The greater the perception of threat, as in Chile and Argentina, the more repressive the military regime tended to be. In the post–Cold War era, however, coups have become rare events. Likewise, revolutionary movements have largely fizzled: the last to ascend to power in Latin America was Nicaragua’s Sandinistas in 1979.

The countries in the region that do not meet the minimal criteria for classification as democracies are burdened by legacies of the Cold War. They fall into three categories. The first are oligarchies with electoral façades in Central America. The second is the Cuban revolutionary regime. The third are electoral democracies that have degenerated into electoral authoritarian regimes, most notably Nicaragua, a caudillo-type personalistic dictatorship under the rule of Daniel Ortega, and Venezuela, also an electoral authoritarian regime. The fact that electoral victories were used in the cases of Venezuela and Nicaragua to establish authoritarian systems underscores the problem: democratic institutions and practices can be used by elected officials to undermine democracy.

The second puzzle is that threats to democracy arise increasingly from the actions of elected leaders rather than military officers. Whereas military coups involve a change in government, typically justified by the need to defend the homeland against perceived threats, self-coups do not change the government but rather alter the constitutional order (Svolik 2015). As the threat of revolution has subsided, the political pressures that led to repressive military rule in the Cold War era have also diminished. The formation of authoritarian coup coalitions is much more difficult, albeit not

impossible.²⁸ The sharp contrast, and violent oscillation, between electoral democracies and military dictatorships, so conspicuous in the 1970s, has largely given way to a greater durability of more or less democratic regimes, and where more hybrid or electoral authoritarian regimes have emerged, they have done so gradually rather than by coup d'état.

Democracy is at least rhetorically accepted by both established elites and their challengers in nearly all countries in the region, and for the most part alternation in power occurs with regularity. And yet demands for social change arising from persistent inequalities continue to threaten the interests of wealthy elites. Consequently, we observe periodic irruptions of more radical movements, parties, and leaders, as well as reactionary responses by elites, with the result that there is a fair amount of careening between radical pressures for political change and oligarchic resistance and repression. This careening, to use Dan Slater's (2013) term, tends to encourage hybrid regimes that occupy the gray zone in between a fully-functioning representative democracy and a repressive oligarchy. For the most part, Latin America's hybrid regimes hold elections, and their rulers depend on elections for their legitimacy, but both the political left and the right frequently deploy methods of rule that are more typical of nondemocracies. In particular, they often seek to centralize power in the executive branch at the expense of the separation of powers and the rule of law.

The third puzzle is that the antidemocratic actions of democratically elected officials often meet with public approval—and this facilitates the reelection of autocratic incumbents. Satisfaction with democracy among the public does not always align with perceptions of its strength by academics. Autocratic leaders with broad support can improve satisfaction with democracy even as they destroy its institutional supports, especially when abuses of power are justified by the need to fulfill democratic mandates.²⁹ Both Chávez and Fujimori were seen by absolute majorities of voters as improving democracy even as they assaulted democratic institutions. Satisfaction with democracy in Venezuela peaked in 2007, and even at the end of Chávez's tenure in 2013, satisfaction with democracy was higher than under the previous *Puntofijo* regime.³⁰ At no point since Fujimori left office has satisfaction with democracy reached the levels it attained during his rule.³¹ Correa enjoyed high approval ratings throughout his term in office. No Bolivian opposition figure ever matched Morales's popularity, and the same is true of Uribe. This suggests that many voters are more interested in substantive results than democratic procedures regardless of ideological leanings. Leaders are elected to get things done, and if constituted institutions are a hindrance, then a dangerous societal consensus around the need for nondemocratic actions may form. Public support for less-than-fully-democratic practices—or, rather, the public perception that such practices are fully compatible with a particular notion of democracy—can reinforce

antidemocratic behavior by leaders on both the left and the right. On the left, governments may concentrate power on the grounds that major social change demands the accumulation of power, while on the right the same argument is made in defense of political order and security.

Dilemmas

Solving these empirical puzzles demands that we come to terms with three deeper analytic dilemmas. In the first place, we need to understand the diversity of democratic regimes. Following the work of Guillermo O'Donnell (1996), the authors of the studies in this volume dispute the notion that there is a single type of consolidated democratic regime. A regime that lacks certain attributes of the political regimes in nations with long histories of democratic rule should not be presumed to be an immature version of established democracies. Instead of a teleological process of consolidation by which regimes converge on a single universal endpoint, there has been a proliferation of diverse democracies. This is why the post-Cold War political science literature generated so many adjectives for democracies, like delegative democracy or illiberal democracy (Collier and Levitsky 1997). Although these are often seen as "diminished subtypes" of fully democratic regimes, they have, with all their deficiencies, proven remarkably enduring. We reject the hubristic view that the kind of democracy that happens to be dominant in one part of the world at a particular moment represents the "end of history" for the rest of the world. The presumption that the end of the Cold War meant all tensions or contradictions within society could be resolved within liberal democracies (see Fukuyama 1992) proved premature. Democracy contains multiple dimensions that do not co-vary in orderly ways, even where long established. It may be the "only game in town," (Linz and Stepan 1996: 5) but it is a game that can be played with a wide variety of rules, players, and stakes.

In the second place, researchers studying democracy need to work simultaneously with dichotomous and continuous regime concepts. Democracy can be present in degrees, and in a diversity of shapes, but that does not eliminate the imperative of distinguishing between regimes that are democratic and those that are not. Democracy and non-democracy need to be clearly distinguished even as we explore the gray zone in between (that is, hybrid regimes). The reasons for this are both analytical and political. Analytically, concepts need clear boundaries to be useful. A contribution of the comparative study of politics is to provide a language for understanding politics that enables observers and participants alike to grasp the full meaning and consequence of their actions. Concepts are not only building blocks of theory, they also guide action. In politics, democracies are treated differently by other democracies, and regime opponents play by different rules depending on the type of regime. For this reason, it is important

that the language used in scholarship does not become too remote from those language of political practice.

This brings us to the third analytical challenge. Democracy is not merely a regime; it is a constitutive part of a particular form of associational life. The defining feature of specifically democratic life forms is citizenship—the idea, going back to antiquity, that the members of a political community should be treated as free and equal participants in a process of self-government. It was variations on this idea that inspired the Latin American struggle for republican independence, that transformed constitutions into instruments of popular sovereignty, and that sustained the demand for human rights. And yet citizenship has never been egalitarian, and its actual practice has continuously fallen short of its potential—whether due to the persistence of colonial, oligarchic, corporatist, populist, or neoliberal arrangements. The citizen as an agent—that is, a person with a capacity for practical reason and moral judgment—is at the core of the democratic bargain, or what O'Donnell (2010: 25-28) called the “institutionalized wager.”

Challenges

Taking these empirical puzzles and analytical dilemmas seriously poses fundamental challenges to the democratization literature: the need to come to terms with liberal, Eurocentric, and status quo biases that tend to reflect the positionality of scholars in the field of study. Unacknowledged liberal biases have shaped research agendas in ways that constrict our understanding of democracy. Liberal democracy is one type of democratic regime, but not the only one. It scarcely needs to be said that democracy preceded liberalism, and that liberalism is less widely embraced than democracy: the widespread phenomenon of illiberal democracy is sufficient to establish that claim. Rather than presume that democracy must be liberal, we find it more fruitful to follow O'Donnell's suggestion that democracy, liberalism, and republicanism form three distinct schools of thought and praxis, and in Latin America the liberal and republican traditions are often weaker than democracy. The assumption that democracy must be liberal dangerously presumes a kind of universality at odds with the complex ways in which liberalism has been received in those regions of the world in which it did not originate but rather was imported and adapted to different circumstances. We do not eschew the term liberal democracy—which is apt enough wherever democratic and liberal theory and practice mix—nor do we assume that democracy subsumes liberalism or vice versa. Indeed, in the Latin American context, liberalism has often been associated with authoritarianism, and democracy with illiberal majoritarianism.

A further problem arises, which is closely connected to unacknowledged liberal biases: Eurocentrism. The concept of Eurocentrism usefully

calls attention to world-historic time and space—that is, to the centrality of Europe in the origin and spread of capitalism as a global system spanning five centuries (Quijano 2007). It is the fact that the industrial revolution and the spread of capitalism started in Europe that should command attention. Mainstream cultural theorists were wrong to suggest that Latin America missed the industrial revolution and the Enlightenment (a failing that was taken by Eurocentric authors to account for Latin America's presumed authoritarianism, Catholicism, and underdevelopment [see Wiarda 1973; Morse 1954]). These theories reified a more fluid reality. It would have been more accurate to note that Latin America experienced industrial modernization and Enlightenment *after* and *under the influence* of Europe and North America. Latin America worked through the issues of economic development and democratization in the context of a world in which these processes had already begun elsewhere. Latin America had Europe and North America as models as it struggled to come to terms with economic dependency and development, or in fashioning constitutionalism and democratic order. Rather than “othering” Latin America, as essentially different from Europe and North America, we take their developmental trajectories to be intertwined through histories of colonialism, imperialism, and a broad spectrum of forms of intervention that continue to this day.

Finally, there is a bias that is perhaps inherent in the human condition, which is to favor the status quo. It is easy to underappreciate the impermanence and contingent nature of all political settlements—including those founded on democratic, liberal, and republican principles. Among these principles is the idea that if democracy is to be meaningful it has to mean more than the periodic rotation of elites. It must mean that real power is placed in the hands of the people, not only to decide who is to govern them but the manner in which they are to be governed. Recent events in the United States serve as a cautionary reminder that no constitutional order is permanent, and that democracy is always a work in progress. As such, it is critical to understand change as inevitable and therefore institutions must continuously evolve and adapt.

A Note on the International Context

International factors often play an important role in democratic crises. In classifying types of regime change we have used the language of the Inter-American Democratic Charter, not because it offers an especially coherent conceptual scheme, but because it aligns our work with the jurisprudence of democratic rights and freedoms in the inter-American system and gets us closer to the mental worlds of the political agents we seek to understand. Our work is intended to be helpful to policymakers by ensuring that when

we indicate a regime has crossed the threshold between democracy and authoritarianism it loses membership in good standing among the club of democratic nations. As the oldest regional project in the continent, the OAS seeks to provide mechanisms for the democratic and peaceful resolution of conflicts.³² The successful role of the OAS in facilitating a return to democracy after the collapse of the Fujimori regime created a momentary democratic consensus in which it was possible to negotiate and approve the Inter-American Democratic Charter.

The charter provided OAS member states with an instrument to address regime changes when, in the judgment of the inter-American community, democracy was at risk of impairment—that is, an “unconstitutional interruption of the democratic order” might occur.³³ The mechanisms at its disposal are varied, namely: investigation and reporting, diplomacy and good offices, mediation and ultimately, suspension of the membership. The OAS lacks, however, the ongoing capacity to monitor and report on the state of democracy in the region. Chapter 2 of this book contributes to this debate by analyzing contemporary types and subtypes of regime crises and patterns of constitutional change in region using the vocabulary of the Democratic Charter.

The Democratic Charter has been less effective than initially expected. Political polarization by oscillations between neoliberalism, Latin American left turns, and the subsequent conservative backlash have undermined regional collaboration and consensus-building under the rubric of the Charter. After the attempted coup d'état in Venezuela in 2002, OAS efforts to avoid a democratic breakdown failed to avert the transition to authoritarianism (see Chapter 3). The Community of States of Latin America and the Caribbean (CELAC) was created by left-wing governments to compete with the OAS in assessing and protecting democracy in the region, with more of a focus on avoiding attacks against sitting incumbents.³⁴ Conservative leaders have vacillated between disregarding and supporting OAS efforts to support democracy, and the Western Hemisphere has ceased to enjoy a consensus on the meaning and conditions necessary to sustain democracy. As regional support for democratic institutions falters, fewer crises are likely to be averted. Thus, the erosion of a regional commitment to democracy is also part of the story of backsliding. It is also a reflection of a deeper problem: the lack of a shared understanding of democratic rule.

Organization of the Book

The history of self-coups, executive encroachments, and constitutional violations in the Andean region underscores the need for a theory of democracy that looks beyond elections and votes. Guillermo O'Donnell serves as

our guide as we explore such a theory in Chapter 2. O'Donnell recognized that the electoral and representative aspects of a democratic regime depend on what he called surrounding rights and freedoms. These both constrain and stabilize democracy. They include guarantees of rights and freedoms necessary to ensure that representative institutions function as mechanisms of "vertical" accountability of rulers to citizens: the right to organize and assemble, freedom of speech, and a free press. Without these basic guarantees, democracy is not only prone to careening, it becomes a façade for oligarchy. They are not only the first line of defense against autocratic rulers, they are essential to the functioning of electoral democracy. One of the great challenges of democratization in Latin America is the fact that liberalism is historically weak and compromised by association with both elite interests and indifference to the common good. Liberalism's emphasis on individual autonomy, the protection of private property, and the rule of an impartial state is misaligned with the challenges of building democracy in highly unequal, postcolonial settings.

It is not only the surrounding rights and freedoms that must be constructed in the distinctive setting of inegalitarian postcolonial arrangements, but also the typically (but not exclusively) republican features of democratic regimes that ensure the accountability of public agencies to one another "horizontally": the separation of powers, the rule of law, and the supremacy of civilians over the armed forces. Where such mechanisms of horizontal accountability are weak, the theory of democracy must encompass the state as well as the regime. When presidents encroach on the powers of legislatures, courts, or other independent agencies of the state, they may act with broad public approval from citizens who have never felt protected by the rule of law, but the damage to democracy is great nonetheless because democracy is not just a system in which parties lose elections—it is a type of constitution, or "way of organizing those living in a state" (Aristotle 1962: 102).

Turning to the chapters devoted to case studies, we begin with the three most dramatic recent examples of executive aggrandizement: Venezuela, Bolivia, and Ecuador. Chapter 3, by Michael McCarthy, analyzes the erosion of democracy that occurred in Venezuela under Hugo Chávez (1999–2013) and the process of autocratization that continued under his successor Nicolás Maduro (2013–present). Unlike the self-coup in Peru, the process of executive encroachment occurred over time and under the cover of republican refounding. Moreover, it was justified by a governing project that sought to move Venezuela away from neoliberal capitalism toward a socialist system. In attempting to break with the *Puntofijo* pact, but retain the legitimacy of democratic constitutionalism, Chávez convened a constituent assembly to rewrite the constitution. However, Chávez's governing project made little room for the opposition, which, in turn, faced the

difficult strategic choice to participate in elections in which the deck was stacked against them. As Chávez consolidated his power, he found new means of executive aggrandizement. In what amounted to a constitutional coup, he exerted ever-greater control over election authorities, the courts, the media, and mass organizations; used plebiscitary means to eliminate term limits on the presidency; and restricted who could run for office, thereby violating voting rights, and preventing elected officials from holding office. When Chávez died, his successor, Maduro chose not to risk opening the political system and instead continuing the constitutional coup playbook by using the power of the presidency to obstruct the legislature, which the opposition won by a super-majority in 2015, blocking recall in 2016, convening another constituent assembly to usurp legislative powers, and holding presidential (2018) and legislative (2020) elections that fell well short of democratic standards.

Chapter 4, on Bolivia, by Santiago Anria and Jennifer Cyr, offers a nuanced and subtle interpretation of the Bolivian regime that steers clear of the label competitive authoritarianism—which implicitly prioritizes Dahl’s emphasis on contestation while neglecting his emphasis on participation—while, at the same time, recognizing the deficiencies of democracy under Evo Morales. Thus, Bolivia under the MAS is lauded for advancing inclusion while liberal rights and freedoms—always tenuous in Bolivia, both under the MAS but also under the earlier system of elite pacts—languished. More problematic for the democratic evolution of the regime was the violation of the constitutional limits on reelection. Having used an intelligently modified version of the Venezuelan formula for constitutional change, Morales did not prudently stop, accept the constraints imposed on him by his own constitutional order, and cultivate a successor; he persisted in executive aggrandizement to perpetuate himself in power. Nonetheless, the MAS was favored by Machiavelli’s *fortuna*. A civil society coup removed Morales, allowing new elections to be held in which a new leader of the MAS emerged victorious, thereby giving Bolivia a chance to deepen the institutionalization of alternation in power while continuing the process of republican refounding.

Chapter 5, on Ecuador, by Grace Jaramillo, documents the erosion of democracy under Rafael Correa (2007–2017), followed by a surprising restoration of key components of the democratic regime under his anointed successor, Lenín Moreno. The political dynamic that prevented the further erosion of democracy involved an about-face by Moreno who, as Correa’s Vice President, gave no indication of his disagreements with Correa. Once elected, however, he called a referendum to change the constitution to prevent Correa from returning to office. Correa had agreed to abide by the terms of the 2008 constitution, which permitted two consecutive terms in office, but he introduced a constitutional amendment, which would have entered into force after the 2017 election, to eliminate term limits. He never got the

chance. Moreno's referendum in the fall of 2017 restored term limits and banned anyone convicted of corruption from running. Found guilty of corruption in absentia in 2020, Correa could not return to power in 2021, and the candidate for Correa's party, Alianza País, narrowly lost the election to an establishment politician, Guillermo Lasso.

The next two chapters examine the state of democracy in countries that have avoided the kind of radical populism that is antagonistic toward neoliberalism. Chapter 6, by Carmen Ilizarbe, focuses on Peru and the lasting effects of Fujimori's neoliberal constitution on the body politic. In the past decade, Peru has undergone a process of democratic reversal. In a country where rapid economic growth coexisted with persistent inequalities, the neoliberal model enshrined in the 1993 constitution, adopted by Fujimori as a way of retrospectively legitimating his self-coup in 1992, compelled ordinary Peruvians to represent themselves through the informal institutions of contentious social protest rather than through formal mechanisms of representation. Even after two decades of alternation in power between civilian governments, the political regime has been unable to develop a coherent party system or other vehicles for popular participation. Without inclusive and egalitarian citizenship, and plagued by corruption and abuses of power, the political system began to lurch from crisis to crisis as actors within legislative and executive branches contended for hegemony. The Peruvian case exposes the fallacy of neoliberal growth-first policies: even when markets generate growth, the democratic state has a crucial role to play to address social needs.

Chapter 7, on Colombia, by Jan Boesten, begins with the paradoxical coexistence of a stable democratic regime and high levels of political violence. Elections occur with regularity, and they are competitive; moreover, since 1991, Colombia has had the benefit of a robust constitutional order. The constituent process leading to the approval of the constitution was sufficiently pluralistic and deliberative to confer legitimacy upon it. Thus, Colombia has a *de jure* liberal regime with the *de facto* capacity to resist executive encroachment. And yet, large parts of the nation's territory remain what O'Donnell (1993) called "brown areas" where the presence of the state, and thus its capacity to guarantee citizenship rights, is limited. In these areas, local oligarchic sectors and armed non-state actors operate with relative impunity. The playing field is not so much uneven as it is strewn with landmines—literal and figurative. In these local areas, the courts cannot be as effective. The logical prescription would be to expand the reach of the central state, and yet it is precisely pacts among oligarchic elites at the local level that give Colombia its violent stability. This underscores the tension between liberalism in Colombia, which finds its greatest expression in the defense of justice in the constitutional court, and Colombia's long republican tradition of elite pacts.

The next two chapters are thematic. Chapter 8, by Jason Tockman, explores the tension between representative democracy and Indigenous rights

to self-determination. He notes that democratic regimes in the Andes have both enabled and impeded Indigenous movements, especially with respect to self-determination, territorial control, and free, prior, and informed consent. Recent democratic innovations in countries like Bolivia and Ecuador, while promising, have met with resistance from within democratic regimes because they threaten to transform the colonial origins of the state in ways that are difficult to reconcile with representative democracy in its various liberal and republican dimensions. Tockman recommends nation-to-nation dialogue as a path forward, and he suggests that the democracies must allow spaces for communitarian practices of self-government even if that means the state withdraws or suspends its institutional constraints where necessary to enable self-determination.

Chapter 9, by Verónica Hurtado and Paolo Sosa-Villagarcia, explores the effect of the pandemic on politics in each of our cases. Surveying the four components of democratic processes during 2020–2021, they identify three possible sources of democratic erosion: support for authoritarian policymaking, dissatisfaction with regime capacity, and loss of legitimacy of elections. They find that democratic performance was affected in each case but in different measure. Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru registered higher political engagement and mass mobilization in defense of democracy, while in Bolivia and Venezuela, opposition figures were persecuted, and the role of the armed forces was dangerously increased.

The final chapter explores Andean political regimes in comparative perspective, highlighting three themes: legacies of executive aggrandizement; the dilemmas of presidential re-election; and contention over models of democracy. It concludes, first, that the debate on democracy needs to recognize the critical importance of the republican dimension of regimes. Second, regimes are only as good as the states that support them. A formally democratic regime, implanted in a neopatrimonial state, is likely to perform, in practice, more like an oligarchy than a liberal democracy. Third, the path toward a citizens' democracy—that is, toward a more just balance between the requirements of democracy, liberalism, and republicanism—is found neither by tinkering with existing institutions nor the embrace of populism, caesarism, personalism, and delegative rule. The struggle for democracy is ultimately about both seizing and sharing political power in a system of rule based on citizenship.

Notes

We are grateful to Michael McCarthy for comments on this chapter, and beg the indulgence of Terry Lynn Karl for adapting the title of her important 1990 article for our purposes.

1. Fujimori's speech is available online: <https://youtu.be/gPot4vZCdP0>
2. Studies of Fujimori's self-coup include Mauceri 1996; Cameron and Mauceri 1997; Cameron 1998; Kenney 2004; Conaghan 2005; Carrión 2006.
3. See Schmitter and Blecher 2021: 15.
4. Bowen and Holligan 2003.
5. The term "strongman" denotes Caesarist or Bonapartist leaders, or, in Spanish, the caudillo. All the caudillos we discuss in this book were men. Ruth Benghiat (2020: 7–8), in her 2020 book *Strongmen*, notes the gender dimension of strongman rule: "The leader's displays of machismo and his kinship with other male leaders are not just bluster, but a way of exercising power at home and conducting foreign policy. Virility enables his corruption, projecting the idea that he is above laws that weaker individuals must follow."
6. Over 69,000 lives were lost.
7. The term was used by the Maoist rebels; see Brook 1991. On the Shining Path, see Palmer ed. 1992.
8. Fujimori, "A Momentous Decision," in Starn et al. 1995. Meticulous police investigation had revealed Gúzman's hiding place and led to his arrest.
9. Politicians often lack the prudence and foresight to anticipate the effects of their decisions, and Cameron saw this firsthand in 1997. Fujimori had been invited to Ottawa on a state visit. Canadian diplomats—perhaps mischievously—arranged for a meeting between Fujimori and international human rights advocates. Scheduled to be brief, this rare opportunity went long because Fujimori was clearly enjoying himself. Human rights advocates challenged his record of deaths, disappearances, torture, and impunity for the armed forces, but, again and again, Fujimori defended himself by pointing to the decline in deaths, disappearances, and torture. His manner of thinking was that of a problem-solving technician—or, in his case, agronomist. He did not think as a lawyer or judge would, in terms of process or accountability. One question flummoxed him: "What mechanisms of accountability prevent the abuse of power?" To this he had no answer.
10. Max Weber said that "he who lets himself in for politics, that is, for power and force as means, contracts with diabolical powers." The politician "works with the striving for power as an unavoidable means. Therefore, 'power instinct,' as is usually said, belongs indeed to his normal qualities" (1958: 116).
11. Fujimori suggested in an interview that Yeltsin would be better off by shutting down parliament: "Boris Yeltsin himself has said so, and the big setbacks he has had in applying his structural reform arise precisely from the effort he must divert to his relations with that Congress" (quoted in Long 1993: online). A few months later, in September 1993, Yeltsin declared the Congress of People's Deputies "dissolved," a move that was rejected by leaders of the parliament as a coup. This precipitated an armed standoff that ended when the army stormed the legislature on October 4 and quashed the resistance.
12. In May 1993, Jorge Serrano, president of Guatemala, suspended the constitution, dissolved Congress and the Supreme and Constitutional Courts, and began to run by decree, promising new elections within sixty days. The move was roundly condemned and Serrano fled the country (Cameron 1998; Levitt 2006).
13. We use the language of the Inter-American Democratic Charter, which was designed to prevent similar events from occurring elsewhere. The charter refers to the "unconstitutional interruption of the democratic order or an unconstitutional alteration of the constitutional regime that seriously impairs the democratic order" (art. 19, http://www.oas.org/OASpage/eng/Documents/Democractic_Charter.htm).

14. Chávez's great-grandfather fought next to Ezequiel Zamora during the federal war, a nineteenth-century civil conflict. Although Chávez's mother considered her grandfather a murderer, Chávez insisted he was a guerrilla fighter.

15. See Chávez's statement here: <https://youtu.be/iKcoFPsoKLU>.

16. We are grateful to Michael McCarthy for this formulation.

17. Coppedge's thesis was plagiarized by Hernando de Soto when he wrote the speech given by Fujimori in the Organization of American States in which he attacked Peru's political system as a "partyarchy," so that he did not have to seem apologetic when he proposed the Democratic Constituent Congress. See Kenney 2004: 222.

18. Chávez turned the "meritocratic ideal" of a firm run strictly on business principles against itself, arguing for the use of petroleum resources for statist ends. See Wiseman and Béland 2010.

19. It was also attempted unsuccessfully in Honduras in 2009. See Cameron and Tockman 2012.

20. This sketch draws on Ortiz de Zárate 2020; *El Universo* 2007; Rivera 2016; *El País* 2018; Jaramillo-Jassir 2008; and not-for-attribution conversations with one of Correa's early associates.

21. Ecuador during this period is best characterized as a hybrid regime (Conaghan 2017).

22. The sketch of Morales draws on Dunkerley 2007; Kohl 2010; Harten 2011.

23. *The Guardian* 2006: 1.

24. See *Semana* 2002; Posada-Carbó 2011; Ortiz de Zárate 2019; CNN 2019.

25. *Semana* 2002.

26. Bushnell 2003: 86–94.

27. CNN 2019.

28. As discussed in the next chapter, since 2000, civil society coups have occurred in Ecuador (2000), Venezuela (2002), and Bolivia (2019). Beyond the Andes, there have been coups in Haiti (2004) and Honduras (2009).

29. Most recently, Donald Trump (see Somer and McCoy 2019).

30. Data available here: <https://www.latinobarometro.org/latOnline.jsp>.

31. See <https://www.latinobarometro.org/latOnline.jsp>.

32. The Organization of American States was the result of a series of Inter-American Conferences dating as far back as 1889. In 1948, during the Bogotá Conference, the member states adopted the OAS Charter, the Inter-American Treaty on Pacific Settlement of Controversies and the Inter American Declaration of Human Rights. The Democratic Charter was an initiative of the Peruvian government after the Fujimori regime collapsed, and it was designed to prevent similar self-coups from occurring in the future.

33. See Inter-American Democratic Charter, chap. 4, arts. 17–22.

34. CELAC was created in 2011 with a treaty signed in Caracas, Venezuela. The Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) has also sought to mediate democratic crises since 2012. Besides these two regional organizations, Progressive International—an international network of left-leaning politicians—has proposed the creation of a parallel electoral observatory to assess OAS electoral missions and interventions (Adler and Long 2021, available here: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/nov/15/organization-of-american-states-democracy-observatory>).