**Legislative Politics in Latin America**

This theoretically inspired study explores legislative politics in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Mexico. Instead of beginning with an assumption that these legislatures are either rubber stamps or obstructionist bodies, the chapters provide new data and a fresh analytical approach to describe and explain the role of these representative bodies in these consolidating democracies. For each country the book provides three chapters dedicated, in turn, to executive–legislative relations, the legislatures’ organizational structure, and the policy process. The analytical focus of each section, however, remains the same: the role of institutional factors (including the allocation of policy-making authority between the executive and legislative branches of government; the number of relevant parties in the legislature; and the structure of electoral incentives) in shaping the patterns of legislative behavior.

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Benito Nacif is Research Professor at CIDE (Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas) in Mexico. Professor Nacif’s academic distinctions include the British Foreign Office and Commonwealth Scholarship (1990–1992).
Legislative Politics in Latin America

Edited by

SCOTT MORGENSTERN
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BENITO NACIF
CIDE
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Before 1997 few were studying the Mexican Congress, let alone other legislatures in Latin America. In 1996, however, the opposition parties in Mexico were poised to wrestle the PRI for control of the Congress for the first time, which they succeeded in doing the following year. Understandably, this generated tremendous interest in legislative politics not only among academics, but also in the business world, the press, and the general public.

At that time the two of us were working in the Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas (CIDE) in Mexico City. Blanca Heredia and Carlos Elizondo, the academic secretary and general director of CIDE respectively, charged the two of us with organizing an international conference of our own design. We both had recently finished dissertations related to legislative politics and realized that bringing in other experts could provide the field much fuller descriptions and richer analyses than our own individual work. Further, Mainwaring and Shugart had been working on their volume on presidentialism in Latin America, and we saw an opportunity to complement their valuable study.

Our first challenge was in defining the scope of our study. In this we relied on the División de Estudios Políticos (Political Studies Division) of CIDE, where we first presented our ideas. The first drafts of the proposal covered many countries and themes. We were forced, therefore, into a tradeoff between depth and breadth. We opted for the former, as it allowed us to add theoretical rigor to studies of Latin American politics. Having made this decision, we settled on addressing two main theoretical issues, executive–legislative relations and legislative organization, with a third section showing how these issues shape the policy process.
Preface and Acknowledgments

Our theoretical bent stems from our training in American politics, based on David Mayhew’s general model of the U.S. legislature and Joseph Schlesinger’s theory of political ambition. These works have been important cornerstones of studies of the U.S. Congress, since they have shown how simple assumptions about legislators’ reelection drives shape politics. However, since they focus on just one case, they hide several assumptions about the nature of the party system, the constitution, the electoral system, and the reelection interests of legislators.

These “hidden” assumptions become variables in a comparative model. We therefore chose our four cases, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Mexico, to test their impact. The most prominent variable gleaned from the U.S. models is the reelection-seeking goal of legislators. In Latin America no country has reelection rates as high as those found in the United States, but Chile has the region’s highest rates. At the other end of the spectrum is Mexico, where immediate reelection is prohibited. Argentina and Brazil lie at other nodes on the continuum, and thus these cases presented themselves as prime suspects for our study. These countries also provide important variance on our other variables, most importantly the shape of the party and electoral systems.

Our contributors, of course, share this methodological focus. This has allowed us to provide comparable chapters on each of the four countries for each of the three themes. As such, the volume combines depth of knowledge about the four cases as well as tests of our primary variables across four major Latin American countries.

In producing this volume we have incurred many debts. Foremost we must thank CIDE for its financial and moral support. The Center for International Studies at Duke University also provided key financial support for the project. The Fredrich Eber Foundation deserves a special mention for the important financial support from the early stages of the project. Also supportive were the Legislative Studies Committee (Comisión de Estudios Legislativos) and the Institute for Legislative Studies (Instituto de Estudios Legislativos) of the 57th Legislature of the Mexican Chamber of Deputies.

On the intellectual side, our primary thanks must go to an anonymous reviewer who provided almost 40 single-spaced pages of comments. Alex Holzman and Cambridge University Press were very encouraging and helped us focus our revisions. Finally, Lewis Bateman at Cambridge gave us the last necessary push to revise and improve some key sections.
## Party Names and Other Acronyms and Abbreviations

### Party Names

**Argentina**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Name</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alianza</td>
<td>Alianza para el Trabajo, la Justicia y la Educación (Alliance for Work, Justice and Education)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FG</td>
<td>Frente Grande (Large Front)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FR</td>
<td>Fuerza Republicana (Republican Force)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frepaso</td>
<td>Frente País Solidario (Front for a Country in Solidarity)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MODIN</td>
<td>Movimiento por la Dignidad y la Independencia (Movement for Dignity and Independence)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA</td>
<td>Partido Autonomista (Autonomist Party)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDC</td>
<td>Partido Demócrata Cristiano (Christian Democratic Party)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDP</td>
<td>Partido Demócrata Progresista (Progressive Democrat Party)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PI</td>
<td>Partido Intransigente (Intransigent Party)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PJ</td>
<td>Partido Justicialista (Justicialist Party [Peronists])</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSD</td>
<td>Partido Socialista Demócratico (Democratic Socialist Party)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSP</td>
<td>Partido Socialista Popular (Popular Socialist Party)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCeDé</td>
<td>Unión del Centro Democrático (Union of the Democratic Center)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCR</td>
<td>Unión Cívica Radical (Radical Civic Union)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Brazil**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PDS</td>
<td>Partido Democrático Social (Democratic Social Party)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDT</td>
<td>Partido Democrático Trabalhista (Democratic Labor Party)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PFL</td>
<td>Partido da Frente Liberal (Party of the Liberal Front)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PL</td>
<td>Partido Liberal (Liberal Party)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMDB</td>
<td>Partido do Movimento Democrático Brasileiro (Party of the Brazilian Democratic Movement)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PP</td>
<td>Partido Progressista (Progressive Party)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPB</td>
<td>Partido Progressista Brasileiro (Brazilian Progressive Party)</td>
</tr>
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</table>
### Party Names and Other Acronyms and Abbreviations

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<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Name</th>
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<td>PPS</td>
<td>Partido Popular Socialista (Popular Socialist Party)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRN</td>
<td>Partido da Reconstrução Nacional (Party of National Reconstruction)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSB</td>
<td>Partido Socialista Brasileiro (Brazilian Socialist Party)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSDB</td>
<td>Partido da Social Democracia Brasileira (Party of the Brazilian Social Democracy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PST</td>
<td>Partido Social Trabalhista (Social Labor Party)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PT</td>
<td>Partido dos Trabalhadores (Worker's Party)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PTB</td>
<td>Partido Trabalhista Brasileiro (Brazilian Labor Party)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPD</td>
<td>Partido por la Democracia (Party for Democracy)</td>
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<tr>
<td>PS</td>
<td>Partido Socialista (Socialist Party)</td>
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<tr>
<td>RN</td>
<td>Renovacion Nacional (National Renovation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UDI</td>
<td>Union Democratica Independiente (Democratic Independent Union)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAN</td>
<td>Partido Acción Nacional (National Action Party)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRD</td>
<td>Partido de la Revolución Democratica (Party of the Democratic Revolution)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRI</td>
<td>Partido Revolucionario Institucional (Institutional Revolutionary Party)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PT</td>
<td>Partido de Trabajo (Labor Party)</td>
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<tr>
<td>PVEM</td>
<td>Partido Verde Ecologista de México (Green Party)</td>
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### Chile

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<tr>
<td>CEDI</td>
<td>Centro de Estudios para el Desarrollo Institucional (Center for Studies for Institutional Development)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEN</td>
<td>Comite Ejecutivo Nacional (National Executive Committee)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLP</td>
<td>Comisión de Labor Parlamentaria (Committee of Parliamentary Work)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMO</td>
<td>Comisión Mista de Planos, Orçamentos Públicos e Fiscalização (Joint Committee for Planning, Public Budgets and Oversight; Brazilian budget committee)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONASUPO</td>
<td>Compañía Nacional de Subsistencias Populares (National Company for Public Subsistence)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRICP</td>
<td>Comisión de Régimen Interno y Concertación Política (Committee for Internal Regulations and Political Concertation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DGI</td>
<td>Direcccion General Impositiva (Director Tax General)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DNU</td>
<td>Decree of Necessity and Urgency</td>
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<tr>
<td>DSV</td>
<td>double simultaneous vote</td>
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### Mexico

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<tr>
<td>PVEM</td>
<td>Partido Verde Ecologista de México (Green Party)</td>
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### Other Acronyms and Abbreviations

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<tr>
<td>DNU</td>
<td>Decree of Necessity and Urgency</td>
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<tr>
<td>DSV</td>
<td>double simultaneous vote</td>
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<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FOBAPROA</td>
<td>Fondo Bancario de Proteccion al Ahorros (Banking Fund for the Protection of Savings)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GC</td>
<td>Gran Comisión (Great Committee)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMF</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INJ</td>
<td>Instituto Nacional Juvenil (National Youth Institute)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISI</td>
<td>Import-substituting industrialization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>District Magnitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GAO</td>
<td>General Accounting Office (Contaduria Mayor de Hacienda)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MC</td>
<td>Member of Congress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCDs</td>
<td>Mexican Chamber of Deputies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NUDs</td>
<td>Necessary and Urgent Decrees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEMEX</td>
<td>Petróleos Mexicanos (Mexican Petroleum)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PR</td>
<td>Proportional Representation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEGPRES</td>
<td>Ministerio Secretaría General de la Presidencia (Ministry of the Secretary General of the President)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SMD</td>
<td>single-member district</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VAT</td>
<td>Value Added Tax</td>
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