

Chapter VIII

Multiple arenas of struggle:

Federalism and Mexico's Transition to Democracy¹

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Introduction

Conventional wisdom is easy to follow but occasionally wrong. Political science journals and the international media commonly assert that the recent election of a new president in Mexico ended more than seventy years of national authoritarian rule by the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI). While the statement accurately describes Mexico's authoritarian political situation prior to 1977, it does not accurately explain the decades leading up to the presidential elections of 2000. Long before the momentous victory of Vicente Fox, Mexico's political regime had undergone vast transformations and democratized substantially.

In the late seventies Mexico had a party-state system in which all 64 Senators and 196 out of 237 federal Deputies were PRI members. The same party governed all 31 states and Mexico City. In addition, the PRI held supermajorities in all state congresses and ruled 99 percent of the localities. Twenty-three years later on the eve of the 2000 presidential elections, Mexico's political map differed dramatically. No single party had the majority in the Chamber of Deputies, the PRI held only 60 percent of the seats in the Senate, and non-PRI governors ruled in 10 of Mexico's 31 states and Mexico City, which together accounted for almost half of the country's GDP. Opposition parties also held over 51 percent of the seats in state congresses, and more than 50 percent of the population lived under non-PRI mayors.

The election of Vicente Fox as president of Mexico therefore did not suddenly give birth to democracy but made visible fundamental changes that had taken place under a cumulative

dynamic in which local struggles interacted with national level politics to produce the Mexican democratic transition. The social, political, and economic dynamics of this process have been well documented,² and scholars have also increasingly noted the “subnational” characteristics of the mobilizations and power struggles of the period (Cornelius 2000; Snyder 2001; Weldon 1997). However, one little noticed fact is that Mexico’s long political transition took place in the context of a federal political system. It is a central contention of this chapter that neither the process nor the outcome of the Mexican democratic transition can be properly understood without attention to the transition’s embeddedness in a federal institutional system. Federalism profoundly shaped Mexico’s democratization process.

This chapter thus seeks to analyze how federal features played a major role in the Mexican transition, and how, in turn, the political transition reshaped the institutional structure of Mexico’s federal system. In so doing I also hope to shed new light on theoretical connections between federalism and democratization. I argue that a series of electoral reforms, beginning in 1977 created the conditions for freer and fairer elections. Federalism pluralized competition into multiple subnational arenas. As members of a party different from the president's were elected to significant state and local positions, the relationship between the center and the periphery changed, transforming a purely legal federal framework into a functioning federal system. This, in turn, redistributed power between actors located at different institutional points in the country’s territorially decentralized polity, providing opportunities for mobilization, countermobilization, and negotiations between regionally organized actors. The push and pull between these actors transformed politics at all levels of the political system, and in many cases evolved into a virtuous cycle. New political spaces in Mexico allowed locally based politicians to compete for power and to mobilize civil society when electoral violations occurred. The

capture of local power by opposition parties gave them leverage to push for additional reforms at the national level, which once in place increased the degree of free and fair elections in the states and localities. By the 1990s, local politicians became national actors. Indeed, mayors, state congresses, governors, and the Senate were institutional driving forces for democratic transition. This virtuous cycle evolved throughout the 23 years of the Mexican transition (1977-2000), although its pace varied among the nation's 31 states, since each state's constitution and electoral law establishes the system of election for local and state authorities, which affected the speed and uniformity of democratization across states.³

While the variations in democratization between states is an important issue, for our analysis the national orientation of the country's party system, which strongly influenced the polity-wide effects of the federally driven transition, is even more critical. The combination of cumulative electoral reforms and the incentives of the party system prompted local elites to create or consolidate regional branches of *national* parties rather than to initiate regional opposition parties, which resulted in the evolution of a polity-wide, relatively disciplined, and programmatic party system. The constitutional reforms from the center opened spaces for political contestation that were occupied mostly by local opposition members of national parties, which appeared across the country united under a common political banner. At the same time, reforms to the federal system bolstered the relative positions of national opposition parties. Most notably, the reforms in the allocation of seats in both houses of the national legislature (the expansion of proportional representation seats in the Lower House and the addition of national constituency senators in the Upper House) tempered the territorial bases of representation in the federalizing political system.

In effect, the ‘federalization’ of electoral competition led to the strengthening of national opposition parties, not to the regional fragmentation of the party system. It also led to institutional reforms that, while empowering new political actors at the subnational level (particularly governors) and activating once-dormant federal institutions, also mitigated potentially “demos-constraining” outcomes in the development of Mexico’s federal system.⁴

I. Cycle I: The Electoral Reforms of 1977 and 1983

Before 1977, Mexico's party system was exclusive and non-competitive. Although parties other than PRI existed, they held only 41 out of 237 seats in the Chamber of Deputies and no seats in the Senate. The lone opposition party was the National Action Party (PAN), and no new parties had appeared in the political arena in the five federal elections prior to the 1977 reforms.⁵ As with most transitions to democracy, the opening shot of the democratic process initiated a sequence of events unanticipated and uncontrolled by those that started them. The leaders of the Mexican political regime in the late 1970s sought to open spaces for political participation to adjust the political system to a rapidly changing and increasingly restless society. President Jose López Portillo (1976 – 1982) was aware that social agitation was not yet a threat to the stability of the state, but he also knew that social diversity was not matched by political representation. In President López Portillo’s words: "It was indispensable to deepen the country's democratization process by establishing political reforms that would enrich, in line with our society’s diversity, the spaces of political representation, so as to legitimize the responsible struggle of minorities and dissidents in our political institutions" (quoted in Becerra, Salazar, and Woldenberg 2000, 87). However, PRI also sought to maximize its control over the political process and, if possible, to increase its electoral prospects under the evolving

institutional order. The aim of reform was therefore to increase opposition participation in the system while safeguarding the PRI's hegemonic position. After eight months of civil and legislative work, congress approved a constitutional electoral reform on December 6, 1977, initiating (in retrospect) the Mexican transition to democracy. Two weeks later, in order to deepen and materialize the new constitutional principles, the Federal Law of Political Organizations and Electoral Processes (LOPPE) was also approved.

The Reforms

Although López Portillo succeeded in passing an electoral reform, the few soft-liners within the regime faced constant opposition from hard-liners, who saw little reason to concede political space to other parties. Soft-liners therefore pursued a two-pronged strategy. On the one hand, through the introduction of proportional representation (PR) seats they opened new spaces of public contestation in the three levels of the federal structure. On the other hand, they increased the number of seats elected by plurality in all the assemblies, bolstering the PRI's position, since they traditionally held these seats. In this way, although PRI members had more political spaces in which to pursue their careers, the overall presence and influence of opposition parties at the local, state and federal levels increased.⁶

The 1977 reform included three constitutional provisions that opened new spaces for political contestation (see Table 1). These reforms activated federal institutions by allowing opposition parties to gain a foothold at multiple levels of government. The first provision introduced PR seats for local councils in towns with populations greater than 300,000. At the time, only ten cities met this criterion, but the introduction of PR seats was an experimental measure that became a general rule for all city councils in the 1983 reform. Some states took full

advantage of their legislative autonomy and interpreted the population threshold as a recommendation and included PR seats in city councils with fewer inhabitants (Lujambio 2000, 94),⁷ opening more spaces for political contestation at the local level that was constitutionally required.

Table 1 goes about here

The second provision introduced PR seats in state congresses, allowing each state's legislature to establish the number of PR seats in their congresses and the minimum percentage of votes required for a party to gain a seat. Consequently, each state developed a particular mixed system in its legislative branch, introducing different degrees of political contestation across states. However, in all cases additional arenas of contestation emerged, although the level of increase was greater in some states than in others.

The third provision modified two aspects of the electoral system for the federal Chamber of Deputies. The first introduced 100 PR seats, which were assigned by a formula among the political parties who did not win at least 60 plurality seats.⁸ The second modification increased the number of plurality seats in the Chamber of Deputies from 196 to 300. Although the introduction of the PR seats guaranteed at least 25 percent of the seats in the Chamber of Deputies for opposition parties, the increase in the number of plurality seats assured the continued dominance of the PRI.

In addition to reforms aimed at increasing contestation, the 1977 reform included three constitutionally embedded conditions that created conditions for free and fair elections. First, national parties could now compete in elections at the state and local levels. Prior to this, local

elites often prevented electoral competition at the sub-national level by establishing electoral requirements that national parties other than PRI had difficulty meeting. Before this reform, parties could often participate at the federal level but not at the local and state levels. Second, new political parties could compete in federal elections under a "conditional registration," which could be turned into a permanent registration if the party received at least 1.5 percent of the national vote in the following election. This reform allowed for the creation of new political parties, including the Communist Party, which included significant elements of the left. Third, the reform increased the responsibilities of the institution in charge of organizing the elections, the Federal Electoral Commission (CFE), and included in its deliberative sessions a representative of both parties with registration and those with "conditional registration." However, parties with conditional registration could participate but not vote, so the final decisions remained under PRI majoritarian control.

The 1977 reform not only initiated Mexico's democratic transition by opening arenas for political contestation and creating conditions for free and fair elections, but it also simultaneously initiated the activation of the federal system through two reinforcing dynamics. On the one hand, multiparty contestation at the local, state and federal levels became constitutionally embedded, slowly reforming the one-party state that in political practice simulated a unitary system. On the other hand, by using PR seats to open the door to the opposition, the reform promoted the formation of national parties and established incentives for party discipline, which resulted in cohesive behavior across federal features to slowly oppose the powerful centralist presidential role.

Effects of the Reforms on Mexico's Federal System

After 1977, state and local elections became the source of three essential elements for democratization. First the state and local levels turned into continuous arenas for political competition between opposition parties and the PRI. Second, as a result of the capacity to compete in local and state elections and the addition of PR seats in the federal legislature, opposition parties had greater access to political positions, public resources, and the local and national media. Third, the persistence of electoral abuses provoked political mobilization in states where the economic elite participated in an opposition party. Although mobilizations rarely changed the outcome of elections, they consolidated the opposition leaderships at the state and local levels, as well as the regional branches of national parties. Furthermore, the persistence of non-democratic elections created legitimacy problems for the elected government, which were both costly and time consuming. By the end of this cycle, eight states around the country had already experienced significant civil mobilizations, setting the stage for further reforms.

The outcomes of the first comprehensive electoral reform of the transition can be analyzed at the various levels of Mexico's federal system. The country meticulously followed an intensive electoral calendar at the three levels of government, so the opposition had many opportunities to test the electoral reforms in the 31 states. Slowly but surely, elections at all levels of the federal system became more competitive and opposition parties expanded their presence in elected office.

The increased level of competition in the Mexican polity is evident in the number of effective political parties, which can be calculated on the basis of vote shares or seat shares.⁹ Markku Laakso and Rein Taagepera devised a formula to measure the "number of hypothetical

equal-size parties that would have the same total effect on fractionalization of the system as have the actual parties of unequal size" (Laakso and Taagepera 1979, 4). As the number of effective parties (N) increases in any given system, we can assume that the degree of political contestation increases too. When N equals 1 the system is a one-party state, and when N is equal or greater than 1.5, the political system is competitive. As N reaches 2, a two-party system is in place, and when N is greater than 2.5 a multi-party system exists.

At the local level, the development of political contestation among city mayors increased consistently but slowly. In the first years after the reform politicians from the left won initial positions, but after the severe economic crisis of 1982 well-known local business leaders joined the PAN to oppose the regime. These new politicians ran as PAN mayoral candidates in the northern states of Sinaloa, Chihuahua, Baja California, and Durango in 1983, but PRI candidates still won more than 97 percent of the local elections. However, future national PAN figures were elected as mayors in two capitals (Durango and Chihuahua) as well as in an important border city with the United States (Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua) in 1983. Candidates from PAN also won the capital of Sonora, the capital city of San Luis Potosí, and Michoacán's second most important city, Uruapan in 1983. The United Socialist Party of Mexico (PSUM) won the mayoral election of Juchitán, an important city in the southern state of Oaxaca, and the Democratic Mexican Party (PDM) captured the capital city of Guanajuato in 1982. By 1983, 8 out of 31 states had an effective number of parties greater than 1.5 at the local level, which was unheard of before 1977 (see Table 2). In 1986, the opposition performed better at the local level. Thirteen states held elections for mayors, city councils and state congresses, and opposition parties won in 25 cities.

Table 2 goes about here

Competitiveness at the state-level also increased quickly. A year before the 1977 electoral reform the average effective number of parties in the state congresses elected in 1976 was equal to 1.02, a clear indication of a one-party state. Six years later, by 1983, over two thirds of the states had a competitive political system, as the effective number of parties in 24 state congresses was equal to or greater than 1.5 (see Table 3). The state average increased from 1.02 in the 1974 - 1977 period to 1.61 in 1980 - 1983. Furthermore, the nine highest ranking states extended over the whole territory: Chiapas and Oaxaca in the south, Veracruz and Tamaulipas in the Gulf of Mexico, Sonora and Chihuahua in the north, and Michoacán, Estado de Mexico, and Guanajuato in the center. As with the local level, the political left (mainly the PCM) increasingly gained state legislative seats. The main opposition party on the right, PAN, increased its number of seats as well but at a slower rate.

Table 3 goes about here

At the federal level, opposition parties reached the highest level of participation in history in the Chamber of Deputies, although PRI still held almost 75 percent of the seats, which was more than the two-thirds majority needed to amend the constitution (see Table 4). Nevertheless, representation in the Chamber opened the possibility for members of the opposition to protest against the unfairness experienced at the state and local electoral processes in a national forum, and they energetically embraced this opportunity.¹⁰

Table 4 goes about here

Mobilization

While opposition politicians eagerly embraced opportunities to run for office in these new political spaces, opposition parties often had to resort to political mobilization in order to keep the momentum of reform going. In the early 1980s, a number of conditions facilitated the capacity of politicians to mobilize support. The populist management of the economy under President Lopez Portillo's administration resulted in a severe economic crisis in 1982, which included the nationalization of the banking system. After six years of confrontation between the private sector and President Luis Echeverría (1970 - 1976), Lopez Portillo's management of the economy drove important members of the local economic elite to join the regional branches of PAN.¹¹

In 1983, regional cases of civil mobilization in response to electoral irregularities made the national news. The new PAN leaders and candidates had the money and ability to organize movements of civic resistance in several states. In Sinaloa, Baja California, and Puebla these movements included massive demonstrations in public plazas, protest walks, and the shutdown of public offices. One year later, the election in the northern border-state Coahuila caught the attention of the international press, and PAN's local leaders and candidates organized several acts of protest against the results in three cities. After repeatedly obstructing highways and even setting the headquarters of a city council on fire, the national army intervened to normalize the situation. In 1985, an important local businessman ran as the PAN candidate for governor in Mexico's third most important state, Nuevo León. Although the PRI candidate won, PAN-affiliated local organizations mobilized, unsuccessfully, against the outcome.

In 1986 the most important civic resistance movement during the administration of President Miguel de la Madrid (1982 - 1988) developed in the northern state of Chihuahua, where elections were held for mayors, state congressmen, and the governor. Civil resistance started a year before the election when the local electoral law was modified by a majority PRI congress. However, opposition parties held 30 percent of the seats in Chihuahua's congress (the effective number of political parties was 1.74), and they made a public case against the legislative reforms. Local PAN officials promptly joined in, leading a 22-day hunger strike and a "Walk for Democracy" from Chihuahua to the central state of Querétaro, over a thousand miles away. The PAN candidate for governor lost after a bitter campaign, and when PRI candidates claimed 98 per cent of the offices contested in the election, civil mobilization started again. At the local level, PAN officials held a 40-day hunger strike, and sponsored rallies in public plazas and the obstruction of custom bridges, while at the federal level, PAN presented a claim to the Supreme Court seeking the nullification of the electoral authority report. The Chamber of Deputies frequently discussed the Chihuahua case, and several meetings were held in the Ministry of Government in an attempt to resolve the electoral dispute. Although in the end PAN did not succeed, the mobilization in Chihuahua was a model for further civil protest around the country. Furthermore, its development throughout the second half of 1986 evolved simultaneously with the negotiation process in Mexico City of the second cumulative electoral reform of the transition.

Before I start the analysis of the 1986 electoral reform, it is important to highlight the influence of federal features in the first decade of the Mexican transition. The 1977 and 1983 reforms activated federal institutions by opening new arenas of contestation at multiple levels of the federal system. The opposition embraced these opportunities and began to compete with the

PRI for political power at the subnational level. When electoral practices impeded their success, subnational leaders of the opposition mobilized the population, and opposition members at the federal level raised their concerns in national fora, further propelling additional reforms.

Cycle II: The 1986 Reforms

The Reforms

The 1986 reforms represented both a step forward and a step backward (see Table 1). Two reforms opened new spaces for political contestation. First, a constitutional amendment increased the number of PR seats in the Chamber of Deputies from 100 to 200. Although PR seats now accounted for 40 percent of the seats, the reform also allowed the party with the plurality of seats an allocation of PR seats that gave it a majority in the chamber. This change rolled back part of the 1977 reform, which excluded parties that obtained more than 60 plurality seats from the distribution of PR seats and violated the original purpose of PR seats, which was to reduce overrepresentation in the political system. Once again, PRI soft-liners opened new spaces for political contestation but secured positions for PRI members in order to achieve the support of the regime's hard-liners. Second, an Assembly of Representatives for Mexico City was established, with 66 members, 40 elected by plurality and 26 by PR. Both of these reforms created new opportunities for the opposition to increase its power at multiple levels of government.

Regarding the reforms to create conditions for free and fair elections, the 1986 reform authorized parties to present common candidates. However, the 1986 reform also eliminated the "conditional registration" of new political parties, which slowed down the ongoing expansion of the party system, and introduced PR in the Federal Electoral Commission (CFE). In the CFE, parties were awarded representatives in proportion to their share of the national vote, which

avored PRI, and this system of organization was replicated at the state and local levels. In addition, the Ministry of Government had the authority to appoint the main local and state electoral administrative officials, giving the CFE little credibility. Finally, the government created the first autonomous organization to solve electoral claims. Although the 9 members of the Court of Electoral Claims (TRICOEL) were appointed by majority vote in the Chamber of Deputies, under PRI control, the institution became the target of future reform and became a central institution in the transition.

Effects of the Reforms in Mexico's Federal System: Increased Contestation at the Subnational Level

By 1989 every state and city in the nation had held at least one election under the 1986 framework. Although the 1986 reform failed to guarantee fully free and fair elections at the national level, it had a positive impact on political contestation at all levels of the federal system.

In the three years following the reforms, major strides were made in improving the level of competitiveness at the local level—17 out of 31 states reached the competitive level for mayors and city councils (see Table 2). In 1989, the 10 states that held local elections reached the highest average level of competitiveness ever, with an effective number of parties of 1.72. However, only one state surpassed the two-party threshold, Baja California, and none achieved the multiparty cutoff, 2.5.

The gains at the state level were also impressive. In the 1987 - 1989 period, 30 out of 31 states reached the competitive level in the number of effective parties in state congresses. The average for the period was an historic high of 1.82. Moreover, four states reached the bipartisan level and two passed the multiparty level. And in a development of major substantive and

symbolic significance, Baja California became the first state to elect a non-PRI governor in 1989 (see Table 5).

Table 5 goes about here

As a result of the bold opposition gains in state legislatures, opposition parties could now act as veto players for local constitutional amendments and legislation in some states, which forced the majority party in the state congress and the governor to negotiate.¹² In the congresses of Baja California, Durango, Guanajuato, and Michoacán no political party could amend the local constitution by itself. More negotiation also occurs when opposition parties in state congresses become veto players for all legislative work, and in the 1987 - 1989 period, this happened in the states of Baja California and Michoacán. These two states had the highest number of effective political parties in their state congresses, with 2.98 and 2.96 respectively.

In addition, opposition gains in the state legislatures and gubernatorial races led to more divided and juxtaposed governments. A divided government implies a situation where a party or an alliance of parties different from the party that holds executive power holds the majority of seats in the legislature—for example, if the governor is from PRI but the opposition controls the legislature. Juxtaposed governments occur when the party that governs the smaller territorial unit (state, city mayor or city council) is different than that which governs the larger territorial unit (the federation, state, or state congress)—for example, a PAN governor and a PRI mayor (de Remes 2000a). Both divided and juxtaposed governments help strengthen checks and balances and cooperation between regime and anti-regime political leaderships. Divided and juxtaposed governments do not mean that states or localities control national decisions, but they do mean

that the federal government cannot control all state and local decisions. As juxtaposed and divided governments arose in Mexico, multiparty competition across and within the federal structure transformed the formal federal framework into a functioning federal system.

At the national level, three viable candidates competed in the 1988 presidential elections—a first in Mexico’s modern history. One of the candidates, Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, had led a democratizing movement within PRI called the *Corriente Democrática* (Democratic Current). After PRI expelled most members of the *Corriente Democrática* in 1987, Cárdenas decided to run for the presidency. He drew support from most leftist civic organizations and was nominated by four of the eight political parties that competed in the election. PARM, PPS, and PFCRN created the *Frente Democrático Nacional* (National Democratic Front), naming Cárdenas as their candidate. From the right, PAN put forward Manuel Clouthier, a former local and national business leader who ran unsuccessfully for governor in the northern state of Sinaloa in 1986, where he organized a significant civil mobilization against fraudulent electoral practices. Clouthier represented the new generation of PAN leaders and candidates, drawn from regional businessmen that were increasingly disappointed with the government's economic performance. PRI's candidate was a successful career bureaucrat from the budget ministry, Carlos Salinas.

Mobilization

Although the election was peaceful, late that night the CFE declared that it could not announce the electoral results because the telephone and computer systems for receiving electoral results had crashed. The suspicious nature of this incident, when combined with reports of voter intimidation, multiple voting by PRI supporters, segregation of opposition poll watchers, and stuffed ballot boxes, immediately discredited the electoral process. The CFE finally

announced five days later that Carlos Salinas had received 50.36 percent of the vote, Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas 30.8 percent, and Manuel Clouthier 17.07 percent. Although the post-electoral problems were "resolved" within the timetable established by the law, many of the opposition parties considered the electoral results to be illegitimate. The regional branches of the main parties organized civil mobilizations across the nation, especially in Mexico City and the states where the opposition had a strong base: Coahuila, Chihuahua, Durango and Sinaloa in the north; Jalisco, Michoacán, Estado de México, and Morelos in the center; and Puebla, Oaxaca, Tabasco, and Veracruz in the south. The regional branches of the national parties, after gaining strength as a result of the 1977 and 1986 electoral reforms, played a significant role in winning votes for the opposition presidential candidates and the mobilization of civil society after election day. Most of these states had an effective number of parties at the state and local levels above the competitive landmark of 1.5 before the 1988 election.

In the period between the federal election in July 1988 and President Salinas's swearing-in ceremony on December 1st of 1988, four state elections sparked civil mobilizations. In the northern state of Sinaloa and the central state of Puebla, local offices of PAN organized several protests, while the members of the leftist *Frente Democrático Nacional* organized six months of mobilizations in the central state of Michoacán and the southern state of Guerrero.¹³

These local and state mobilizations created pressures to which the new national government had to respond. Initially the opposition presented a cohesive position against the PRI and the government, but as negotiations evolved the strategies of PAN and the Frente diverged. Cárdenas insisted that President Elect Salinas should resign, that Congress should name a provisional government, and that a fair election should be held next year. PAN faced a more difficult choice. While it described the presidential election as questionable, it accepted the

legality of the electoral results for Congress, which gave them their historically high number of seats. However, PAN continued to push for additional reforms, arguing that the illegitimate President could achieve legitimacy by using presidential power to promote democratization, social justice, and national sovereignty. If President Salinas was willing to achieve legitimization through this secondary mechanism, the PAN would not stand in the way, and PAN's willingness to work with Salinas inaugurated a type of coalition government between the PAN and the Salinas administration.

In sum, as a consequence of the 1977 and 1986 electoral reforms and the multiple spaces for political contestation available through the federal structure, Mexico was far more democratic in 1990 than it had been in 1977. The increased success at the subnational level created divided and juxtaposed governments, and debates between the PRI and opposition parties over federal, state, and local responsibilities developed. Increasingly, negotiations over the allocation of state and local budgets required the consensus not only of the political elite within one party but also of other parties. Plural negotiations over public policy became, slowly but consistently, day to day business at the state and local levels. Moreover, the introduction of PR seats at the local, state, and federal levels created incentives for the opposition elites in the regions to build constituencies. Furthermore, the PR system of election and the inability to run for reelection created strong incentives for elites to pursue their careers through national parties. Soon enough, as these local politicians claimed national offices, bipartisan and multiparty agreements would also be needed between the national and sub-national levels.

IV. Cycle III: The 1989-1990 Reforms

By the late 1980s, regional politicians that emerged in the first half of the transition began to compete for national political office. The multiparty political contestation present in several states in the late seventies and eighties became common in the federal legislative chamber in the next decade.

Since the PRI no longer had the capacity to amend the Constitution on its own, the Salinas administration needed to build a multiparty consensus to achieve policy change. In September 1988, President Elect Salinas proposed a four-point national agenda stressing the need for reforms regarding electoral laws and institutions, external debt, public security and poverty. After seven months of multiparty negotiations the national Congress approved a comprehensive reform in August of 1989 with the support of PRI and PAN. One month later, a multiparty consensus in the Chamber of Deputies and PRI's supermajority in the Senate also approved the new Federal Code of Electoral Institutions and Procedures (COFIPE). Let us now turn to an examination of the content of these reforms.

The Reforms

The 1989 - 1990 reform created new spaces for political contestation by establishing that no party in the Chamber of Deputies could have more than 350 seats (70 percent of the Chamber). Although this reform guaranteed opposition parties at least 150 seats of the Chamber, it still allowed for the possibility that a party could achieve enough seats (two thirds) to amend the Constitution. Moreover, the PRI insisted on retaining the article introduced in the 1986 reform that entitled the party that won the majority of plurality seats to receive enough PR seats to achieve the overall majority in the Chamber. When combined with the electoral circumstances of the time, PRI was almost guaranteed the control of the majority of the Chamber

of Deputies in the late 1980's and early 1990's, and could thus avoid a divided government at the federal level.

Two important reforms significantly improved the conditions for free and fair elections in Mexico: the creation of a reliable electoral authority and a new system of voting registration.

First, the Electoral Federal Institute (IFE) was created as a public and autonomous organism responsible for the organization of executive and legislative elections at the federal level. For the first time in the transition, the government and the PRI yielded control of the federal electoral authority. In the new 23-member council, only seven members were PRI members or federal bureaucrats, while six others were citizens nominated by the president but approved by a two-thirds majority in the Chamber of Deputies, which required multiparty support, given the electoral results of 1988. The remaining ten seats were representatives of the opposition parties. Second, the Federal Electoral Register (RFE) created a new electoral roll and a new personal voting identification. IFE had the responsibility of creating the RFE in order to guarantee every citizen the right to vote and to guarantee every party that any given citizen would vote only once. This reform decreased the government and the PRI's capacity to commit electoral fraud.

Effects of the Reforms on Mexico's Federal System

Contestation

Elections at the local level continued to become more competitive. In the 1990-1993 period, 24 out of 31 states reached the competitive level and 7 states passed the bipartisan threshold (see Table 2). Of the 30 most populated cities in the country, opposition parties governed in nine, and an opposition party had governed at least once in 10 of 31 capitals.

Electoral gains also continued at the state level. In the 1990 - 1993 period all 31 states reported an effective number of political parties in their legislatures above the competitive level of 1.5, and one third of them registered a number above the bipartisan threshold of 2 (see Table 3). The opposition also captured additional governorships (see Table 5). In Chihuahua, former mayor Francisco Barrio, who had led the 1986 civil mobilizations as the losing candidate, became the third governor from PAN in 1992, and his party won the majority of the state congress as well. By 1993, PAN governed three states and about 10 percent of the national population. In that same year, opposition parties had gained enough seats in 8 states to prevent the PRI from unilaterally changing the constitution. Divided governments existed in three states—Guanajuato, Baja California and Baja California Sur.

At the federal level the electoral results in 1991 reflected the popularity of Carlos Salinas. The PRI recovered its comfortable majority in the Chamber of Deputies (320 out of 500) and retained a strong, although decreasing, overrepresentation in the Senate. However, concurrent sub-national elections generated civic mobilizations that captured national attention and created incentives for further electoral reforms at the center.

Mobilization

In 1991, state elections for governor were held in 8 states concurrently with the federal congressional elections. In spite of an impressive recovery by PRI in the federal congressional elections, the elections were uneventful and most results were accepted as legitimate. PRI gubernatorial victories in Guanajuato and San Luis Potosí, however, generated local mobilizations.¹⁴ These mobilizations, led mainly by PAN, soon reached the national arena. Vicente Fox, a federal congressman and former businessman, ran as the PAN candidate for

governor in Guanajuato. Officially, he lost by almost 20 percent against the PRI candidate and former mayor of México City, Ramón Aguirre. The results were questioned because of numerous electoral violations. Civil mobilization arose immediately, declaring that Fox was the legitimate winner. Soon after, Ramón Aguirre resigned as the Governor elect. The congress of Guanajuato appointed Carlos Medina, the PAN acting mayor of the industrial city of León, as the state governor. In exchange, Mr. Medina, the second non-PRI governor of modern México, appointed a PRI former Supreme Justice as Secretary of State. This unexpected solution sent the message that party-led civil mobilizations could not only promote future legal and institutional reforms but could also change the outcome of the elections. Furthermore, it created the third divided government in the history of modern México.

A similar protest occurred in San Luis Potosí, resulting in the resignation of a PRI governor, and serious civil disobedience occurred in Tabasco as well, following an overwhelming PRI victory late in 1991. Andrés Manuel López Obrador, a local PRD leader and former PRI official, led the mobilizations in Tabasco. Although the protests did not change the electoral outcome, López Obrador gained national exposure. He later became the National President of PRD and in the landmark 2000 election he was elected Mayor of México City. In the 1992 election in Michoacán, the PRI candidate officially won the election but the PRD candidate claimed that the result was the product of electoral fraud. Civil mobilizations ensued for months and did not cease until the PRI victor stepped down from his post. The state congress appointed a local PRI politician as governor, and PRD agreed to negotiate the conditions for a new election.

In conclusion, the 1989 - 1993 period had significant results for the democratization process. First, the participation of political actors from the opposition at the sub-national level

evolved from occupying minority roles through PR to gaining the majority of seats in state assemblies or getting elected to significant executive positions at the state and local levels. This phenomenon resulted in an increasing number of divided and juxtaposed governments, which developed political dynamics between the center and the periphery that were absent under the party-state system. Second, after the first half of the Salinas administration and three cumulative electoral reforms that improved the conditions for free and fair elections, the PRI notably increased its voting share at the federal level and won several state elections with the recognition of the opposition. However, post-electoral problems arose in several states and repeatedly the President and the national leadership of the PAN reached a negotiated solution outside the procedures established by the law. This practice, popularly known as "concertacion," made evident that the legal framework needed modifications to prevent and solve future electoral problems. Once again sub-national political conflicts provided national debates and eventually led to the electoral reforms of 1993 and 1994.

Cycle IV: The reforms of 1993 and 1994

As the presidential election of 1994 approached, Salinas sought to avoid the disruptive electoral conflicts that had occurred in previous years and therefore acknowledged that some aspects of the electoral framework required further adjustments. Consequently, the parties in Congress discussed a new electoral reform in 1993. Although the PRD, PPS, PARM and PFCRN abstained, the reforms approved by the PRI and the PAN produced important achievements. Once the fourth electoral reform of the transition was enacted, and as the presidential race drew closer, many political actors, including the PRI's presidential candidate, Luis Donaldo Colosio, argued for another round of reforms that would satisfy those parties that

disagreed with the 1993 reform. A further reason to pursue further reforms was the Zapatista rebellion that broke out in Chiapas in January 1994. As the fifth electoral reform of the transition was being approved by a multiparty vote in Congress, Mr. Colosio was assassinated. The dramatic events in the first three months of 1994 fostered the fifth electoral reform of the transition, which should be analyzed in conjunction with the 1993 reform, since they had a cumulative impact on the following national, state and local elections.

The Reforms

The 1993 reform included two changes that opened new spaces for political contestation. First, the constitution was amended so that no party in the Chamber of Deputies could have more than 315 seats (63% of the Chamber), preventing any single party from amending the constitution. The opposition was therefore guaranteed at least 185 seats. Second, the size of the Senate was doubled from 64 seats to 128 seats (4 seats per state) and its system of election was also transformed. Three senators were to be assigned to the political party that achieved the plurality of votes and the fourth to the party that placed second in the election. This reform had a triple effect. First, it guaranteed that opposition parties would hold at least one fourth of the seats in the Senate. Second, it reduced the level of overrepresentation between the winner and the runner up of a Senate election, and third, it added 32 more seats to be awarded by the majority rule, which pleased the PRI. The 1994 reform did not open new spaces for political contestation.

Regarding the creation of conditions for free and fair elections, both reforms were deep. The 1993 reform empowered the electoral authority, the IFE, to determine the spending limits for political parties and their candidates. Previously, there was no electoral financial regulation.

Although the law did not equalize expenditures between parties, it allowed some equalizing legislation through further reforms. The IFE was also empowered to provide general guidelines to the National Chamber of Radio and Television to reduce the inequalities in electoral coverage between parties. Finally, the Tribunal Federal Electoral (TRIFE) was established as a juridical authority with constitutional rank and its decisions were not subject to review by the Supreme Court.

The 1994 reform promoted significant changes in the composition of the General Council of the IFE and in the system for the election of its members. The parties agreed to withdraw their right to vote in the General Council's sessions and instead legislated that six citizens, appointed by two thirds of the Chamber of Deputies, hold the majority on the eleven-member Council. This structure was replicated at the state and local councils of IFE. Every party retained a seat in every national, state or local IFE council but without the right to vote their positions lost their deliberative power. Regarding actions to promote conditions of equality for the electoral process, a picture identification card was issued for every voter. All political parties had open access to the electoral roll, the ballots were numbered to avoid double counting and double voting, and 20 days before the election all social governmental propaganda was suspended.

Effects of the Reforms on Mexico's Federal System:

Contestation

As the intensive sub-national electoral calendar unfolded, political contestation at the state and local levels increased. The combination of the cumulative effect of electoral reform and economic crisis resulted in important defeats across the nation for the PRI. At the local level, in the 1994 - 1996 period 17 of the 30 most populated cities in the country were governed

by non-PRI mayors, and the effective number of parties for mayors and city councils was above 2.0 for 25 out of 31 states (see Table 2). At the state level, the average effective number of parties for state congresses was 2.18, and all states surpassed the competitive level (1.5) and 4 of the 31 states reached the multiparty level (2.5) (see Table 3). In the previous three years of the transition only 10 states had registered an effective number of parties above 2, but in the 1994 - 1996 period this number rose to 23 out of 31 states. In 1995 five states held elections for governor, and in three—Guanajuato, Jalisco, and Baja California—PAN candidates won (see Table 5). In the other two, Michoacán and Yucatán, the PRI candidates won in elections widely regarded as legitimate. By the end of 1995, more than 17 percent of the national population lived in the four states governed by PAN—Baja California, Guanajuato, Chihuahua, and Jalisco (Mexico's third most important state).

This increase in the number of effective political parties produced more divided and juxtaposed governments, as well as unified opposition governments. By 1996, five states had divided governments—Baja California Sur, Chihuahua, Guanajuato, Aguascalientes, and Estado de México. Two states, Jalisco and Baja California, had unified governments under PAN. In 19 states no party had enough seats to reform the constitution by itself, and the number of juxtaposed governments more than doubled from 239 in 1991 – 1993 to 579 in 1994 – 1996 (de Remes 2000a).

In a year of political violence and economic turmoil the 1994 presidential and congressional elections on August 21st were remarkably peaceful. Since no significant civil mobilizations followed, the process was generally acknowledged as the most open and transparent ever. President Ernesto Zedillo (1994 - 2000) of PRI received 51 percent of the vote, and although PRI retained the majority in both Houses of Congress, it remained unable to reform

the constitution by itself. In addition, three-fourths of the 128-seat Senate was replaced.

Although the PRI held 95 seats overall, its highest number ever, the 1993 reforms decreased its overrepresentation rate from 33 to 24 percent, and decreased the PAN's under-representation rate from 19 to almost 6 percent.¹⁵

Mobilization

From this point forward, the character of the cycles changes slightly. As the opposition secured political power at all levels of government, they increasingly pursued further reform through formal political institutions rather than through pressure in the streets. Moreover, the increased freedom and fairness of elections meant that PRI victories were now widely recognized as legitimate.

II. Cycle V: The 1996 Reform

Since his first days as President Elect, Ernesto Zedillo had promoted a new round of debates to reach what he called a definitive electoral reform. On January 30th, 1996, Zedillo outlined his expectations for the ongoing round of reforms by arguing that the electoral process by which he had come to power was "legal pero no equitativo" (legal but not equal).¹⁶ President Zedillo expressed his desire to establish new electoral rules that would ensure equity in financial resources, electoral campaigns, and access to the media. Although various parties withdrew from negotiations at one time or another, all parties participated in the final negotiations for the reform in both the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate. On July 30th, 1996, both Houses of Congress unanimously approved the sixth and final constitutional reform of the transition.

The Reforms

The 1996 electoral reform is more comprehensive than the two previous ones. The goal was to establish an institutional and legal framework to promote free and fair elections and to prevent post-electoral protests. The 1996 reforms opened new spaces for political contestation in three ways. First, for the first time in over fifty years the inhabitants of Mexico City could elect their mayor. Previously, the President appointed the mayor. Second, in the Chamber of Deputies no single party could hold more than 300 seats—60 percent of the Chamber. In addition, no party could be over-represented by more than 8 percent unless it was the result of winning plurality seats. According to this formula, the PRI needed at least 42.2 percent of the national vote to retain control of the Chamber of Deputies. Third, while the territorial chamber still had 128 members, PR was introduced to the Mexican Senate. The system of election of the territorial chamber became threefold. A fourth of the Senate (32 seats) was to be elected by PR from a nation-wide district. From the 96 remaining seats (3 per state) two-thirds of them (64 seats) were to be assigned to the party that won the plurality of votes in each state. The remaining one-third (32 seats) were to be assigned in each state to the party that finished in second place. The reform had two important effects: on the one hand, it led to significantly decreased territorial malapportionment in the Mexican Senate; on the other hand, it further decreased in party overrepresentation in the national legislature.

Regarding reforms that created conditions for free and fair elections, the 1996 reform had three main achievements. First, it explicitly included at the constitutional level a set of democratic principles that involved legislative adjustments for the electoral framework at the state level. The reformed Article 116 established the autonomy of the administrative and judicial institutions responsible for the state and local elections. Furthermore it promoted conditions of

equality regarding public electoral financing and access to the media. The members of these administrative bodies that resembled the IFE were appointed by two-thirds of each state congress. Second, at the federal level, the General Council of IFE became a 9-member body, and all these members were appointed by two-thirds of the Chamber of Deputies. In order to maintain the participation of political parties and members of congress in the discussions of the General Council, Legislative Counselors and party representatives were allowed in the sessions with voice but no vote. Third, and also at the federal level, an electoral court called *Tribunal Electoral del Poder Judicial de la Federación* (TEPJF) was created as the highest electoral juridical authority in the country. The members of the TEPJF were appointed by two-thirds of the Senate.

Effects of the Reforms in Mexico's Federal System

Contestation

Two congressional federal elections, 31 gubernatorial elections, over 60 state congress elections, and more than 4,000 local elections were held between 1996 and 2001. This intense electoral calendar resulted in few civil mobilizations and few controversies. Political contestation increased across the three levels of the federal structure, and the reforms created the institutional framework for the 2000 presidential election and the peaceful transition of power from PRI to PAN.

The first test of the 1996 electoral reform was the midterm election of 1997. In 1997, 10 states had elections at the state level and 11 at the local level. PAN won two more gubernatorial elections, and Mexico City had its first election for mayor in over fifty years and the fourth election for its local assembly. PRD candidates received enough votes to win the mayoral

election and a strong majority of the seats in the Assembly. The significant presence of opposition parties at all levels of government can be seen in the number of divided and juxtaposed governments. By 1997, 7 states across the nation had experienced a divided government and as a result of the elections in 10 states in 1997, 6 more states had divided governments.¹⁷ The number of juxtaposed governments also rose, and by the end of the transition 53 percent of the Mexican people lived under them (de Remes 2000a,b).

The most impressive changes occurred in the national institutions. The 1997 congressional elections created the first divided government at the federal level under a PRI president. Although 45 percent of the Mexican population had lived under divided governments at the subnational level, a divided government at the federal level in 1997 was a momentous change. The PRI had 239 seats in the Chamber, but twelve short of the majority. It was unable to prevent the other parties, PRD (125), PAN (121), PVEM (8) and PT (7), from forming a majority opposition front. The existence of a divided government increased the degree of negotiation between parties and between the Executive and the Legislative branches of government.

In the Senate, opposition parties also gained, although the electoral results slightly favored PRI. Of the 32 open seats, all of which were PR seats, the PRI gained 13, the PAN 9, the PRD 8, the PT 1, and the PVEM 1. This balance did not change the majority control of the Senate, and the PRI used its dominance in the Senate to stop policy changes promoted by the opposition in the Chamber of Deputies. Simultaneously, the opposition front in the Chamber of Deputies prevented President Zedillo from accomplishing many reforms in the second half of his administration. Although the election of 32 senators by PR did not change the ruling majority in the territorial chamber, it affected the degree of party overrepresentation in the Senate. The

evolution of overrepresentation in the territorial chamber was striking. In 1988, with little more than 50 percent of the vote, PRI held almost 94 percent of the seats, which resulted in an overrepresentation of 42.8%. In 1997, with 38.5% of the vote, PRI held 60% of the seats with an overrepresentation of 21.6%. In ten years PRI's overrepresentation in the Senate decreased by half. The PAN achieved its highest number of seats (33) and for the first time in its history registered a degree of overrepresentation. The balance for the PRD is also positive, although the results are mixed. The PRD received its highest number of Senators (16) while it doubled its percentage of seats from 6.3 to a historical high of 12.5. However, its degree of underrepresentation rose from -10.5 to -13.3 percent.

Multiparty contestation across and within the federal system had reached its highest levels in history. In the period 1996 - 1998 thirty states had an effective number of parties above 2 at their local and state levels, the bipartisan threshold, and ten states were above the multiparty threshold of 2.5. One of every three Mexicans lived under non-PRI governors. Moreover, governors elected from opposition parties or multiparty alliances governed a territory that accounted for over 50 percent of the national GDP (see Table 5). The presidential candidates for PAN and the PRD were both acting elected officials at the sub-national level: Gobernador Vicente Fox of Guanajuato and Mayor Cuauhtemoc Cardenas of Mexico City. The PRI nominated Francisco Labastida, the Secretary of Government of the Zedillo Administration and former governor of Sinaloa (1986 - 1992) through an open, nationwide primary—the first in Mexico's modern history.

The elections of 2000 took place under the highest standards of fairness registered in a Mexican federal campaign to date. The 1996 electoral reform established a system to promote a fair distribution of public money among the national parties, and established a mechanism to

define the maximum spending per campaign. Finally, due to a cumulative effort from previous reforms, a non-partisan institution within IFE enforced such financial regulations. The IFE also monitored the airtime given to each party or alliance from January 19th to June 29th in nationwide radio morning shows and the main television evening news, and PRI's dominance of the media lessened significantly.¹⁸

Fox's victory in the 2000 election was the result of the contestation that had developed at the state and local levels for over a decade and represented the culmination of these changes at the national level. With 42.5 percent of the 37.6 million votes cast, Vicente Fox became the nation's president, ending Mexico's democratic transition. In addition, for the first time in Mexico's modern history no party had a majority in either chamber of Congress, replicating changes that had already occurred in many state legislatures. In the landmark simultaneous presidential and legislative elections of 2000, PRI gained more seats in the Chamber of Deputies and in the Senate than PAN or any other single party.

These outcomes in the 2000 elections created a new democratic game across the republican and federal structures. For the first time, divided government with no split congress occurred at the national level, and multiple veto points arose that were controlled by different political players. In order to approve legislation and the federal budget, the ruling party PAN required the support of the PRD or the PRI. In order to modify the constitution, the ruling party required the support of PRI. The parties in the opposition can modify any law without the approval of the PAN, but would face the President's veto. Moreover, the opposition does not have enough votes to amend the constitution without support from PAN.

Regarding the federalist structure, President Fox faces another challenge. In 2002, members of his party are governors in nine states, while the PRD governs five states and Mexico

City, and the PRI governs seventeen of the 31 states. At the local level, the PAN governs around 40 percent of the population, with the PRI in close second. What are the implications of this multiparty federal and republican structure for Mexico's democratic consolidation?

III. Federalism and the Consolidation of Democracy in Mexico

Although federal features created positive dynamics for Mexico's transition, federalism is not a single edged sword. Several authors in this book have described how federal features can play a positive role in the transition to democracy and an obstructive role in the democratic consolidation. The case of Brazil is the seminal example of such a situation as Alfred Stepan, and Scott Mainwaring and David Samuels forcefully argue in this volume. How will democratic consolidation fare in Mexico's federal system?

Earlier in this volume, Alfred Stepan argued that in a federal system a number of constitutionally embedded practices and decision making formulas that go against the general democratic principle of "one person, one vote" interact with paraconstitutional patterns of political behavior "to impede systematically a potential majority's capacity to alter the status quo or to facilitate the capacity of the majority to create polity-wide decisions they deem necessary for the quality of democracy and efficacious policy making." Stepan analyzes four variables in order to describe their "demos-constraining" potential. In this part I will analyze the Mexican case using two of Stepan's variables: 1) the degree of overrepresentation in the territorial chamber, 2) the "policy scope" of the territorial chamber, 3) the degree to which policy making is constitutionally allocated to super majorities or to sub-units of the federation, and 4) the degree to which the party system is polity wide in its orientation and incentive systems. I will argue that

Mexico's political system, while federal, is largely "demos-enabling" on these measures. While granting considerable powers and representation to the states, it is less malapportioned institutionally than any of its federal counterparts in the Western Hemisphere, grants fewer powers to the "territorial" Upper Chamber of the National legislature, and is dominated by polity-wide political parties. Some of these features are embedded in the country's original constitution. For example, the Mexican Constitution does not grant the Senate law-making powers over the national budget, depriving it of an important prerogative available to its counterparts in other federal countries in the hemisphere.¹⁹ Others, however, evolved as a result of the push and pull of conflict and negotiations between government and opposition during Mexico's decades-long transition from authoritarianism. If federalism shaped Mexico's political transition, it, in turn, was also shaped by the transition, and the changes introduced heightened the demos-enabling features of the federal system. In the following pages I will analyze the two variables identified by Stepan that were most shaped by the transition process: the degree of overrepresentation in the territorial chamber and the degree to which the party system is polity wide in its orientation and incentive systems.

The degree of overrepresentation in the territorial chamber.

State overrepresentation in the upper chamber can be problematic for democratic practice as a "win-set" of Senators representing the minority of the population can join together to prevent significant modifications to the status quo. In this volume, Alfred Stepan stresses this idea through a proposition: "the greater the overrepresentation of the less populous states (and thus the underrepresentation of the more populous states) the greater the demos-constraining potential of the senate."

Stepan proposes three indicators to measure overrepresentation, 1) the malapportionment index, 2) a ratio of best represented to worst represented federal sub-unit on basis of population, and 3) the percentage of seats of the best represented decile. The malapportionment index of the Mexican Senate consistently decreased since 1977. In 2000, as shown in Table 6, this index placed Mexico significantly below non-consolidated federal regimes like Brazil and Argentina. Moreover, its degree is even lower than longstanding federal democracies like Spain, Australia and the USA. This is the first indicator of the comparatively low demos-constraining potential of the Mexican Senate.

Regarding the ratio of best represented to the worst represented federal sub-unit in the Senate, the results are also closer to the “demos-enabling” end of the continuum. In 1977, a vote in the least populated state in Mexico, Baja California Sur, was worth 31 votes of the most populated state, Estado de México. This 31/1 ratio, registered at the beginning of the transition, was already considerably lower than the situation of the United States in 1990, where a vote for the Senate in Wyoming was worth 66 votes for the same election in California. Moreover, Mexico was already in 1977 less demos-constraining than Brazil (144/1) and Argentina (85/1) are today (see Table 6).

Table 6 goes about here

Moreover, after the sixth electoral reform of the transition in 1996, Mexico's ratio decreased even more due to the introduction of PR national senators. After the 2000 election, the state with the highest degree of overrepresentation was Yucatán, with 5 senators and 1,658,210 inhabitants. Simultaneously, the state with the highest degree of under-representation, Estado de

México, had only 3 senators and 13,096,686 inhabitants. Thus, one vote in Yucatan is worth 8 votes in the Estado de México. This ratio is even lower than Spain's (10/1), Germany's (13/1) or Australia's (13/1), which are countries that have a system of election that acknowledges asymmetric representation between territorial sub-units regarding population.

Although the current status of the ratio in Mexico is less demos-constraining than most federal systems, this ratio is not the result of a constitutionally embedded allocation of seats between sub-units but of the interaction between the PR system and the national lists proposed by each party, which is vulnerable to change in the next election. Still, the distribution of the population among states will prevent Mexico from achieving the high levels of malapportionment of Brazil, Argentina or the United States.

Finally, overrepresentation in the territorial chamber can be measured by the percentage of seats of the best-represented population decile. The starting point for Mexico in this variable is also considerably better than the current situation of the biggest federal countries in the continent. Mexico's best-represented decile in 1977 had 31.3 percent of the Senate seats. Unlike in Brazil, Argentina and the United States, over-represented states, with only ten percent of the national population, could not prevent constitutional reforms in Mexico (see Table 6). The outcome of this tendency was that the best represented decile of the country had only 14.8 percent of the seats in the Senate, while Spain's had 23.7 percent and Brazil's 44.8 percent.

From the previous analysis it is possible to arrive at two conclusions. First, it is demonstrable through the data in Table 6 that the process of the Mexican transition itself changed some of the structures in Mexico federalism, in this case to make them less demos-constraining. Second, in all three cases, Brazil, Argentina, and the USA are the most demos-

constraining longstanding federal democracies and, in all three cases, Mexico's federal system is among the least demos-constraining in the world.

The degree to which the party system is polity-wide in its orientation and incentive systems

The second variable I will use to analyze the possible impact of Mexico's federalism on its democratic consolidation is the degree to which the party system is polity-wide in its orientation and incentive systems. This variable is addressed in Alfred Stepan's fourth proposition: the more political parties are disciplined parties whose incentive systems, especially concerning nominations, privileges polity-wide interests over provincial and local interests, the more polity-wide parties can mitigate the inherent demos-limiting characteristics of federalism. As we will see, the Mexican electoral framework has a set of structural incentives, which were created or reinforced throughout the transition, that have resulted in a party system that is much more disciplined and polity-wide oriented than both Brazil and, arguably, the United States.

In Mexico, national party committees have a high influence in the designation of PR and majority candidates across the nation. Primaries are recent phenomena and even in those cases, national party committees may have a strong influence determining the primary's procedure and validating the final results. Consequently, disciplined and polity-wide parties characterize Mexico's party system. National committees play a significant role in the nomination of most PR and plurality candidates. A low degree of party discipline in previous elected roles will therefore affect the probability of a politician being promoted again as candidate. The expansion of PR seats throughout the transition and the introduction of a nationwide district in the Senate also strengthened the hand of the national party leaderships. Moreover, the inability of elected politicians to run for reelection reduces the power of incumbency. Likewise, under the current

electoral framework, public financial resources are available through the party and finance at least half of any campaign. Such a legal framework diminishes the financial power of an incumbent. Finally, once an elected official leaves office, most future public jobs will be party related.

In addition, since Mexico's first electoral reform in 1977 the legal framework favored polity-wide parties over regional parties. The Mexican framework established that a party needed to gain simultaneously 2% of the national vote and enough votes to pass a regional threshold.²⁰ All in all, the electoral legal framework created strong incentives for local political societies, as we have argued earlier in this chapter, to form regional branches of national parties rather than regional parties.

Once polity-wide parties were in place and their national leaders became principal agents of democratic negotiation they had no incentives throughout the 23-year long transition to modify the electoral framework to promote regional parties. These polity-wide institutions accomplish fairly well the two theoretical objectives of a party: they are organized electoral machines and they solve problems of collective action within the legislative branch of government and across the three levels that compose the federal structure. By doing so they have reduced significant demos-constraining characteristics associated with federalism.

IV. Conclusion

I have argued that federal features were influential institutions in the promotion of Mexico's democratic transition. The opening of new electoral spaces at the subnational level allowed opposition parties to enter into competition with the PRI and activated Mexico's federal system. As subnational opposition politicians gained power in the states, they mobilized their

supporters in order to push for the respect of electoral laws and for additional electoral reforms. When these pressures reached the national arena, the legislative and executive branches of the national government negotiated and approved legal and institutional reforms that created better conditions for contested elections at the local and state levels. Local political elites took advantage of this opportunity by competing and often winning sub-national elections. This phenomenon, along with the introduction of a PR system of election for local, state, and federal assemblies, increased the degree of multiparty representation through different branches of government at different levels of the federalist structure. Simultaneously, as spaces for political contestation in Mexico's federal system promoted democracy, democratic multiparty participation across the three levels of government transformed what was previously a purely legal framework into a functioning federal system. As the opposition claimed a greater share of electoral offices, more legislative work required the opposition's support, and the number of divided and juxtaposed governments increased, which forced the ruling party to negotiate with the opposition over many policies, including further electoral reforms.

Moreover, Mexico's transition did not result in the fragmentation of the political society into multiple regional parties, as might be anticipated in a federal system. In Mexico, regional actors participated within polity-wide parties, so the process of the transition mitigated potentially "demos-constraining" outcomes associated with a federally driven transition. It is fair to argue, therefore, that Mexico's federalism will not hinder the process of consolidation as has been the case in Brazil and Argentina. If this thesis proves to be right, Mexico will be among the first cases of "Third Wave" democracies whereby federalism plays a positive institutional role for both democratic transition and democratic consolidation.

Table 1
MAIN ASPECTS OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL ELECTORAL REFORMS
1977 - 1990

Type of Reform	1977	1986	1989 - 1990
Reforms that Opened New Spaces for Political Contestation	<p>Introduction of proportional representation (PR) seats for local councils in towns with population above 300,000 inhabitants.</p> <p>Introduction of PR seats for state congress.</p> <p>Plurality seats (usually won by PRI) in the Federal Chamber increased from 196 to 300. 100 PR seats also added to increase minority party representation.</p>	<p>Introduction of PR seats for all local councils.</p> <p>Creation of an Assembly of Representatives for Mexico City formed by 40 plurality seats and 26 PR seats.</p> <p>Increase in the number of PR seats in the federal Chamber of Deputies from 100 to 200.</p>	<p>Any single party limited to 350 seats (70%) in the federal Chamber of Deputies. Nevertheless, the party winning a majority of plurality seats is guaranteed enough PR seats to secure a majority in the Chamber.</p>
Reforms that Created Conditions for Free and Fair Elections	<p>Reduction in legal obstacles for national parties to compete in state and local elections.</p> <p>Incorporation of new political parties to the system with conditioned registration..</p> <p>New parties incorporated into the national electoral authority (without a vote).</p>	<p>Different parties allowed to present common candidates.</p> <p>Conditioned registration eliminated.</p> <p>PR introduced into the national electoral authority.</p> <p>Court of Electoral Claims (TRICOEL) created. However, all 11 members named by the PRI majority of the Chamber of Deputies.</p>	<p>Creation of Federal Electoral Institute (IFE) responsible for organizing federal executive and legislative elections.</p> <p>Creation of the Federal Electoral Register (RFE).</p> <p>Creation of the Electoral Federal Court (TRIFE)</p>

Table 1 cont.
MAIN ASPECTS OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL ELECTORAL REFORMS
1993 - 1996

Type of Reform	1993	1994	1996
Reforms that Opened New Spaces for Political Contestation (continued)	<p>Any single party limited to 315 seats (63%) in the federal Chamber.</p> <p>Senate reformed. Number of senators increased from 64 to 128 (4 per state). In each state, the party winning a plurality of the vote received three seats with one seat held for second-place party.</p>		<p>Mayor of Mexico City chosen by popular vote.</p> <p>Any single party limited to 300 seats (60%).</p> <p>Senate reformed. PR (from a national list) introduced for 32 seats out of 128. For the remaining 96 seats (3 per state), the party winning a plurality of the vote in each state receives two seats with one seat held for the second-place party.</p>
Reforms that Created Conditions for Free and Fair Elections (continued)	<p>IFE authorized to review spending of political parties and their candidates.</p> <p>IFE authorized to monitor media coverage of elections and political parties.</p> <p>TRIFE established as constitutional legal authority with powers to make binding and definitive decisions.</p>	<p>State and local electoral institutes (analogous to IFE) established throughout the country.</p> <p>“Citizen Counselors” appointed by the Chamber of Deputies gain majority control of IFE. Political parties stripped of vote.</p> <p>Transparency of elections improved: a picture ID issued for all voters; electoral ballots numbered; all parties given access to voter registration lists.</p> <p>Campaign advertising prohibited 20 days before election.</p>	<p>Autonomy and scope of subnational electoral institutes expanded.</p> <p>Independence of IFE strengthened.</p> <p>Creation of the Electoral Court (TEPJF) as the top electoral legal authority.</p>

Table 2
EFFECTIVE NUMBER OF PARTIES FOR MAYORS AND CITY COUNCILS PER STATE
LAAKSO/TAAGEPERA INDEX* 1980 - 1998

STATE	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
AGS.	1.15			1.68			1.45			1.68			1.67			2.26			2.38
BC.	2.17			2.25			2.38			2.30			2.29			2.28			2.25
Bcs.	1.25			1.57				1.37			1.87			1.97			2.36		
CAMP.			1.07			1.11			1.28			1.49			2.00			2.39	
COAH.		1.40			1.63			1.41			1.67			1.97			2.11		
COL.			1.31			1.33			1.73			2.07			2.23			2.70	
CHIS.			1.22			1.21			1.34			1.35				2.11			2.38
CHIH.	1.27			1.60			1.69			1.55			1.90			2.24			2.17
DGO.	1.28			1.69			1.81			1.66			1.98			2.46			2.75
GTO.			1.59			1.66			1.98			2.26			2.29			2.82	
GRO.	1.26			1.31			1.37			1.97				2.02			2.18		
HGO.		1.04			1.10			1.07			1.51			1.63			2.09		
JAL.			1.64			1.61			1.73				1.86			2.20		2.60	
E.MEX		1.16			1.41			1.54			1.97			2.18			2.65		
MICH.	1.17			1.46			1.34			2.13			2.16			2.53			2.54
MOR.			1.34			1.21			1.38			1.82			1.99			2.76	
NAY.		1.44			1.41			1.27			1.49			2.08			2.18		
NL.			1.13			1.20			1.26			1.35			1.94			2.11	
OAX.	1.08			1.10			1.10			1.22			1.17			2.02			2.07
PUE.	1.15			1.25			1.19			1.51			1.61			1.92			2.02
QRO.			1.12			1.20			1.41			1.45			1.66			2.47	
QROO.		1.13			1.10			1.19			1.42			1.40			2.02		
SLP.			1.30			1.32			1.52			1.68			2.08			2.57	
SIN.	1.39			1.51			1.51			1.57			1.93			2.31			2.40
SON.			1.24			1.38			1.19			1.41			1.79			2.09	
TAB.			1.10			1.11			1.42			1.77			2.05			2.30	
TAM.	1.22			1.28			1.26			1.56			1.81			2.01			1.95
TLAX.			1.35			1.40			1.67			1.66			2.07		2.13		2.52
VER.			1.28			1.36			1.67			1.68			2.12			2.59	
YUC.		1.19			1.20			1.17			1.45			1.71		1.87			1.85
ZAC.			1.19			1.18			1.54				1.85			2.33			2.60
Avg.	1.31	1.23	1.28	1.52	1.31	1.31	1.51	1.29	1.51	1.72	1.63	1.67	1.84	1.87	2.02	2.2	2.22	2.49	2.3
# CASES	11	6	14	11	6	14	10	7	14	10	7	12	11	8	11	13	8	11	13
N = 1.5	1	0	2	6	1	2	4	1	7	9	4	7	10	7	11	13	8	11	13
N = 2.0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	2	2	3	7	11	8	11	11
N = 2.5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	6	4

Source: Author's calculations and data from de Remes (2000). *Note:* Laakso/Taagepera index, as discussed in Laakso and Taagepera (1979).

Table 3
EFFECTIVE NUMBER OF PARTIES FOR STATE CONGRESS PER STATE
LAAKSO/TAAGEPERA INDEX 1976 - 1999

STATE	1976	1977	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
AGS.		1.37			1.70			1.66			1.70			1.66			1.53			2.48			2.04	
BC.		1.00			1.34			1.48			1.43			2.98			2.79			2.14			2.49	
BGS.			1.28			1.51			1.61			1.51			1.38			1.99			2.46			3.04
CAMP.		1.00			1.00			1.19			1.29			1.50			1.52		1.78				2.37	
COAH.	1.00			1.68			1.68			1.51			1.8			1.86			2.27			2.78		
COL.	1.00			1.58			1.58			1.64			1.91			1.94			2.29			2.53		
CHIS.	1.00			1.50			1.72			1.72			1.71			1.34				2.15			2.15	
CHIH.		1.00			1.28			1.74			1.28			1.56			2.25			2.08			2.28	
DGO.		1.00			1.73			1.51			1.53			2.22			2.57			2.70			2.59	
GTO.	1.00			1.70			1.70			1.85			2.09			2.04			1.66			3.03		
GRO.			1.18			1.37			1.29			1.64			1.88			1.92			2.01			
HGO.			1.00			1.57			1.72			1.72			1.72			1.89			2.04			2.16
JAL.		1.00			1.64			1.63			1.61			1.83			1.83			1.89			2.30	
E.MEX			1.44			1.70			1.64			1.57			2.39			2.37			3.40			
MICH.		1.12			1.00			1.70			1.71			2.96			1.94			2.54			2.30	
MOR.	1.00			1.53			1.53			1.53			1.53			2.07			1.68			2.84		
NAY.			1.68			1.68			1.61			1.89			1.91			1.94			2.01			
NL.	1.00			1.90			1.60			1.92			1.83			1.89			2.26			2.26		
OAX.		1.00			1.71			1.70			1.72			1.73			2.04			2.40			2.17	
PUE.			1.52			1.65			1.59			1.67			1.69			1.67			2.22			2.04
QRO.	1.00			1.00			1.47			1.51			1.99			1.86			2.24			2.77		
QROO.			1.51			1.67			1.80			1.80			1.82			1.84			2.32			2.24
SLP.			1.00			1.73			1.72			1.60			1.69			2.01				2.42		
SIN.		1.00			1.55			1.65			1.53			1.85			2.03			2.38			2.21	
SON.	1.00			2.10			1.90			1.73			1.87			2.06			2.16			2.88		
TAB.		1.00			1.23			1.23			1.24			1.43			1.94			1.85			1.99	
TAM.			1.00			1.74			1.72			1.72			1.64			1.64			2.22			2.16
TLAX.		1.22			1.77			1.80			1.77			1.77			1.74			2.53			2.84	
VER.		1.39			1.77			1.77			1.77			1.96			1.92			1.88			2.35	
YUC.	1.15			1.47			1.30			1.57			1.73			1.84			1.67	1.99			2.13	
ZAC.		1.00			1.00			1.43			1.63			1.86			1.84			2.02			3.16	
AVG.	1.02	1.08	1.29	1.61	1.44	1.62	1.61	1.58	1.63	1.66	1.55	1.68	1.83	1.95	1.79	1.88	2.00	1.92	2.00	2.22	2.34	2.69	2.36	2.33
# CASES	9	13	9	9	13	9	9	13	9	9	13	9	9	13	9	9	13	9	9	14	8	8	15	5
N = 1.5	0	0	3	7	7	8	7	9	8	9	9	9	9	12	9	8	13	9	9	14	8	8	15	5
N = 2.0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	1	3	5	2	5	10	8	8	14	5
N = 2.5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	3	1	6	3	1

Source: Author's calculations and data from Lujambio (2000). Note: Laakso/Taagepera index, as discussed in Laakso and Taagepera (1979).

Table 4
PARTY DISTRIBUTION IN THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES
1976 - 2003

Period	1976 - 1979		1979 - 1982		1982 - 1985		1985 - 1988		1988 - 1991		1991 - 1994		1994 - 1997		1997 - 2000		2000 - 2003	
	# seats	% total	# seats	% total	# seats	% total	# seats	% total	# seats	% total	# seats	% total	# seats	% total	# seats	% total	# seats	% total
PAN	20	8.4	43	10.8	51	12.8	38	9.5	101	20.2	89	17.8	119	23.8	121	24.2	208	41.6
PRI	195	82.3	296	74.0	299	74.8	292	73.0	260	52.0	320	64.0	300	60.0	239	47.8	209	41.8
PRD											41	8.2	71	14.2	125	25.0	51	10.2
PARM	10	4.2	12	3.0			11	2.8	30	6.0	15	3.0						
PPS	12	5.1	11	2.8	10	2.5	11	2.8	32	6.4	12	2.4						
PCM			18	4.5														
PSUM					17	4.3	12	3.0										
PMS									19	3.8								
PDM			10	2.5	12	3.0	12	3.0										
PST/PFCRN			10	2.5	11	2.8	12	3.0	34	6.8	23	4.6						
PRT							6	1.5										
PMT							6	1.5										
PT													10	2.0	7	1.4	9	1.8
PVEM															8	1.6	15	3.0
PSN																	3	0.6
CD																	3	0.6
PAS																	2	0.4
Coalitions									14	4.8								
Total	237	100.0	400	100.0	400	100.0	400	100.0	500	100.0	500	100.0	500	100.0	500	100.0	500	100.0

Source: Data for the periods 1976 to 1997 from Becerra, et al. [2000 #649]. Data for the period 2000 – 2003, Instituto Federal Electoral (IFE) at www.ife.org.mx

Notes: Proportional representation was introduced in the Chamber of Deputies in 1979, through the 1977 electoral reform.

Table 5
NON-PRI GOVERNORS IN THE MEXICAN TRANSITION 1977 - 2000
AND GOVERNOR ELECTIONS SINCE THE 2000 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

State	Election Date	Period of Gov.	Name	Party / Alliance (1)	% Nat. Pop.	% Nat. GDP
Baja California	July 2, 1989.	1989 – 1995	Ernesto Ruffo	PAN	2.3	2.8
Guanajuato	August 18, 1991.	1991 – 1995	Carlos Medina*	PAN	4.8	3.4
Chihuahua	July 12, 1992.	1992 – 1998	Francisco Barrio	PAN	3.1	4.0
Jalisco	February 12, 1995.	1995 – 2001	Alberto Cárdenas	PAN	6.6	6.5
Guanajuato	May 28, 1995.	1995 – 2001	Vicente Fox	PAN	4.8	3.4
Baja California	August 6, 1995.	1995 – 2001	Héctor Terán Terán	PAN	2.3	3.1
Mexico City	July 6, 1997.	1997 – 2000	Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas	PRD	9.3	22.6
Querétaro	July 6, 1997.	1997 – 2003	Ignacio Loyola Vera	PAN	1.4	1.8
Nuevo León	July 6, 1997.	1997 – 2003	Fernando Canales	PAN	3.9	6.9
Zacatecas	July 5, 1998.	1998 – 2004	Ricardo Monreal+	PRD	1.5	0.8
Aguascalientes	August 2, 1998.	1998 – 2004	Felipe González	PAN	0.9	1.2
Tlaxcala	November 8, 1998.	1999 – 2005	Alfonso Sánchez Anaya+	PRD/PT/PVEM	1.0	0.5
BCS	February 7, 1999.	1999 – 2005	Leonel Cota Montaña+	PRD/PT	0.4	0.5
Nayarit	July 4, 1999.	1999 – 2005	Antonio Echevarría Domínguez+	<u>PAN/PRD/PT/PVEM</u>	1.0	0.6
Presidential Election July 2, 2000						
Mexico City	July 2, 2000.	2000 – 2006	Andrés M. López Obrador	PRD	8.8	22.7
Morelos	July 2, 2000.	2000 – 2006	Sergio Estrada	PAN	1.6	1.4
Guanajuato	July 2, 2000.	2000 – 2006	Juan Carlos Romero Hicks	PAN	4.8	3.3
Chiapas	August 20, 2000.	2000 – 2006	Pablo Salazar Mendiguchía+	PRD/PAN/PT/PVEM	4.0	1.7
Jalisco	November 12, 2000.	2001 – 2007	Francisco Ramírez Acuña	PAN	6.5	6.4
Yucatán	May 27, 2001.	2001 – 2007	Patricio Patrón Laviada	PAN/PRD/PT/PVEM	1.7	1.3
Baja California	July 8, 2001.	2001 – 2007	Eugenio Elorduy Walter	PAN	2.6	3.3
Tabasco	August 5, 2001.	2001 – 2007	Manuel Andrade	PRI	1.9	1.2
Michoacán	November 5, 2001.	2001 – 2007	Lázaro Cárdenas Batel	PRD	4.9	2.4

Source: Author's calculations and data, as well as data from Lujambio (2000) and the web sites of the PRI, PAN and PRD. Population data for 1995 from INEGI (1996) and for 2000 INEGI (2000). For the state's percentage of the national GDP see INEGI's web site. All population and economic data can be found in Mexico's National Institute of Statistics, Geography and Information (INEGI) web page: www.inegi.gob.mx

Notes: (1) In the cases of multiparty alliances, the party listed first is the party to which the governor is member or with which the governor is mostly identified. + All these governors were significant PRI members until just before their election, when they formed multiparty opposition coalition.

Table 6
A CONTINUUM OF THE DEGREE OF OVERREPRESENTATION IN THE TERRITORIAL CHAMBERS
of the World's Longstanding Federal Democracies and Mexico

Malapportionment in Upper Houses		Ratio of Best Represented to Worst Represented Federal Sub-Unit (on basis of population)		Percentage of Seats of Best Represented Decile	
Belgium	NA	Austria	1.5/1	Belgium	10.8
Austria	0.030	Belgium	2/1	Austria	11.9
India	0.075	Mexico (2000)	8/1	Mexico (2000)	14.8
Germany	0.244	Spain	10/1	India	15.4
Mexico (2000)	0.247	India	11/1	Spain	23.7
Mexico (1997)	0.257	Germany	13/1	Germany	24.0
Spain	0.285	Australia	13/1	Australia	28.7
Canada	NA	Mexico (1997)	19/1	Mexico (1997)	28.9
Australia	0.296	Canada	21/1	Mexico (1977)	31.3
Mexico (1977)	0.317	Mexico (1977)	31/1	Canada	33.4
USA	0.364	USA	66/1	USA	39.7
Brazil	0.404	Argentina	85/1	Brazil	41.3
Argentina	0.485	Brazil	144/1	Argentina	44.8

Source: Data for Mexico calculated by the author with inputs from the Mexican Senate at www.senado.gob.mx. Instituto Federal Electoral (IFE) at www.ife.org.mx, Population data from Mexico's National Institute of Statistics, Geography and Informatic at www.inegi.gob.mx. Data for Malapportionment in the Upper Chambers for countries other than Mexico obtained from Samuels and Snyder (2001, 662). All other data from Stepan (2001).

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² The bibliography on the Mexican transition is young and growing by the day. The most comprehensive book about the constitutional and legal political reforms promoted in Mexico between 1977 and 1996 is Becerra (2000). A valuable overview of the electoral reform of 1989 - 1990 and of its immediate results in the federal election of 1991 is Nuñez (1993). For an institutional analysis of the House of Representatives and State Congress in Mexico, see Lujambio (2000). Alain de Remes (2000; 2000) has produced two studies of the continuous development of political competition at the local level. For a study of the historical evolution of the National Action Party (PAN) see Loaeza (1999). For an historical account of the role of the PRI in the democratic transition see González Compeán (2000).

³ Although the states may not contravene the articles of the national constitution, they did not have to follow all the mechanisms used in federal level elections until the electoral reform of 1996. Therefore, electoral wrongdoings that were addressed in federal legislation were not always followed promptly or to the same degree at the state and local levels.

⁴ This provides a sharp contrast to the Brazilian case. See the chapter by Samuels and Mainwaring in this volume. See also Alfred Stepan's contribution to this volume for a theoretical discussion of "demos-constraining" potentials in federal systems.

⁵ The party system in 1977 formally included four national organizations, and only PAN was in the opposition. The other three parties—the PRI, the Socialist Popular Party (PPS) and the Authentic Party of the Mexican Revolution (PARM)—were all pro-regime.

⁶ In a plurality system of election (also known as "first past the post") the candidate supported by the largest number of voters wins, and all other voters remain unrepresented. Under this electoral system, the winning party tends to be over-represented in the legislative assembly. In a PR system, both majorities and minorities are represented since votes are translated proportionally into seats. Under the PR system, the political parties usually establish a list of candidates prior to the election. In the Mexican electoral system, the federal congress, state congresses, and city councils evolved from a full plurality system to a mixed system of plurality and PR seats.

⁷ By 1982 eighteen of the thirty-one states had used their legal prerogatives to include PR seats in their local city councils. Lujambio reports that this included cities with between 25,000 and 200,000 inhabitants.

⁸ The PR seats replaced the "party deputies," a flexible number of seats assigned to each minority party in proportion to their vote share in the election. "Party deputies" never exceeded 42 seats since their introduction in 1963.

⁹ In this chapter I use the effective number of parties on the basis of vote shares for the mayoral elections to analyze political competitiveness at the local level and on the basis of seat shares for state congresses to analyze competitiveness at the state level. Both numbers are indicators in their own right but cannot be comparable against each other because they measure different electoral elements. One measures votes, the other voting outcomes.

¹⁰ For an analysis of the effects of the 1977 electoral reform in the Chamber of Deputies, see Becerra et al. (2000).

¹¹ The increased presence of businessmen in the state and national upper ranks of PAN was called *Neopanismo*. Loaza (1999) argues that this phenomenon had two important consequences. First, businessmen abandoned traditional mechanisms of extra-party political participation and instead became involved in electoral politics aimed at challenging the status quo. Second, PAN became more inclusive, increased its national scope, lightened its Catholic discourse, and started to promote civil mobilization across regions. Both of these consequences provoked the defection of traditional PAN members between 1984 and 1994.

¹² A veto player is an individual or collective actor whose agreement is required for a change in policy. While veto players may result in the government's inability to govern, it should be acknowledged that the absence of veto players might produce even worse policy results for a country's citizens. The introduction of veto players in an authoritarian regime is an essential step toward democratization. On the negative effects of veto players, see Tsebelis (1995).

¹³ The *Frente Democrático Nacional* (FDN), which had served as a vehicle for the 1988 presidential candidacy of Cuauhtemoc Cárdenas was dissolved soon thereafter. In 1989 the *Partido Socialista Mexicano* (PMS) joined several national and regional former FDN politicians, headed by Cárdenas, to found the *Partido de la Revolución Democrática* (PRD). PRD became the third largest party in Mexico and a central actor in further cycles of the democratic process.

¹⁴ Elections for governor were held in the northern states of Nuevo León and Sonora, the central states of Guanajuato, San Luis Potosí, Colima and Querétaro, and the southern states of Campeche and Chiapas. In six states PRI victories were not challenged.

¹⁵ The percentage of party overrepresentation in the Senate is the percentage of seats a party gained minus the percentage of votes received by that party (% seats - % vote).

¹⁶ The famous statement can be found on the front page of *Excelsior*, January 31, 1996.

¹⁷ Before 1997, Baja California (1989 - 1992 and 1992 - 1995), Michoacán (1989 - 1992), Guanajuato (1991 - 1994 and 1994 - 1997), Baja California Sur (1993 - 1996), Chihuahua (1995 - 1998), Aguascalientes (1995 - 1998) and México (1996 - 1999) had divided governments. In 1997, six more states had divided governments: Coahuila (1997 - 1999), Morelos (1997 - 2000), Colima (1997 - 2000), Guanajuato (1997 - 2000), Querétaro (1997 - 2000) and Sonora (1997 - 2000). See Alonso Lujambio, *El Poder Compartido* (México D.F.: Oceano, 2000), 68.

¹⁸ For this data see Becerra et al. (2000).

¹⁹ The Mexican Constitution claims that the federal budget is not a law, and this fiction deprives the Senate of jurisdiction over federal budgets. Consequently, senators in Mexico have been living the irony of sharing the responsibility of establishing the nation's taxes, through the federal income law, while being unable to speak or vote on the way such income should be spent. In spite of a number of changes made in the policy scope of the Senate during the long transition process, this critical feature was left unchanged.

²⁰ The latter was simply calculated as the quotient of the number of national votes divided by the number of PR seats. In Brazil, the state threshold was a "quotient" calculated by the division of the number of votes in a state by the number of PR seats in that state. A regional party in Brazil could obtain federal representation through PR winning a minority of votes in its state and without winning a single vote in any other state.