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Paths to Democracy and the Political Culture of Costa Rica, Mexico, and Nicaragua

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> The social and cultural matrix within which Latin America's leaders oper-
> ate at present is such that effective and representative popular democracy
> is, with really few exceptions, not a feasible alternative.
> —*Frank Tannenbaum[1]*

Authoritarianism is now on the wane and democracy on the rise across the globe in spite of widespread midcentury pessimism about the prospects for democratic governance.[2] Indeed, the decline of authoritarian rule in Southern Europe and Latin America in the 1970s and 1980s, followed by the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, may constitute one of the most significant and encouraging historical trends of the turbulent and often tragic twentieth century. Yet even though the extensive decline of military authoritarianism and the rise of civilian, constitutional rule in Latin America have become the region's hallmark in the past decade,[3] predictions about democratization in Latin America have long been gloomy and to some extent remain so.[4]

Efforts to account for major world political patterns and for historic changes in the world's political landscape have often turned to political culture as an explanatory factor. Social scientists have long viewed political culture as an important determinant of regime type, or vice versa.[5] Phenomena such as the rise of European fascism,[6] the supposed authoritarianism, irrationality, and intolerance of mass publics,[7] the degree of democracy in regimes,[8] authoritarian coalitions in developing nations,[9] and general economic and political traits of Latin American nations[10] have attracted the attention of social scientists.

Of particular interest here are culturalist interpretations of Latin American politics that argue against the likelihood of constitutional, representative democracy in the region. Dealy, for example, asserts that Latin Americans do not understand the very term *democracy* in the conventional Western sense of political pluralism, representation, and competing interests but as "political monism or *monistic* democracy: that is, the centralization

and control of potentially competing interests . . . an attempt to eliminate competition among groups."[11] Wiarda argues that U.S.-style democracy is "probably ill suited to the nations of Iberia and Latin America,"[12] because they are

> Catholic, corporate, stratified, authoritarian, hierarchical, patrimonialist, and semifeudal to [the] core. Largely untouched by the great revolutionary movements . . . the Iberic and Latin American nations remain locked in this traditional pattern of values and institutions. . . . [T]he hold of these traditional patterns and institutions has remained continuous, modified to be sure by the newer currents of modernity but not submerged and replaced by them.[13]

Members of this school, then, would certainly have concurred with Fitzgibbon and Fernandez in 1981 that "analysis . . . would lead one to conclude that the countries of Latin America are probably not developing along a democratic-participant cultural path."[14]

A distinct approach to the problem of political culture and democracy provides a different reason for pessimism about Latin American prospects for democratization. This approach has been articulated by a number of authors[15] but is especially prominent in the work of Inglehart.[16] Inglehart asserts that the beliefs of mass publics heavily influence regime type.[17] "Cultural patterns, once established, possess considerable autonomy and can influence subsequent political and economic events." He views political culture as an essential link between democracy and economic development, arguing that the widely observed correlation between development and democracy stems largely from "its linkages with social structure and political culture," the latter more important than the former.[18] Inglehart argues, based on a study of twenty-four nations, that the path to democracy in Europe and the Anglo-American nations has involved a series of sociocultural changes over a long period. He believes that the rise of Protestantism increased popular receptivity to capitalism, which as it developed eventually brought about higher levels of economic development. The resulting widespread prosperity permitted increases in interpersonal trust among citizens and, ultimately, the development of a "durable set of orientations that roughly corresponds to the 'civic culture' discussed by Almond and Verba."[19] This civic culture led to the development and stabilization of democratic governments. Inglehart notes that the Protestant tradition may no longer be central today and that there may be alternative roads to democratization, including an Asian path involving Confucianism in a role rather analogous to Protestantism in the Anglo-European path he examines in detail.[20]

Given these arguments about known and conjectured paths toward democracy (and the received wisdom about Latin American political culture), one would hardly expect to find either democratic cultures or stable

representative, liberal, constitutional regimes in Latin America. Latin American nations historically have not had widespread experience with Protestantism and remain predominantly Catholic. Nor have their experiences with capitalism brought prosperity in comparison with the Anglo-European countries.

The recent nearly universal adoption of the *forms* of representative democracy in Latin America may well have produced regimes that are insufficiently undergirded by a civic culture, and that are therefore likely to be unstable or perhaps ephemeral. There may well be a serious problem of culture-structure incongruity in Latin America today, of democratic governmental structures ungrounded in an appropriately supportive cultural matrix.[21]

This possibility of culture-structure incongruence raises two critical questions. First, can these new Latin American democracies survive, or will they soon succumb to a new wave of authoritarianism? There is much historical evidence for a cyclical alternation between representative constitutional rule and authoritarian rule in Latin America,[22] with major shifts in regime styles being triggered by major economic crises. The onset of the Great Depression of the 1930s ushered in many military regimes, and the more recent trend away from militarism has followed new regional economic crises in the 1970s and 1980s. To the extent that political culture does indeed shape regime type, the absence of a civic culture in Latin America would make a return to authoritarianism more likely.

The second critical question is, might there be other paths toward democratic political culture and stable democratic governance than the Anglo-European and Asian ones discussed by Inglehart? In Latin America, economic crisis rather than gradual social evolution may well be the engine of major political change, but crisis in itself lacks a teleological compass. Extreme economic difficulties or political crises may so discredit and weaken authoritarian regimes that they may crumble, but hard times of themselves constitute no road map for subsequent political transformation. The specific nature of crisis-driven political change must, therefore, be shaped by other factors. Latin America today cannot democratize as the industrial West has or as Asian nations may be doing, it is clear, but might there be other paths? Can the political culture of particular Latin American countries lead them toward democracy? Or will Latin American political culture indefinitely bar democracy from the region?

Measurement of Political Culture

Considerable prior research from two schools has identified two main elements of democratic political culture. One, from the "civic culture" tradition, emphasizes a mixture of participation in politics with more passive subject

and parochial roles.[23] The civic culture approach to democratic norms, ultimately, held that such cultures supported and encouraged a wide variety of political participation.[24] The key tests have come to involve the degree to which citizens express support for the right to organize civic groups, work for political parties, protest, and vote.

The second approach to democratic culture, based on the work of Stouffer and McClosky,[25] involves citizens' tolerance—the willingness to extend civil rights to proponents of unpopular causes. It is argued that tolerance is a critical element of democratic political culture because intolerant attitudes may lead to intolerant behavior toward the targets of intolerance.[26] The early studies during the 1950s and early 1960s focused on tolerance toward communists, but later methodological refinements centered on groups defined by respondents themselves as being disliked (that is, one's "least-liked group").[27]

We employ both approaches—support for the right to participate and for the right of minority dissent—in evaluating democratic political culture. In *Polyarchy*, Dahl argues that both elements are essential to a culture that supports liberal, representative institutions: citizen support for widespread or *extensive* political participation (EP—approval of taking part in civic groups, political parties, protests, and voting), and support for the right of minority dissent, or *inclusive* values (IP—approval of civil liberties for unpopular groups or regime critics).[28]

Testing the Theory: Mexico, Costa Rica, and Nicaragua

We propose to explore further the linkages of mass political culture to regime type using three Latin American cases, Mexico, Costa Rica, and Nicaragua. Recently collected data on political values in these nations provide a test for theories about democratic culture and regime type, as well as a chance to examine possible alternative paths by which nations might develop stable democratic practice.

Mexico

We first examined popular political culture in a study of urban Mexicans.[29] In our 1984 study of Mexico, we reviewed a substantial literature that characterized Mexico as an authoritarian political system.[30] Despite liberal constitutional trappings, Mexico was then ruled (as it is today and as it has been for decades) by the dominant and authoritarian Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI). Moreover, most experts concluded that Mexicans shared an authoritarian political culture.[31] Attempting to evaluate this received wisdom empirically, we interpreted political authoritarianism as opposition to democratic liberties and extensive citizen participation—the inverse of the democ-

ratic values discussed above.

Given the impressionistic historical evidence and extant theories about culture and regime type, we expected Mexicans to be authoritarian in political orientation, whether regime type were either the cause or the effect of political culture.[32] First, should culture shape structure, Mexico's inherited authoritarianism (from both its Iberian and indigenous cultural matrices) should never have permitted the development of a civic culture; authoritarian popular values would have persisted and undergirded the nation's authoritarian regimes. Second, to the extent that regime type shapes political culture, one would expect that seven decades of PRI rule following upon two decades of revolutionary authoritarianism and the thirty-five-year dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz (1876-1911) would have certainly nurtured antidemocratic norms among Mexicans, no matter what their original political culture. Third, there could well have been reciprocal causation between political culture and regime type. Mexican institutional authoritarianism might have contributed to authoritarian popular values, which in turn would have reinforced authoritarian rule. In short, each variant of the structure-culture causality argument suggests that Mexican culture and regime type should have been congruent with each other.[33]

The study reported on interviews of 430 urban Mexicans, working-class and middle-class citizens of voting age distributed among six northern industrial cities and Guadalajara, Mexico's second largest city. The sample, not a national probability sample, was purposefully concentrated on working- and middle-class urban dwellers in order to measure the impact of class membership on democratic/authoritarian values.[34]

Our analysis showed that despite the undisputedly authoritarian nature of the polity and despite the general pessimism about democratic inclinations of Latin Americans in general and Mexicans in particular, these urban Mexicans manifested high levels of support for a system of extensive participation (EP) and for inclusive political rights (IP) for regime critics (see Table 4.1). Indeed, our sample of urban Mexicans generally compared quite favorably to a 1978 sample of New Yorkers, with average intensity of support for democratic liberties scores at levels similar to or only slightly below the New York City respondents.

Attempts to account for these surprising findings revealed that despite a modest significant positive correlation between higher social class and support for democratic liberties, urban, working-class Mexicans were still strongly supportive of democratic norms. We also found modest, significant correlations between these values and both level of education and gender, with the more educated and males being somewhat more supportive of democratic liberties than the less educated and females.[35] It should be emphasized, however, that Mexican women and the less educated, despite their slightly lower levels of commitment to both IP and EP, were still notably in the prodemocratic end of the scales.

Table 4.1 Support for Democratic Liberties, Mexico (Mean Scores)

Question	Score
A. *Extensive Participation (EP)*	
To what extent would you approve or disapprove of:	
1. Participating in a new group or organization to try to solve community problems?	8.8
2. Working for a political party, candidate, or election campaign?	7.3
3. Participating in a legal demonstration?	8.2
B. *Intensive Participation—Opposition to the Suppression of Civil Liberties (IP–OSDL)*	
To what extent would you approve or disapprove of the government passing a law that would prohibit critics of the Mexican form of government from:	
4. Holding public demonstrations?	6.3
5. Holding meetings?	6.4
6. Expressing their point of view?	6.4
7. To what extent would you approve of the government censoring radio, TV, or newspaper ads that criticize the government?	6.4
C. *Intensive Participation—Right to Dissent (IP–RD)*	
To what extent would you approve or disapprove of people who say bad things about the Mexican form of government having the right to:	
8. Vote?	6.3
9. Hold peaceful demonstrations to express their point of view?	7.6
10. Run for public office?	4.7
	(n=430)[a]

Note: Mean scores are based on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 indicating highest support for civil liberties. Note that for presentation purposes here, the scale on the OSDL items has been reversed in conformity with the other indices, so that on all three sets a high score means support for democratic liberties.

[a]Varies slightly due to nonresponse.

Costa Rica and Nicaragua

Attempting to examine further the intriguing possibilities concerning political culture and regime structure raised by these data from urban Mexico in the late 1970s, we collected data on the political beliefs of Costa Ricans and Nicaraguans. We wished to consider more carefully how mass culture might be linked to regime type and possible paths toward democratization. Unlike Mexico, which is one of Latin America's largest, most populous, and most industrialized nations, Costa Rica and Nicaragua are both small. Like Mexico, they are both poor and predominantly Catholic, but they have a number of common traits that make them a particularly valuable pair of countries for this study.

Costa Rica and Nicaragua are neighboring nations that were both on the southern end of the Kingdom of Guatemala (part of the Viceroyalty of New Spain) during their colonial epoch. Guanacaste, once part of Nicaragua, is now a Costa Rican province. With relatively few Indians, both nations developed predominantly mestizo cultures. From 1823 to 1838 both were part of the five-province Central American Republic; since 1838 both have been independent. Their economic development patterns have had many similarities, until fairly recently, with both developing dependent, agro-export-oriented commodity production. During the nineteenth century both nations had many subsistence smallholding farmers, and both have seen expansion of succession of new export crops that have displaced many small farmers from their land and caused considerable urbanward migration. Costa Rica and Nicaragua both joined the Central American Common Market (CACM) in the 1960s and both experienced considerable industrialization and rapid GNP growth from 1960 through 1975. The mid-1970s oil shock and collapse of the CACM brought severe recessions to both countries.[36]

Despite their numerous similarities of history, location, population, language, ethnicity, and economy, the two countries have long been virtually opposite in regime types. Costa Rica's democratic institutions began to develop in the late nineteenth century. Latin America's longest-standing and most stable democratic regime, Costa Rica has an unbroken record since 1950 of constitutional rule, electoral honesty, and peaceful transfers of executive power.[37] In contrast, Nicaragua's political tradition has been one of Latin America's most violent and turbulent; its regimes have typically been authoritarian if not dictatorial. The Somoza dynasty ruled Nicaragua from 1936 to 1979, when it was overthrown by a coalition headed by the Marxist-led Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN). The resulting FSLN-dominated government implemented revolutionary policies and struggled against the U.S.-backed contra insurgency. Although the 1984 election, won by the FSLN, was characterized by most experts and international observers as fair, prior to 1990 Nicaragua had never had a peaceful transfer of power to a victorious opposition party following a free election.[38]

Given these many similarities and the key differences in regime type, we may use Nicaragua and Costa Rica for a "most-similar-systems" study to seek the source of the great difference between their regimes. Specifically, this study should reveal whether the political cultures of Nicaragua and Costa Rica are congruent with their distinctive patterns of rule. Political culture theory would suggest that Costa Ricans have political values far more supportive of democratic liberties than Nicaraguans, a hypothesis consonant with impressionistic studies.[39]

Given the historical evidence available, Costa Ricans should be more democratically inclined than Nicaraguans because regime type should be either a cause or an effect of political culture. If culture shapes structure, Costa Rica sometime well prior to 1950 must have developed a civic culture

that would have eventually supplanted its putative Iberian cultural authoritarianism and helped shape contemporary democratic institutions. Nicaragua presumably would never have developed a civic culture, and mass authoritarianism would have undergirded its authoritarian regimes.

Reversing the logic, one might conclude that the emergence of democratic institutions in Costa Rica may have gradually helped transform the political culture into a civic, democratic one. Culture and regime type would have been incongruent for some time until authoritarian Iberian cultural legacies were supplanted. But because Costa Rica has had a stable democratic regime for several decades, its popular political culture should by now have become congruent with national institutions—that is, both regime and political culture should be democratic. Applied to Nicaragua, the logic that regime type shapes culture would militate in favor of an authoritarian political culture. The Sandinista revolution has been criticized for authoritarianism and for restricting civil liberties, yet for the prior forty-three years the Somozas embodied capricious dictatorship, and before them there was authoritarian *caudillo* rule punctuated by frequent civil war and foreign intervention. No matter what the original political culture, this national experience should have left a legacy of authoritarianism in the political culture despite recent steps toward formal democratization.

A third possibility is that of reciprocal causation between political culture and regime type. Given the stability of regime types, culture and structure should have reinforced each other in both countries. Nicaraguan institutional authoritarianism should have contributed to authoritarian popular values, which in turn should have reinforced authoritarian rule. Costa Rican democratic institutions should have reinforced a popular civic culture, and vice versa.

In short, all logical paths suggest congruence between political culture and structure in Nicaragua and Costa Rica, manifested in popular support for democratic liberties in Costa Rica and in authoritarian values in Nicaragua.

The data. The Nicaraguan sample totaled 1,150, and was based on face-to-face interviews in respondents' dwellings conducted in August 1989 by the Fundación Manolo Morales of Managua. The poll, the foundation's third for the Nicaraguan newspaper *La Crónica*, was conducted by an experienced interview team technically advised on sampling, questionnaire design, training, and fieldwork by a team of two U.S. academics (including coauthor Booth) and one Spanish academic with extensive field experience in survey research. The sample was drawn from four major cities: Managua, Masaya, León, and Estelí, with sample size proportional to city population. Sampling substrata within each city were based upon neighborhoods, stratified for economic status. Individual respondents age 16 or older, the legal voting age in Nicaragua, were selected by quotas based upon gender and age.

Questions have been raised about the accuracy of the preelection sur-

veys conducted in Nicaragua because several failed to predict the defeat of the Sandinistas. (A number of other surveys did correctly predict the outcome.) Central to the difficulty was that many of the survey organizations were closely associated with one side of the political spectrum or the other and revealed this bias to the respondents in some way. There may also have been considerable volatility in voter preferences during the final month of the campaign, when no polling was done. In contrast to these problems, the survey we use was conducted several months prior to these problematical polls (and so early in the campaign that candidates had not yet been named) by an organization without partisan identification and virtually unknown to the public at large. Analysis of the survey shows highly consistent responses.[40]

The Costa Rican data, from face-to-face, in-home interviews, were collected in May and June 1987 and consist of a national probability sample of 927 respondents. The multistage stratified survey was conducted by our collaborator at the University of Costa Rica, Miguel Gómez B. The sampling frame was the 1984 national population census and produced eighty-five primary sampling units stratified into nine strata and distributed throughout all of Costa Rica's seven provinces. Because the Costa Rican sample included both urban and rural areas, whereas the Nicaraguan included only major cities, we have taken care do all analyses first with the entire Costa Rica sample and then once again with only the urban area respondents to assure comparability.[41] For the items discussed, the urban Costa Rican sample has generally similar responses to the national sample. In several of our tables, where our purpose is to contrast overall levels of support for democracy, we compare the entire Costa Rican national sample with the urban Nicaragua sample. One subset of items on support for the right to dissent was not included in the 1987 Costa Rican national sample, but was included in a 1985 urban sample (n=506). The 1985 sample used the same sampling frame as did the 1987 sample and was conducted by the same group in Costa Rica.

Findings. We look first at the three Extensive Participation items (Table 4.2).[42] The Costa Rican results present no surprises. Overwhelming majorities, exceeding 90 percent, approve of conventional forms of participation such as working with community groups or working for a political party in an election campaign. Support declines for participation in protest marches, but even so more than three-fourths of the population approves of the activity.

The Nicaraguan results do surprise us, however, because on each item significantly fewer Nicaraguans than Costa Ricans support extensive participation, but Nicaraguans still overwhelmingly support EP. These items, however, might be regarded as "easy." That is, although support for a system of extensive participation is vital in a democratic political culture, these forms of participation are conventional and uncontroversial in modern, mass-based

electoral systems. Costa Rica has long had such a system, but Nicaragua has not; hence, the lower levels of support for these forms of participation in Nicaragua are not surprising. What does come as a surprise is that Nicaraguans have values so similar to those of Costa Ricans.

Table 4.2 Extensive Participation, Costa Rica and Nicaragua

Question	Country				
	Costa Rica		Nicaragua		
	%	(n)	%	(n)	Sig.[b]
I am going to read you a list of actions people can take to accomplish their political objectives. Do you approve or disapprove of:					
Partieipation in an organization or group in order to try to resolve a community problem?					
Approve	98.0	(908)	84.9	(976)	
Disapprove	2.0	(19)	7.0	(81)	
DK[a]	.0	(0)	8.1	(93)	
TOTAL	100.0	(927)	100.0	(1,150)	<.001
Working in election campaigns for a political party or candidate?					
Approve	93.5	(866)	74.7	(859)	
Disapprove	6.5	(60)	9.7	(112)	
DK[a]	.3	(3)	15.6	(179)	
TOTAL	100.0	(927)	100.0	(1,150)	<.001
Participating in protest marches?					
Approve	76.8	(712)	60.3	(693)	
Disapprove	23.2	(215)	25.0(	288)	
DK[a]	.0	(0)	14.7	(169)	
TOTAL	100.0	(927)	100.0	(1,150)	<.001

[a]Includes "don't know," "no response," and "indifferent" responses.
[b]Chi-square significance.

The more stringent test of depth of commitment to democratic norms comes in an examination of Inclusive Participation. We include two dimensions of IP for both countries. The first of them includes three items measuring Opposition to the Suppression of Democratic Liberties (OSDL) —opinions regarding government suppression of protests and meetings of regime critics, and government censorship of the media. The second IP

dimension includes four Right to Dissent items that tap respondents' willing-ness to grant key civil liberties to those who "only say bad things" about the government. We would expect significantly higher levels of support for the RD items in Costa Rica than in Nicaragua.

In Costa Rica, where two main parties have alternated in power for the past two decades, political criticism tends to be opposition to specific poli-cies of the incumbent party or *ad hominem* attacks on the president and his cabinet. More extreme views, in which "only bad things" are said about the government, would most likely come from leaders of various extreme leftist and rightist parties with no reasonable chance of taking power in an election. Costa Rican respondents to the survey would likely have such extremists in mind when they discuss their willingness to grant the right to vote, demon-strate, run for public office, and speak out against the government. These would be rights enjoyed by extremist parties, which since 1948 have shown only feeble or waning electoral strength.[43]

In Nicaragua at the time of our survey, the opposition was very large and, although diverse ideologically, strongly in favor of ousting the Sandinistas. When our survey was being conducted, the dominant political issue was the formation of the opposition coalition and the upcoming February 1990 elections. Clear lines were drawn between the supporters of the revolutionaries who had ruled since 1979 and their opponents. Hence, when Nicaraguans were asked about their support for the civil rights of crit-ics of their government, it could not have seemed to them a hypothetical question. At stake were the rights of the opponents of Sandinista rule to run for office and possibly unseat the revolutionary leaders.

The data for the IP items tapping OSDL are presented in Table 4.3. Note that for this table, we used the 1985 urban Costa Rica sample because the 1987 Costa Rican national sample did not contain them. The Nicaraguan sample remains the same. Once again, the Costa Rican results present no surprise. Strong opposition to the suppression of democratic liberties is expressed by urban Costa Ricans, with approximately three-fourths of the sample opposing restrictions on demonstrations, meetings, and censorship of the mass media. What does surprise us are the high levels of OSDL of the Nicaraguan respondents. Consistently more than three-fourths of urban Nicaraguans oppose restrictions on civil liberties. Indeed, on two of the three variables, a statistically significant higher proportion of Nicaraguans oppose restrictions on civil liberties than do Costa Ricans. With samples as large as the ones we are analyzing, small differences in proportions can produce sta-tistically significant results and therefore we do not wish to exaggerate the differences between the two countries. Far more important is that, Nicaragua's long history of authoritarian rule notwithstanding, opposition to suppressing civil liberties in Nicaragua is higher, not lower, than in Costa Rica with its long tradition of democratic rule. One must begin to wonder

what factors operated in the socialization process of authoritarian Nicaragua to produce such results, but we leave consideration of that question until later.

Table 4.3 Inclusive Participation: Opposition to the Suppression of Democratic Liberties, Costa Rica and Nicaragua

	Country				
	Costa Rica (1985)[b]		Nicaragua		
Question	%	(n)	%	(n)	Sig.[c]
Do you think that the government ought to take the following actions:				.	
Prohibit demonstrations?					
Yes	24.3	(123)	15.0	(172)	
No	72.9	(369)	78.3	(900)	
DK[a]	2.8	(14)	6.6	(78)	
TOTAL	100.0	(506)	100.0	(1,150)	<.001
Prohibit meetings of groups that criticize the government?					
Yes	20.2	(102)	17.8	(205)	
No	77.1	(390)	76.8	(883)	
DK[a]	2.8	(14)	5.4	(62)	
TOTAL	100.0	(506)	100.0	(1,150)	NS
Censor newspapers, radio. and TV?					
Yes	19.4	(98)	12.7	(146)	
No	78.3	(396)	80.1	(921)	
DK[a]	2.4	(12)	7.2	(83)	
TOTAL	100.0	(506)	100.0	(1,150)	.002

[a]Includes "don't know" and "no response" responses.

[b]As explained in the section on data, for these items, only a 1985 urban Costa Rica sample was available.

[c]Chi-square significance.

Support for civil liberties in the abstract, as measured by OSDL, may not be the strongest test of commitment to democracy—it may be too easy to agree to support the right to demonstrate, hold meetings, and be free of censorship. Let us examine the more stringent test of commitment to a system of Inclusive Participation, the four variable series measuring the Right to Dissent—RD (Table 4.4). The first item deals with support for the right of people who say only bad things about the government (regime critics) to organize demonstrations. Although the level of support in Costa Rica for this

key democratic norm is lower than it was for any of the previous items examined, nearly two-thirds of the sample express democratic sentiments. As expected, Nicaraguans express lower levels of support for RD compared to their attitudes on the previous items, but well over half of them still express democratic views. More interesting is that the difference between Costa Ricans and Nicaraguans is not statistically significant. Moreover, fewer Nicaraguans than Costa Ricans oppose the right to demonstrate by government critics.

The second item in Table 4.4 presents some real surprises. We would expect that granting the right to vote to regime critics could imply a higher level of political tolerance than allowing such individuals to hold a demonstration. After all, a demonstration indicates potential power, but casting a vote is an exercise of real political power, albeit in diluted form. Viewed from another perspective, the right to vote should receive greater support in Costa Rica because of that country's recent political history. The civil war of 1948 was fought largely over the issue of the integrity of the electoral process.[44] Perhaps the results of this survey on this item reflect contradictory opinions, with some stressing the danger of allowing the extremist opposition to vote and others emphasizing the importance of the integrity of the election system.

Nicaraguans not only were more supportive of the right of regime critics to vote than they were of any of the other six IP items (and indeed higher than all but one of the Extensive Participation items), they also supported the vote for regime critics more than did Costa Ricans. Table 4.4 shows that nearly 85 percent of Nicaraguans compared to only 60 percent of Costa Ricans support the right to vote of critics.

Although it might be thought that this finding is merely idiosyncratic, it is consistent with the two remaining variables in the series. About 40 percent of Costa Ricans support the right of people who say only bad things about their government to speak out against it; 70 percent of Nicaraguans defend this right. Similarly, about one-third of Costa Ricans support the right to run for office; over half of Nicaraguans do so. In each case, Nicaraguans manifest significantly greater support for IP-RD democratic norms than do Costa Ricans.

Testing the Standard Explanations:
Socioeconomic and Demographic Factors

The findings presented above are surprising enough to raise the possibility that they may be spurious. Indeed, as was noted in the data section above, there are differences between the two samples that might explain the findings. We noted there that the Costa Rican sample was national, whereas the Nicaraguan was confined to the major cities of the country. If rural Costa Ricans turn out to have much lower support levels for democratic norms,

their inclusion in the Costa Rican sample could well have affected the over-
all sample results. Because education is associated with levels of urbaniza-
tion and is also associated with support for democratic norms, especially
those related to political tolerance, one would expect democratic support to
be lower in the countryside.[45] Finally, age and gender distributions could
influence the results. If, for example, rural areas of Costa Rica contain a larg-
er proportion of females and older individuals, we might find lower levels of
support for democratic norms in the Costa Rican sample because of a corre-
lation between age, sex, and support for democratic norms. We examine
each of these possibilities in the analyses that follow.

Table 4.4 Inclusive Participation: Right to Dissent, Costa Rica and Nicaragua

	Country				
	Costa Rica		Nicaragua		
Question	%	(n)	%	(n)	Sig.[b]
There are people who say only bad things about the government. Do you support or oppose their:					
Organizing a demonstration?					
Support	63.4	(588)	58.0	(667)	
Oppose	36.0	(334)	30.6	(352)	
DK[a]	.5	(5)	11.4	(131)	
TOTAL	100.0	(927)	100.0	(1,150)	NS
Right to vote?					
Support	60.1	(557)	84.7	(974)	
Oppose	39.6	(367)	9.9	(114)	
DK[a]	.3	(3)	5.4	(62)	
TOTAL	100.0	(927)	100.0	(1,150)	<.001
Speaking out against the government?					
Support	43.6	(404)	70.3	(808)	
Oppose	56.1	(520)	19.7	(226)	
DK[a]	.3	(3)	10.1	(116)	
TOTAL	100.0	(927)	100.0	(1,150)	<.001
Running for office?					
Support	34.4	(319)	52.0	(598)	
Oppose	65.0	(603)	30.9	(355)	
DK[a]	.5	(5)	17.1	(197)	
TOTAL	100.0	(927)	100.0	(1,150)	<.001

[a]Includes "don't know," "no response," and "indifferent" responses.
[b]Chi-square significance.

Because the inclusion of rural populations in the Costa Rican case is the major difference between the two samples, we will examine the possible impact of that factor first. As noted, on one of the three dimensions, Opposition to the Suppression of Democratic Liberties, we utilized an urban sample for Costa Rica, so differences observed there between the two countries cannot stem from urban-rural differences. For the other two dimensions (EP and RD), however, we used the Costa Rican national sample, with 55 percent rural dwellers.[46] We therefore crosstabulated EP and OSDL items from the Costa Rican national sample with urban/rural residence. Urban-rural differences on all three EP items proved to be statistically insignificant (Chi-square criterion), indicating that rural Costa Ricans were no less likely than urbanites to support widespread participation.

We also crosstabulated urban/rural residence with the Right to Dissent variables. On two of four there was no statistically significant difference. On the remaining two, the right of regime critics to run for office or speak out against the government, there were significant differences. As expected, support for the right to dissent is lower in rural Costa Rica than in the urban areas: support for the right of regime critics to speak out against the government was 39.5 percent among rural dwellers, 48.6 percent among urbanites. Support for the right of dissenters to run for office was 38.7 percent among the urban sample, only 30.9 percent among the rural sample. Yet, when compared even to the more tolerant urban Costa Ricans, urban Nicaraguans still manifested markedly greater support for the right to dissent. In sum, urban-rural residence difference cannot account for lower support for dissent among Costa Ricans compared to Nicaraguans.

We turned to a second set of conventional explanations—age, gender, and education. The literature is replete with associations between these variables and support for democratic liberties. Women have been found to be less tolerant of democratic liberties than men, younger people more tolerant than the older, and educated respondents more tolerant than the less educated.[47] Seeking a possible explanation of the differences between the two countries' samples, we first compared the distributions of these variables within the two samples. Gender and age distributions are very similar in the two samples and therefore do not promise to explain differences in support for democratic norms. Education, often a key predictor of tolerance, does show some differences. A higher proportion of the Nicaraguan urban sample than the national Costa Rican sample had achieved a secondary education (49 percent vs. 38 percent), whereas the proportions of the two samples with University education are almost identical (13 percent each). Because educational achievement is in fact higher in Costa Rica than Nicaragua,[48] we dropped the Costa Rican rural dwellers and found that educational achievement of our urban Costa Ricans exceeds that of the Nicaraguans, with 19 percent of the former having some university education. Thus, differences in the composition of the samples based on gender, age, or education seem far

too small to account for the differences we have encountered in the opinion data.

It is possible, however, that the within-sample impact of such variables differs, so we crosstabulated gender, age, and education with each of the democratic norms variables (data not presented). Age proved to have no statistically significant monotonic association with any of the IP or EP items.[49] Gender, however, produced some significant differences, but the results do not help explain differences between the two countries. We found that within the Extensive Participation series, Nicaraguan women were significantly more supportive (at a .05 level of significance) of participating in a group to try to resolve community problems than were Nicaraguan men. Nicaraguan men, however, were significantly (probability <.001) more supportive of participation in protest marches than women. Costa Rican sample males also expressed more support than women for protest marches (probability <.03). The OSDL series also revealed several significant differences, but consistently showed that for both countries women were somewhat less supportive of this measure of democratic political culture than were men.[50] On the Right to Dissent series, the most stringent test of democratic political culture, we found no gender-based differences. We conclude, then, that differential gender effects are not responsible for the results we have observed.

Finally, education showed no significant monotonic relationship to OSDL. It did correlate significantly with some of the Extensive Participation items, but in no way that would help explain the national-level results. Education was more strongly and significantly associated with the RD items. This was markedly true in Costa Rica, with university-educated respondents expressing far higher support for democratic liberties than those with prima-. ry education. Nonetheless, on the key items regarding the right to vote and the right to run for office, Nicaraguan university-educated respondents were still more supportive than Costa Rican university-educated respondents. We conclude from this exercise that neither gender, age, nor education can explain the high levels of support for democratic norms we have encountered in Nicaragua.

These analyses confirm our initial impressions from the data and allay our suspicions that major differences in key demographic or socioeconomic effects between within the two samples are responsible for the surprising results we have presented here. We need to move, then, from this unsuccessful attempt to employ conventional explanations to a deeper analysis of the data.

The Impact of Ideology on Democratic Norms

We turn to the possibility that ideology might help explain these findings. In several studies of democratic norms conducted in Canada, Israel, New

Zealand, and the United States, respondents on the political left have exhibited higher levels of tolerance for democratic liberties than those on the right.[51] A systematic difference in the distribution of ideological preferences between Costa Rica and Nicaragua could help explain the surprisingly high levels of support for democratic norms in the latter country. That is, if Costa Ricans are ideologically further to the right than Nicaraguans and if the political right is indeed less supportive of democratic norms, then Nicaragua's greater support for democratic norms might be explained by having more left-oriented citizens.

To test this proposition we first must show that ideology and democratic norms are associated in both countries, and in the predicted direction. In the Costa Rica survey we used the conventional "left-right scale" question to tap the ideological orientation of the respondents on an eight-point scale. All but 12 percent of respondents answered; we found a far larger proportion of the sample on the right (46.1 percent) than on the left (6.0 percent); the remainder of the sample clustered in the center. That such a large proportion of the respondents located themselves on the ideological right suggested that the ideology might indeed help explain differences between Costa Rica and Nicaragua.

We correlated ideological self-identification with the ten variables that constitute the three sets of democratic support variables.[52] We found, however, that ideology was consistently related only to the IP items measuring Right to Dissent.[53] Because RD is the most stringent test of support for democratic norms, it is particularly revealing that ideology did indeed emerge as a predictor of these attitudes among Costa Ricans. Table 4.5 reveals that, as expected, Costa Ricans on the right consistently are more likely to oppose the granting of key civil liberties than those on the left.[54] Indeed, with the exception of the last item, the right to run for office, the left and center of the ideological continuum in Costa Rica are virtually indistinguishable in their support for these liberties.

To test the ideological explanation for democratic norms in Nicaragua, we would have preferred a similar left-right scale, but none was included in the survey. However, a reasonable surrogate, one that may be even more sensitive to meaningful ideological differences in Nicaragua, may be based on party identification. We counted persons identifying with the FSLN as on the left, and those identifying with the UNO opposition coalition of parties as on the right, with those not choosing in the center.[55] Because the survey was conducted while the UNO coalition was forming, it is not surprising that approximately two-fifths of the respondents did not indicate any party preference. The proportion of the sample indicating support for the well-established FSLN, however, was very close to the proportion of votes the party eventually received in the election.

Ideology correlates significantly with all of the democratic norms vari-

ables, but the differences were most marked in the Inclusive Participation series as shown in Tables 4.6 and 4.7. The tables also contain the Costa Rican data (entire national sample) for comparative reference.

We had expected the left, that is, FSLN supporters, to be more supportive of democratic norms. Table 4.6 intriguingly reveals that it is citizens on the right (UNO supporters) who were clearly more supportive of the IP-OSDL items—favorable toward the freedom of regime critics to protest and to hold meetings, and opposed to censorship—by margins of from 17 to 23 percent. The differences are statistically significant. Table 4.7 presents the IP-RD items and reveals a strikingly similar pattern. Respondents who identified with the Nicaraguan right are from 14 to 26 percent more likely to oppose restrictions on civil liberties than the Nicaraguan left (FSLN supporters). Sandinistas also support these rights more than they oppose them, but on two items—support for the rights to organize demonstrations and to run for office—their approval falls below 50 percent.[56]

Ideology indeed makes a difference in both Costa Rica and Nicaragua, but the impact is reversed in the two countries, leaving us with an apparent paradox. We divided the Nicaraguan data into left and right (using party as a surrogate), seeking to show that greater leftism there could explain why Nicaraguans were more supportive of key civil liberties than Costa Ricans. In fact, we accounted for some of the cross-national differences (see Table 4.6), but on a number of key questions, especially on the critical Right to Dissent items (Table 4.7), Nicaraguans of all ideological stripes remained more libertarian than Costa Ricans. Paradoxically, we had expected the left to be more supportive of civil liberties than the right, yet we found precisely the opposite in Nicaragua.

Why might the Nicaraguan right support civil liberties more than the left? Traditional theory argues that the left supports civil liberties more because doing so is consistent with its overall political philosophy. These data, however, suggest that political context and utilitarian considerations may have more to do with support for democratic liberties than does political philosophy. In Nicaragua, at the time of the study, the left (FSLN) was in power and the right (UNO) was preparing to challenge its control. The stronger support for civil liberties expressed by the right was, we believe, a function of its momentarily greater need to exercise such liberties in order to compete successfully for office and political power. Some sympathizers of the left, on the other hand, with their party in power may well have viewed such civil liberties as a threat to their own power. Thus, for Nicaraguans, at least, citizen support of civil liberties may be contingent upon where one sits in the political process; more of the "outs" favor democratic civil liberties than do the "ins." (Indeed, we expect that similar patterns—that is, the right more supportive of civil liberties—will appear in surveys of populations of the declining communist regimes of the Eastern bloc.) Although we do not have space to report fully on the results here, a new survey we conducted in

Table 4.5. Left–Right Ideology and Support for the Right to Dissent, Costa Rica

	Left–Right Ideology							
	Left		Middle		Right		No Opinion	
	%	(n)	%	(n)	%	(n)	%	(n)
Organizing a demonstration?[a]								
Support	73.2	(41)	72.3	(243)	57.4	(245)	54.6	(59)
Oppose	26.8	(15)	27.7	(93)	41.9	(179)	43.5	(47)
DK	.0	(0)	.0	(0)	.7	(3)	1.9	(2)
TOTAL	100.0	(56)	100.0	(336)	100.0	(427)	100.0	(108)
Right to Vote?[a]								
Support	64.3	(36)	68.8	(231)	54.1	(231)	54.6	(59)
Oppose	35.7	(20)	31.0	(104)	45.7	(195)	44.4	(48)
DK	.0	(0)	.3	(1)	.2	(1)	.9	(1)
TOTAL	100.0	(56)	100.0	(336)	100.0	(427)	100.0	(108)
Speaking out against the government?[a]								
Support	51.8	(29)	53.0	(178)	36.5	(156)	38.0	(41)
Oppose	48.2	(27)	46.7	(157)	63.0	(269)	62.0	(67)
DK	.0	(0)	.3	(1)	.5	(2)	.0	(0)
TOTAL	100.0	(56)	100.0	(336)	100.0	(427)	100.0	(108)
Running for office?[b]								
Support	50.0	(28)	36.6	(123)	32.1	(137)	28.7	(31)
Oppose	50.0	(28)	63.1	(212)	67.2	(287)	70.4	(76)
DK	.0	(0)	.3	(1)	.7	(3)	.9	(1)
TOTAL	100.0	(56)	100.0	(336)	100.0	(427)	100.0	(108)

[a]Sig. <.001 (x^2).
[b]Sig. at .03 (x^2).

Table 4.6 Ideology and Inclusive Participation: Opposition to the Suppression of Democratic Liberties, Nicaragua and Costa Rica

| | Party Orientation in Nicaragua[a] | | | | | | Costa Rica | |
| | Opposition | | No vote/NR | | FSLN | | | |
Question	%	(n)	%	(n)	%	(n)	%	(n)
Prohibit demonstrations?								
Yes	9.2	(22)	12.2	(57)	21.1	(93)	24.3	(123)
No	89.2	(214)	78.0	(366)	72.6	(320)	79.9	(369)
DK[b]	1.7	(4)	9.8	(46)	6.3	(28)	2.8	(14)
TOTAL	100.0	(240)	100.0	(469)	100.0	(441)	100.0	(506)
Prohibit meetings of groups that criticize the government?								
Yes	8.8	(1)	13.2	(62)	27.7	(122)	20.2	(102)
No	89.2	(214)	77.6	(364)	69.2	(305)	77.1	(390)
DK[b]	2.1	(5)	9.2	(43)	3.2	(14)	2.8	(14)
TOTAL	100.0	(240)	100.0	(469)	100.0	(441)	100.0	(506)
Censor newspapers, radio, and TV?								
Yes	4.2	(10)	8.7	(41)	21.5	(95)	19.4	(98)
No	94.2	(226)	81.2	(381)	71.2	(314)	78.3	(396)
DK[b]	1.7	(4)	10.0	(47)	7.3	(32)	2.4	(12)
TOTAL	100.0	(240)	100.0	(469)	100.0	(441)	100.0	(506)

[a]Sig. < .001 (x^2)
[b]This category includes "don't know," and "no response."

Table 4.7 Ideology and Inclusive Participation: Right to Dissent, Nicaragua and Costa Rica

| | Party Orientation in Nicaragua[a] | | | | | | | |
| | Opposition | | No vote/NR | | FSLN | | Costa Rica | |
Question	%	(n)	%	(n)	%	(n)	%	(n)
Organizing a demonstration?								
Support	75.0	(180)	57.4	(269)	49.4	(218)	63.4	(588)
Oppose	20.4	(49)	24.9	(117)	42.2	(186)	36.0	(334)
DK[b]	4.6	(10)	17.7	(83)	8.4	(37)	.5	(5)
TOTAL	100.0	(240)	100.0	(469)	100.0	(441)	100.0	(927)
Right to vote?								
Approve	94.6	(227)	84.0	(394)	80.0	(353)	60.1	(557)
Disapprove	3.8	(9)	6.8	(32)	16.6	(73)	39.6	(367)
DK[b]	1.7	(4)	9.2	(43)	3.4	(15)	.3	(3)
TOTAL	100.0	(240)	100.0	(469)	100.0	(441)	100.0	(927)
Speaking out against the government?								
Approve	82.5	(198)	68.7	(322)	65.3	(288)	43.6	(404)
Disapprove	12.1	(29)	15.4	(72)	28.3	(125)	56.1	(520)
DK[b]	5.5	(13)	16.0	(75)	6.3	(28)	.3	(3)
TOTAL	100.0	(240)	100.0	(469)	100.0	(441)	100.0	(927)
Running for office?								
Approve	68.3	(164)	50.7	(238)	44.4	(196)	34.4	(319)
Disapprove	19.6	(47)	23.7	(111)	44.7	(197)	65.0	(603)
DK[b]	12.1	(29)	25.6	(120)	10.9	(48)	.5	(5)
TOTAL	100.0	(240)	100.0	(469)	100.0	(441)	100.0	(927)

[a]Sig. < .001 (x^2).
[b]Includes "don't know," "no response," and "undecided."

the summer of 1991 in urban Nicaragua revealed a dramatic reversal of support for civil liberties consistent with the evidence uncovered in this study. We found UNO supporters, whose party was now in power, expressing much lower support for civil liberties than FSLN supporters, whose party was now out of power.

Support for this positional, rather than philosophical, interpretation of the effect of ideology upon support for democratic liberties appears in Table 4.8. In it, we show the results of two items that measure respondents' support for their political system; they are drawn from a scale called "Political Support-Alienation" that has been shown to be reliable and valid in the United States, Germany, Mexico, and Costa Rica.[57] The first item taps pride in the system and reveals dramatic differences between the FSLN supporters and the opposition. Whereas over 90 percent of the FSLN supporters expressed pride in Nicaragua's political system, a proportion exceeding Costa Rica's, less than 40 percent of UNO supporters expressed such pride. The second item taps evaluations of the protection granted to citizens by the system of laws. Here again the differences are dramatic, with four-fifths of the FSLN supporters replying affirmatively compared with only one-fifth of the opposition. With such comparatively low levels of support for the system among UNO supporters, it seems natural that they would favor the rights that might give them the opportunity to change that system.

The types of participation that UNO supporters favored in the months prior to the elections were not always conventional. In response to another query, nearly half of those who both supported UNO and expressed low support for the system of government would approve of citizens who take over factories, churches, and public buildings to achieve their political objectives.[58] In marked contrast, less than one-fifth of FSLN supporters who expressed high support for the system of government approved of such actions. In Costa Rica, by comparison, only 6 percent of the 1987 respondents expressed approval of takeovers of public buildings or factories, far lower than either the UNO or FSLN supporters in Nicaragua.

Conclusions

Our earlier discovery that urban Mexicans strongly supported democratic liberties in spite of their long-standing authoritarian system led us to delve deeper into the notion that regime type is determined by mass political culture, or vice versa. Costa Rica and Nicaragua presented fascinating further venues to explore the influence of mass culture upon regime type. Costa Rica was immediately intriguing because it has developed a stable democratic regime despite not sharing a historical experience with either of the two models Inglehart specifies for the emergence of democracy. Moreover, Costa Rica has developed a strong mass culture of support for fundamental civil

Table 4.8 System Support, Nicaragua and Costa Rica

	Party Orientation in Nicaragua							
	Opposition		No vote/NR		FSLN		Costa Rica	
Statement	%	(n)	%	(n)	%	(n)	%	(n)
One can feel pride in Costa Rica/ Nicaragua								
Agree	38.3	(92)	62.3	(292)	94.3	(416)	91.7	(850)
Neutral	8.8	(21)	7.7	(36)	3.6	(16)	4.9	(45)
Disagree	51.7	(124)	26.9	(126)	1.6	(7)	3.3	(31)
DK/NR	1.3	(3)	3.2	(15)	.5	(2)	.1	(1)
TOTAL	100.0	(240)	100.0	(469)	100.0	(441)	100.0	(927)
Laws protect the basic rights of Costa Ricans/Nicaraguans								
Agree	20.0	(48)	36.2	(170)	82.5	(364)	64.3	(596)
Neutral	12.1	(29)	16.6	(78)	8.6	(38)	19.0	(176)
Disagree	63.3	(152)	35.8	(168)	6.8	(30)	16.5	(153)
DK/NR	4.6	(11)	11.3	(53)	2.0	(9)	.2	(2)
TOTAL	100.0	(240)	100.0	(469)	100.0	(441)	100.0	(927)

liberties in spite of its Catholicism, poverty, and Iberian cultural legacy. Obviously, then, Costa Rica demonstrates that there must be at least one additional path to the development of democratic political culture and to democratization than those posited by Inglehart.

Nicaragua presents an even more intriguing test of the influence of mass culture upon regime type because not only is it poor and Catholic but its political tradition has been so undemocratic, turbulent, violent, and marked with repression of civil liberties. But astonishingly, we have discovered that urban Nicaraguans in 1989 manifested support for basic political liberties at levels equal to or greater than their Costa Rican neighbors. Clearly, Nicaraguans cannot have arrived at their civic culture either by the conjectured Anglo-European or Asian paths or by the path that was followed by Costa Ricans. Indeed, by culturist arguments Nicaraguans should not have developed these democratic values at all because of the weight of history and because of systemic barriers to such popular values. Neither, given Mexican history and regimes, should Mexicans have developed such democratic values. These stunning incongruities between theoretical predictions and the revealed cultural reality in urban Nicaragua and urban Mexico raise fascinating questions about the linkage between culture and regime type.

Do mass belief systems determine regime types? Perhaps, but at least not always nor in the ways envisioned by Inglehart. In one sense, Costa Rica provides an example in which the data may be read as supporting cultural determination of regime type because it has a stable democracy undergirded by a relatively widespread commitment of citizens to civil liberties. In sharp contrast, however, if mass political culture were consistently determinant of regime types, Mexico and Nicaragua should be stable democracies because of the high levels of support for democratic liberties that we have discovered among their urban citizens.

There still exists the possibility, of course, that Mexico and Nicaragua are in or are entering the process of democratizing their regimes because of mass values that are temporarily incongruent with regime structures. That, however, raises the reciprocal question of whether regime type determines mass values. Again, Costa Rica might exemplify a case in point because one might argue that despite the historico-cultural factors militating against a mass culture of democracy, the development of democratic rules of the game led to the evolution of a mass civic culture. If the system-to-culture influence were universal, however, neither Mexicans nor Nicaraguans should manifest anywhere near the strong allegiance to democratic norms that they do. We therefore submit that the culture-regime type relationship is far more complex than the recent literature suggests. Very important factors yet to be considered—the roles, decisions, and values of political elites, the possibility of cultural diffusion of democratic norms, and utilitarian considerations—may also play critical roles in the emergence of democratic values and democracy.

The importance of these factors may be most constructively explored by

returning to the question: What are alternative paths toward democratic values and democratization suggested by our three Latin American cases? We see at least two and possibly three divergent paths.

The Costa Rican path. In this relatively poor, Catholic country a democratic regime and democratic political culture may well have emerged simultaneously over the course of more than a century due the isolation of its colonists, the lack of racial exploitation, lower levels of inequality than in other parts of Latin America for significant periods of the nation's history, and a historical need for economic elites to co-opt workers with favorable social policies and democratic rules of the game. Also critically important have been the actions of political elites in building reciprocal trust and mutual accommodation at key moments in the nation's political history, especially the early twentieth century and the period following the 1948 civil war.[59] These factors suggest that in Costa Rica, through a system of reciprocal influence, elite culture, mass culture, and institutional development contributed to both the stabilization of democratic institutions and widespread allegiance to democratic norms.

The Mexican path to a democratic urban culture diverges significantly from the Costa Rican and Anglo-European paths. Mexico's 1910–1917 revolution over liberal democratic forms and the economic demands of the working classes eventually led to the establishment of the PRI-dominated regime. Despite their authoritarian political practice, Mexican regimes have traditionally employed the democratic forms of constitutionalism and elections and have emphasized democratic values in public education. Moreover, both Mexico's proximity to the United States and the tradition of heavy migration of Mexicans to their northern neighbor have widely exposed Mexicans to liberal democratic norms and practices. These factors in combination may well account for the emergence of democratic values among urban Mexicans in spite of their authoritarian polity. Support for democratic liberties may also have grown among Mexicans increasingly disillusioned with the PRI-dominated system for the very practical reason that freedom to protest, dissent, and work for change would benefit those dissatisfied and bent upon reforming the polity. Indeed, the emergence of a significant opposition challenge to and a large vote against the PRI in the 1988 Mexican presidential election could well constitute steps toward democratization that were presaged by the popular support for democratic norms revealed in our 1978–1979 survey.

The Nicaraguan path to a democratic urban culture must differ significantly from the Anglo-European and Costa Rican paths but may have some common elements with the Mexican case. First, as suggested for Mexicans, Nicaraguans may have developed democratic norms over time in part by

means of cultural diffusion through the media. Second, diffusion of democratic norms could also come from the Nicaraguans' experiences in neighboring Costa Rica and the United States, where many have lived and traveled, or have relatives. Third, Nicaraguan authoritarianism itself and the struggle to defeat it over the past fifteen years may well have bred democratic values. As in Mexico, utilitarian considerations could have developed a widespread appreciation of democratic liberties in a society that has struggled against repression for many years. In the 1970s the Sandinistas and their broad-front allies fought against the Somozas. In the 1980s the emergent opposition to the revolution worked to defeat the Sandinistas at the polls—and eventually did. All Nicaraguans who worked for or wanted political freedom would have benefited from democratic liberties in their political struggles, and many suffered for their absence. Such experiences could easily have raised Nicaraguans' utilitarian commitment to such rights. Fourth, the Sandinista revolution itself encouraged citizen participation in a wide variety of forms and venues. Despite periodic curtailment of the participatory rights of some opponents, the political values inculcated by the revolution itself included democratic norms.

Although Nicaraguan supporters of the leftist Sandinista National Liberation Front overall supported democratic liberties in 1989, we have seen that they were somewhat less prone to do so than other Nicaraguans, especially the citizens who identified with the emerging United Nicaraguan Opposition coalition. This surprised us because previous research has generally found those on the left to be more tolerant of democratic liberties than those on the right.[60] This additional anomaly suggests that commitment to civil liberties may be less a function of ideological orientation than of position with respect to power. That some Sandinista supporters were less committed to democratic liberties than other citizens suggests that they may have (correctly) perceived their critics' rights to organize, protest, and run for office as a threat to the survival of the revolution.

This argument is the obverse of the utilitarian explanation for the emergence of support for democratic norms among people living in repressive regimes, irrespective of ideology. Because civil liberties could help the opposition, they might well weaken the incumbents and thus in practice seem less attractive to regime supporters. Here, then, short-term utilitarian considerations of power rather than long-term historical-cultural factors may determine levels of commitment to civil liberties. We therefore suspect that during the final years of communist rule in Eastern Europe, the politically centrist and conservative opponents of communist regimes manifested, for utilitarian reasons, markedly higher commitment to civil liberties than supporters of the ruling Communist parties. Indeed, we may find that Nicaragua and Mexico constitute examples of nations following another path toward democratic culture and democracy—an authoritarian breakdown path.

In summary, we have found the culturist propositions that mass culture determines regime type (or perhaps vice versa) to be substantially lacking in the cases of Mexico and Nicaragua. Although we by no means rule out reciprocal influence between mass culture and regime type, it is evident that other factors including elite culture and interactions,[61] institutional evolution, diffusion of democratic values by the media and migration, and utilitarian considerations must also influence the evolution of democratic culture and the emergence of democratic regimes. Political culture thus appears to be much more changeable and responsive to short-term forces than the culturist approach assumes.

Ultimately, high levels of commitment to democratic values among Mexicans and Nicaraguans should be a source of qualified optimism to those who value political liberty and democracy. Their unexpected existence in authoritarian settings heralds prospects for mass support for the development of democracy in the region and for other authoritarian regimes. Although we do not believe that the emergence of mass democratic values will necessarily assure the development of democratic institutions in either country, they could well encourage national elites to choose democratic rules and practices as they confront national crises. In the middle run such tolerance of others' rights could well be a harbinger of moderation among populations striving to transform their systems, a factor that might reduce the propensity to violence in the struggle for change. In the long run, mass support for democratic liberties could, as in Costa Rica, reinforce elite commitment to democratic regimes and, by thus enhancing the stability of new democracies, break the tragic Latin American tendency to cycle back to authoritarian rule.

Notes

This chapter is drawn from our previous analyses of Mexico in the *Latin American Research Review* and of Costa Rica and Nicaragua in the *Journal of Politics* (cited below).

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2. Dankwart A. Rustow, "Democracy: A Global Revolution?" *Foreign Affairs* 69 (Fall 1990): 75-91.

3. Larry Diamond, Juan Linz, and Seymour Martin Lipset, eds., *Democracy in Developing Countries: Latin America* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1989); John A. Booth and Mitchell A. Seligson, eds., *Elections and Democracy in Central America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989); John Peeler, *Latin American Democracies* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985); James M. Malloy and Mitchell A. Seligson, eds., *Authoritarians and Democrats: Regime Transition in Latin America* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1987); Guillermo A. O'Donnell, Philippe C. Schmitter, and Laurence Whitehead, eds., *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986); and Paul W. Drake and Eduardo Silva, eds., *Elections and Democratization in Latin America: 1980-1985* (La Jolla, CA: Center for Iberian and Latin American Studies-Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies, Institute of the Americas,

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4. Russell Fitzgibbon and Julio A. Fernandez *Latin America: Political Culture and Development* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1981), chaps. 1, 17; Emilio Willems, *Latin American Culture: An Anthropological Synthesis* (New York: Harper and Row, 1975), chaps. 5, 14; Frank Tannenbaum, *Ten Keys to Latin America* (New York: Vintage, 1966), pp. 138-145; John P. Gillin, "The Middle Segments and Their Values," in Robert B. Tomasek, ed., *Latin American Politics: 24 Studies of the Contemporary Scene* (New York: Anchor Books, 1966), pp. 23-40; Howard J. Wiarda, *The Democratic Revolution in Latin America: History, Politics, and U.S. Policy* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1990).

5. Larry Diamond and Juan Linz, "Politics, Society, and Democracy in Latin America," in Larry Diamond, Juan Linz, and Seymour Martin Lipset, eds., *Democracy in Developing Countries: Latin America*, p. 10.

6. The work of Theodore Adorno et al., *The Authoritarian Personality, New York: Harper and Brothers* (1950), was later discredited by Bob Altemeyer, *Right Wing Authoritarianism* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1981), pp. 13-116.

7. Arguments for redefining democracy based on the irrationality and intolerance of mass culture may be found in Joseph A. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1943); Lester Milbrath, *Political Participation* (Chicago: Raud McNally, 1965); and Robert A. Dahl, *A Preface to Democratic Theory* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1956). Studies debunking such arguments include V. O. Key, *The Responsible Electorate* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, Belknap Press, 1966), Clyde A. Nunn, Harry J. Crockett, Jr., and Allen J. Williams, Jr., *Tolerance for Nonconformity: A National Survey of Changing Commitment to Civil Liberties* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1978); and Herbert McClosky and Alida Brill, *Dimensions of Tolerance* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1983).

8. Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, *The Civic Culture* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1963).

9. Guillermo A. O'Donnell, *Modernization and Bureaucratic Authoritarianism* (Berkeley: Institute of International Studies, University of California, 1973), predicted that authoritarian coalitions rising from modernization would block democratization in Latin America.

10. Lawrence E. Harrison attributes the lack of development and democracy in Latin America to social and political culture, in *Underdevelopment Is a State of Mind: The Latin American Case* (Lanham, MD: Madison Books; Cambridge: Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, 1985). A similar argument is made by Fitzgibbon and Fernandez in *Latin America*.

11. Glen Dealy, "The Tradition of Monistic Democracy in Latin America," in Howard J. Wiarda, ed., *Politics and Social Change in Latin America: The Distinct Tradition* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1974), p. 73.

12. Howard J. Wiarda, "Social Change and Political Development in Latin America: Summary," in Wiarda, ed., *Politics and Social Change in Latin America* (Amherst, Mass: University of Massachusetts Press, 1974), p. 274.

13. Ibid., pp. 269-270. Wiarda, in his latest work on the subject, *The Democratic Revolution in Latin America*, pp. 3-57, recognizes that some changes in support for democracy in Latin America are occurring but essentially reaffirms his earlier pessimism about the democratic potential of the region's culture.

14. Fitzgibbon and Fernandez, *Latin America*, p. 350.

15. See, for instance, Harry Eckstein, "A Culturalist Theory of Political Change," *American Political Science Review* 82 (September 1988): 789-804; Lucian Pye, *Asian Power and Politics: The Cultural Dimensions of Authority* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985).

16. Ronald Inglehart, *Culture Shift in Advanced Industrial Society* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990); and "The Renaissance of Political Culture," *American Political Science Review* 82 (November 1988): 1203-1230.

17. Inglehart, "The Renaissance of Political Culture," p. 1205.

18. Ibid., p. 1219.

19. Ibid., p. 1221.

20. Inglehart, *Culture Shift*, pp. 61-63.

21. See Wiarda, *The Democratic Revolution in Latin America*, pp. 31-57.

22. Mikael Bostrom, "Political Waves in Latin America," *Ibero-Americana, Nordic Journal of Latin American Studies* 19, no. 1 (1989): 3-19.

23. Almond and Verba, *The Civic Culture*, pp. 31-32. Almond and Verba also stressed high levels of national pride and perception of civic competence as elements of the civic culture, but these have been found to be problematical elements. See Enrique Baloyra, "Criticism, Cynicism, and Political Evaluation: A Venezuelan Example," *American Political Science Review* 73 (December 1979): 987-1002; and Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, eds., *The Civic Culture Revisited* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1989).

24. Indeed, in subsequent work by Verba, political participation became the dominant focus. See, for instance, Sidney Verba and Norman H. Nie, *Participation in America: Political Democracy and Social Equality* (New York: Harper and Row, 1972); Sidney Verba, Norman H. Nie, and Jae-On Kim, *Participation and Political Equality: A Seven-Nation Study* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1978).

25. Samuel A. Stouffer, *Communism, Conformity, and Civil Liberties* (New York: Doubleday, 1955); Herbert McClosky, "Consensus and Ideology in American Politics," *American Political Science Review* 58 (1964): 361-382.

26. John L. Sullivan, James Pierson, and George E. Marcus, *Political Tolerance and American Democracy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), p. 51.

27. Nunn, Crockett, Jr., and Williams, Jr., *Tolerance for Nonconformity*; John L. Sullivan, Michal Shamir, Patrick Walsh, and Nigel S. Roberts, *Political Tolerance in Context: Support for Unpopular Minorities in Israel, New Zealand, and the United States* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1985).

28. Robert A. Dahl, *Polyarchy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971).

29. John A. Booth and Mitchell A. Seligson, "The Political Culture of Authoritarianism in Mexico: A Reexamination," *Latin American Research Review* 19, no. 1 (1984): 106-124.

30. See, for instance, Judith Adler Hellman, *Mexico in Crisis* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1978); Pablo González Casanova, *Democracy in Mexico* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970); Susan Eckstein, *The Poverty of Revolution: The State and the Urban Poor of Mexico* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977); Roger D. Hansen, *The Politics of Mexican Development* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1971); and L. Vincent Padgett, *The Mexican Political System* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1966).

31. See, for instance, Eric R. Wolf, *Sons of the Shaking Earth* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959); Rafael Segovia, *La politización del niño mexicano* (Mexico, D.F.: El Colegio de Mexico, 1975); Samuel Ramos, *Profiles of Man and Culture in Mexico* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1962); Octavio Paz, *Labyrinth of Solitude: Life and Thought in Mexico* (New York: Grove Press, 1961); Erich Fromm and Michael Maccoby, *Social Character in a Mexican Village: A Sociopsychoanalytic Study* (Englewood Cliffs, NY: Prentice Hall, 1970).

32. Inglehart acknowledges that determining the direction of causality historically is virtually impossible, but he believes that culture shapes structure, in particular, that a "civic culture" contributes to democracy. See Inglehart, "Renaissance," pp. 1212, 1215.

33. Almond and Verba predict that culture and regime type will normally be congruent, i.e., converge to resemble and support each other, or move toward congruence. Periods of incongruence between culture and regime type might occur during periods of rapid change. *The Civic Culture*, pp. 21-23.

34. See Booth and Seligson, "The Political Culture of Authoritarianism," p. 110, for additional methodological details and further data..

35. Ibid., pp. 116-117.

36. See John A. Booth and Thomas W. Walker, *Understanding Central America* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), pp. 17-27, for further material on their histories. See also James L. Busey, "Foundations of Political Contrast: Costa Rica and Nicaragua," *Western Political Quarterly* 8 (September 1958): 627-659.

37. Charles Ameringer, *Democracy in Costa Rica* (New York: Praeger, 1982); Mitchell A. Seligson, "Costa Rica and Jamaica," in Myron Weiner and Ergun Ozbudun, eds., *Competitive Elections in Developing Countries* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1987); and John A. Booth, "Costa Rica: The Roots of Democratic Stability," in Diamond, Ling, and Lipset, *Democracy in Developing Countries*.

38. Thomas W. Walker, *Nicaragua: Land of Sandino* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1981); Richard L. Millett, *Guardians of the Dynasty* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1977); John A. Booth, *The End and the Beginning: The Nicaraguan Revolution* (Bonlder: Westview Press, 1985); Latin American Studies Association (LASA), *The Electoral Process in Nicaragua: Domestic and International Influences* (Anstin: LASA, 1984); and *Electoral Democracy Under International Pressure* (Pittsburgh: LASA, March 15, 1990).

39. Diamond and Linz, "Politics, Society and Democracy," p. 11; Busey, "Foundations of Political Contrast."

40. Daniel M. Lund, "Polling Failure in Nicaragua Assessed," *Interamerican Public Opinion Report*, Spring 1990, pp. 1, 4-5; Katherine Bischoping and Howard Schuman, "Pens and Polls in Nicaragua: An Analysis of the 1990 Preelection Surveys," *American Journal of Political Science* 36 (May 1992), pp. 331-350; William Barnes, "Rereading the Nicaraguan Preelection Polls, Vanessa Castro and Gary Prevost, eds., *The 1990 Elections in Nicaragua and Their Aftermath* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 1992).

41. For these analyses, this meant limiting the sample to the metropolitan area of San José, the nation's capital, and the provincial capitals on the meseta central. This limitation reduced the Costa Rican sample to an N of 388.

42. The Nicaraguan sample consistently has more nonresponse than the Costa Rican sample, no doubt because of the turbulent political climate and the newness of public opinion surveying in Nicaragua, compared to stable Costa Rica, where such polls are commonplace. To be cautious, we report nonresponse and calculate percentages based upon all replies rather than on only those who responded. All data reported on Nicaragua and Costa Rica in Tables 4.2 through 4.8 have been reported in Mitchell A. Seligson and John A. Booth, "Political Culture and Regime Type: Evidence from Nicaragua and Costa Rica," *Journal of Politics* 55 (Nov. 1993).

43. The extreme right is represented by the Movimiento de Costa Rica Libre, which actively publishes anticommunist advertisements but has not been active as an electoral force. The extreme left, represented by various parties and coalitions of parties in the 1970s and 1980s, has been steadily losing strength since 1982 and has now lost several of its historical maximum of five seats in the fifty-seven-seat unicameral Legislative Assembly.

44. When the incumbent regime invalidated the 1948 presidential election, there was widespread outrage. A guerrilla force coalesced and toppled the government. Although other issues stimulated individuals to rebel, including opposition to communists in government, anger over tampering with the outcome of the election was a

unifying theme. To prevent the recurrence of corruption of the election process, the 1949 constitution established an independent body, the Supreme Electoral Tribunal, with the power to exercise total control over elections. The system builds in numerous safeguards including the transfer of police power to the tribunal in the months preceding elections.

45. Edward N. Muller, Mitchell A. Seligson, and Ilter Turan, "Education, Participation, and Support for Democratic Norms," *Comparative Politics* 20 (October 1987): 19-33.

46. We coded as urban all respondents in the metropolitan area of San José, the national capital, and in the provincial capitals of Alajuela, Cartago, Heredia, Limón, and Puntarenas.

47. Stouffer, *Communism, Conformity, and Civil Liberties.* In their methodologically more sophisticated study, *Political Tolerance and American Democracy,* however, Sullivan, Pierson and Marcus found these variables were found to be very weakly related to tolerance (pp. 110-144).

48. Inter-American Development Bank, *1989 Report*, pp. 308, 388.

49. In two of the ten crosstabulations on age significant differences were found, but the results were nonmonotonic, i.e., respondents in the oldest and youngest age categories both had lower or higher support for democratic norms than those in the middle category.

50. Females were significantly less tolerant of democratic liberties in four of the six crosstabulations.

51. Bob Altemeyer, *Enemies of Freedom: Understanding Right-wing Authoritarianism* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1988), pp. 239-252; McClosky and Brill, *Dimensions of Tolerance*, pp. 260-265, 338-340; Mitchell A. Seligson and Dan Caspi, "Arabs in Israel: Political Tolerance and Ethnic Conflict," *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science* 19 (February 1983): 55-66; Stouffer, *Communism, Conformity, and Civil Liberties*; and Sullivan, et al., *Political Tolerance in Context*, pp. 197-199.

52. The original democratic norms items in the Costa Rica surveys were administered using a scale of 1 to 10, but these were recoded as dichotomies to match the Nicaragua survey. For linear correlation purposes, when analyzing the Costa Rica sample alone, it is more appropriate to use the unrecoded ten-point items when using such predictors as the eight-point ideology scale. In the tables presented, the items are recoded for consistency of presentation with the other tables in the chapter.

53. On only one other variable, participation in protest marches in the series of Extensive Participation did we find any significant correlation ($r = -.11$; sig. $<.001$). On all other items, the correlations were insignificant.

54. Ideology is recoded as follows (1,2,3 = left; 4,5 = center; 6,7,8 = right).

55. Though UNO included a small number of tiny left-wing elements within its umbrella coalition, it was firmly identified with an anti-FSLN position and on balance much to the ideological right of the FSLN. We found, for example, only 6 respondents among the 240 who identified with UNO but who supported left-wing parties. This included 3 respondents who supported the Partido Comunista de Nicaragua, 2 who supported the Partido Marxista Leninista and 1 who supported the Partido Socialista Nicaraguense.

56. Finally, in both Tables 4.6 and 4.7, the Nicaraguans who refused to identify themselves with a particular party position scored in the intermediate range between UNO and FSLN identifiers. This supports our view that those who did not identify with one political bloc or the other were more likely to be ambivalent in their feelings about politics than party identifiers, and constituted a true ideological center.

57. See Edward N. Muller, Thomas O. Jukam, and Mitchell A. Seligson, "Diffuse Political Support and Antisystem Political Behavior: A Comparative Analysis," *American Journal of Political Science* 26 (May 1982): 240-264; and

Mitchell A. Seligson, "On the Measurement of Diffuse Support: Some Evidence from Mexico," *Social Indicators Research* 12 (January 1983): 1-24. In Costa Rica, the items were administered using a seven-point scale, whereas in Nicaragua an agree/disagree format was used. To make the two formats compatible, the Costa Rican responses were dichotomized, with the middle category being classified in the "neutral" category.

58. These were the UNO supporters who disagreed with the statement that the laws protect the basic rights of Nicaraguans. Use of the other diffuse support item, pride in the system, produces similar results.

59. Peeler, *Latin American Democracies*; and Booth, "Costa Rica."

60. Note that this research and expectation referred to citizens of countries in which Marxists did not hold power. Critics of Marxist regimes and the historical record have amply demonstrated the capacity of Marxist regimes to curtail civil liberties.

61. See, for instance, John A. Booth, "Prospects for Democracy in Nicaragua: Elites, Political Culture, and the 1990 Election" (Paper presented at the American Political Science Association meetings in San Francisco, 2 September 1990; and John Higley and Michael G. Burton, "The Elite Variable in Democratic Transitions and Breakdowns," *American Sociological Review* 54 (1989): 17-32; John Peeler, "Elite Settlements and Democratic Consolidation in Latin America: Colombia, Costa Rica, and Venezuela," in John Higley and Richard Gunther, eds., *Elites and Democratic Consolidation in Latin America and Southern Europe* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 81-112; and Seligson and Booth, "Political Culture and Regime Type."