

The Birth of Democracy in South America

South America contains some of the oldest democracies in the world, yet we still know relatively little about how and why democracy arose in the region. Raúl L. Madrid argues that three main developments – the professionalization of the military, the growth of parties, and splits within the ruling party – led to democratization in the early twentieth century. Military professionalization increased the incentives for the opposition to abandon the armed struggle and focus on the electoral path to power. The growth of parties boosted the capacity of the opposition to enact and enforce democratic reforms that would level the electoral playing field. And ruling party splits created the opportunity for the opposition and ruling party dissidents to ally and push through reforms. This persuasive and original book offers important implications for the study of democracy. This title is also available as Open Access on Cambridge Core.

Raúl L. Madrid is the Harold C. and Alice T. Nowlin Regents Professor in Liberal Arts at the University of Texas at Austin. He is the author of *The Rise of Ethnic Politics in Latin America* (2012) as well as numerous other books and articles on Latin American politics.

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RAÚL L. MADRID

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