

ANALYTICAL SUMMARY

MOLINA V., José Enrique

POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE ELECTORAL CALENDAR IN LATIN AMERICA:
ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF SIMULTANEOUS AND SEPARATE PARLIAMENTARY
AND PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

América Latina Hoy, 29, 2001, pp. 15-29

The paper analyzes arguments put forward by Shugart and Carey (1992) and Mainwaring and Shugart (1997) regarding the effects that different combinations of presidential electoral systems and the timing of parliamentary elections (simultaneous with or separate from presidential) have with regard to political representation and governability. The hypotheses of these authors are contrasted with the results of Latin American presidential elections between 1996 and 2000. The conclusion reached is that the election results tend to confirm the hypotheses regarding the effects of the electoral calendar and the type of electoral system for president on governability and representation, particularly regarding the possibility that the party or coalition of the president has a sizeable or majority parliamentary representation.

Key words: Electoral systems, Latin America, electoral behavior, presidential government, governability.

CHASQUETTI, Daniel

MAYORITY PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS IN LATIN AMERICA

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The article analyses the impact of different types of second round ballot systems adopted in Latin America for presidential elections. After classifying the diverse range of run-off ballot systems, and reviewing the principal conclusions arrived at by specialists on the topic, the article examines the effects of different electoral types on party fragmentation, polarization and democracy stability. The article concludes that electoral formulas based on absolute majority combined with inchoate party systems are not an option favorable to the maintenance of democratic stability. It also concludes that systems of qualified majority (less than 50%) are efficient mechanisms for the configuration of scenarios with low fragmentation and limited ideological polarization.

Key words: Elections, electoral systems, presidents, fragmentation, polarization.

BRANDLER, Natalia

ELECTORAL REFORM AND POLITICAL FRAGMENTATION: THE CASE OF VENEZUELA

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This article examines electoral reforms to the Venezuelan municipal electoral system between 1984 y 1995 with the purpose of examining theories regarding the effects of electoral systems on party systems. The article explores the effect of district magnitude, electoral threshold, and the electoral formula on the effective number of electoral and legislative parties. It argues that reforms provided incentives that encouraged many political parties and electoral groups to compete in local elections; however, their participation in elections did not result in a significant number of additional seats for them. This contributed to the further erosion of public trust in the electoral institution and, over the longer term, to the further delegitimation of the two traditional political parties.

Key words: Electoral reform, political parties, effective number of parties, disproportionality, Venezuela.

DILLON SOARES, Gláucio Ary
 SEARCHING FOR THE LOST RATIONALITY
 América Latina Hoy, 29, 2001, pp. 81-107

Surveys carried out during the military regime have shown that the evaluation of different public policies have low correlations with each other, are particularly low among illiterates and poorly educated respondents and were poor predictors of voting intention and party preferences. However, data from a large pre-election poll, with a stratified random household sample in the Distrito Federal, contradict these findings. In this survey, evaluations of public policies cluster, yet are not “block and blind” answers, the magnitude of their inter-correlations does not follow educational lines, and the evaluations are excellent predictors of voting preference for governor. The disparities among these findings may result from real changes in the population. During the last decade and a half, to specificities of the Distrito Federal (higher per capita income and one of the highest educational levels in the nation), to an election in which the incumbent governor ran against a former governor, to the campaign emphasis of the incumbent governor, who was running on his record, to characteristics of the military regime, or to combinations thereof. Regardless of the explanation that one may favor, the 1998 elections showed the existence of a rationality that linked voting intention to the evaluation of public policies. However, this linkage might be *specific* to this particular election, and not generalizable to other electoral levels or to party preferences.

Key words: Elections, Public policies, Rational choice, Social classes, Authoritarian regime, Democracy.

MORGENSTERN, Scott
 ORGANIZED FACTIONS AND DISORGANIZED PARTIES. ELECTORAL INCENTIVES
 IN URUGUAY
 América Latina Hoy, 29, 2001, pp. 109-131

This paper extends the study of party organization and legislative voting to factionalized party systems. After developing a typology of factional types, it argues that hierarchically organized factions respond to a competing incentive system. Factions have interests that push them to work together for the good of the party, but at the same time, they have interests in distinguishing themselves for electoral purposes. Further, the electoral cycle drives the weights of these competing pressures, leading factional cooperation to break down as elections near. These patterns and incentives are particularly evident in Uruguay, and the paper uses roll-call data from that country's legislature to test the propositions.

Key words: Factions, Uruguay, party organization, electoral systems.

CORROCHANO, David H. and DÍAZ-S., Héctor
 PERFORMANCE AND INSTITUTIONAL IDENTITY. THE ELECTORAL TRIBUNAL
 IN THE 2000 ELECTORAL ALTERNANCE
 América Latina Hoy, 29, 2001, pp. 133-152

This article analyzes the performance of the “Electoral Tribunal of the Judicial Branch of the Federation” (TEPJF - “Tribunal Electoral del Poder Judicial de la Federación”), examining its degree and type of identity during the process leading up to the presidential elections of July 2, 2000. Its hypothesis is that in its performance the TEPJF was successful, though it lacked a clear identity which facilitated a strategy of institutional blackmail which, in turn, led to uncertainties during the process, could have limited the democratic advances attained, and generated a post electoral conflict with consequences for the political stability of the country.

Key words: Transition, trust, performance and institutional identity.

SZNAJDER, Mario and RONIGER, Luis
 POLITICS, SOCIAL ETHOS AND IDENTITY IN CONTEMPORARY CUBA
 América Latina Hoy, 29, 2001, pp. 155-178

The resilience of the Cuban political model appears paradoxical against the backdrop of extreme economic hardship, loss of foreign support and increasing pressure by the United States and the anti-Castro opposition. Notwithstanding adverse global circumstances following the demise of the Soviet Union –its main source of economic support– the Cuban revolutionary government has managed to hold onto power. In this paper the authors analyze the conditions under which Cuba has remained committed to its revolutionary path and the economic measures and political mechanisms it has adopted to maintain internal stability, despite serious international challenges and internal pressures. They suggest that the special characteristics of the Cuban Revolution, which have allowed its resilience, have limited the appeal of the Cuban model in spite of its achievements in areas of human development such as health and education.

Key words: Political longevity, collective identity, social ethos, reforms, dual economy.