Political parties and democratisation in Latin America

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For the first time in the history of Latin America, practically all societies in the region are ruled by democratically elected governments as a result of democratisation processes that since the late 1980s have given an increased salience to party politics and electoral processes in Latin America. In some cases that salience has been enhanced by highly contested electoral campaigns and by unexpected results, but it has mainly resulted from the central role played by political parties in providing continuity and change, stability coupled with elements of democratic contestation. In other cases, periodical elections do not seem to suffice to provide stability and democratic governance; a key difference in these cases is the absence of political parties with a well defined and relatively strong organisation that allows institutionalised interaction.

Electoral confrontations in recent years have displayed levels of contestation rarely found in post-industrial democracies. In Argentina, a fierce campaign dislodged the Peronists from government, whilst in Chile the ruling centre-left coalition had unexpected difficulties in staying in office but finally managed to elect a Socialist to the Presidency. The left also did well in Uruguay, but its good performance was this time cancelled by a second-round re-assertion of the traditional parties’ hegemony. In Mexico, the 71-year-old incumbency of the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) finally came to an end with the election as President of the candidate of the conservative opposition, Vicente Fox. An important element these electoral confrontations had in common was that they took place within the context of established and relatively stable party systems.

There are, though, other cases that present very different characteristics. In Peru and Venezuela elections have emphatically demonstrated an absence of institutionalised party politics and have failed to provide democratic stability. A similar case can be identified in Colombia, where the presence of formal party structures has proved to be insufficient in a context in which much of the country's territory - and social life - is controlled by drug barons, guerrilla groups and the armed forces.

Although the bulky literature on democratisation often emphasises the role of elections in democratic consolidations, less attention has been given to how the electoral process takes place and to its effects on the process's main protagonists, the political parties. This article argues that the development of political parties and electoral processes in Latin America's new democracies have resulted in different degrees of stability.

Political parties

When discussing new democracies, much has been said and written about institutional obstacles to democratisation, what often have been described as authoritarian legacies or 'enclaves'2. This article argues that attention should now be given to political parties, as essential anchors of the process of democratic consolidation.

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2 Although the concept of enclave was first used by Manuel Antonio Garretón with reference to the Chilean case, more properly they were also called amarres (ties or moorings) making reference to Pinochet's alleged saying that had left everything well tied down, when in 1990 he handed over the government to an elected civilian President, Patricio Aylwin.
The extent to which that democratic consolidation appears and develops in Latin American societies can be largely determined by the role played by parties. However, the literature on Latin America's democratisation has rarely gone beyond descriptive accounts of parties. Much remains to be done in terms of studying parties, their organisation and their relationship to civil society and to the state, but even a preliminary observation shows that the types of parties that prevail in cases where democratisation appears more consolidated (such as those of the Southern Cone) are different from the parties and groups that characterise cases where democratisation is still to be institutionalised, such as Colombia, Peru and Venezuela.

It could be argued that the party systems found in Argentina, Chile, Mexico and Uruguay are comparatively stable. In the case of Argentina, Chile and Uruguay the main political parties - and certainly those in government - predate periods of military dictatorship and command strong loyalties in society, and since the return to democracy, governments and legislators have been replaced by means of regular elections, after completing their periods in office. Mexican political parties show similar characteristics, whilst Mexico did not go through the period of military rule affecting most of Latin America in the 1970s and 1980s.

With the exception of Costa Rica and most of the English-speaking Caribbean, most societies in the region show comparatively unstable party systems. Even Brazil shows a less stable system than its Southern Cone neighbours, highly fragmented, with weak parties and characterised by extreme electoral volatility.

Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Argent.</th>
<th>Bolivia</th>
<th>Brazil</th>
<th>Colomb</th>
<th>Chile</th>
<th>Ecuador</th>
<th>Mexico</th>
<th>Parag.</th>
<th>Peru</th>
<th>Urug.</th>
<th>Venez.</th>
<th>Total Lat Am</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>A little</td>
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<td>99</td>
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<td>N</td>
<td>1200</td>
<td>1080</td>
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<td>602</td>
<td>1046</td>
<td>1200</td>
<td>1200</td>
<td>18038</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: *Latinobarómetro*, 2000

A form of political trust measured by *Latinobarómetro* confirms that distinction (Table 1). If Argentina, Chile, Mexico and Uruguay are defined as stable party systems, and Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru and Venezuela as

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less stable or unstable, a directional hypothesis stating that there would be a lower level of trust in unstable systems is confirmed by a one-tailed Kolmogorov-Smirnov test (p<0.001) (Table 2).

Table 2

Comparison of stable and unstable party systems (Kolmogorov-Smirnov test)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Stable</th>
<th>Unstable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A lot</td>
<td>18 / 5%</td>
<td>22 / 3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some</td>
<td>90 / 23%</td>
<td>128 / 18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A little</td>
<td>128 / 33%</td>
<td>200 / 27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>151 / 39%</td>
<td>379 / 52%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Stable systems and systemic variables

Several models have been developed to study political parties and their relationship with wider society, including Neumann's 'mass party' (1956), Kirchheimer's 'catch-all party' (1966), Panebianco's 'electoral-professional party' as opposed to those he describes as 'mass bureaucratic' ones (1988), and Katz and Mair's 'cartel party' (1995), but the debate inspired by these models has remained circumscribed to the established democracies of Western Europe and North America. Not much has been said about the extent to which these models may explain the development of Latin American post-authoritarian political parties, beyond the implicit assumptions lying behind characterisations of campaigns as 'Americanised': if the game is Americanised so must the players be.

This paper seeks to examine the extent to which that assumption could be justified by looking at those party systems we have characterised as stable, and in particular by looking at the main actors in the Southern Cone's recent electoral campaigns. In order to explore the extent to which those actors have experienced a transition from mass bureaucratic to electoral-professional parties, the paper will consider two types of factors: systemic, priming variables, and external or exogenous variables. By systemic variables we mean those that prime the party, preparing or conditioning it for a change, such electoral systems, party organisation, objectives, membership. External variables as exogenous shocks or experiences that lead to changes enabling the party to adjust to different circumstances, such as electoral defeat, loss of office, national crisis, proscription, etc.

In Argentina, the two main traditional parties since the 1950s have been the Peronists or Partido Justicialista (PJ) and the Unión Cívica Radical (Civic Radical Union - UCR), both having developed catch-all characteristics in a society where Peronist populism first and then a succession of military governments made it difficult for voters to place themselves within a political scale. As Table 3 shows, practically half of those Latinobarómetro polled in Argentina before the 1999 elections placed themselves precisely at the centre of the political of the political spectrum, compared with 24 per cent for the whole of Latin America.

Many Argentine voters may have little difficulty with identifying themselves as PJ or UCR supporters, but that does not amount to an specific left-right identification since
both parties are broad organisations with their own internal political scale. The strength of their membership can be seen from the number of voters who have registered as party members with the Electoral Service: 18 per cent of the 21.5 million voters registered in 1993 also declared PJ membership, as opposed to 13.2 per cent who registered as UCR members, and 7.2 per cent who declared membership of other parties. By comparison, parties in Chile have memberships that never exceed 1.5 per cent of the registered voters.

Table 3

Political scale (in percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Argentina</th>
<th>Chile</th>
<th>Uruguay</th>
<th>Latin America</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Left</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>N</td>
<td>951</td>
<td>955</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>5.71</td>
<td>4.95</td>
<td>5.74</td>
<td>5.58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Question: “In politics, people speak of ‘left’ and ‘right’. On a scale where 0 is left and 10 is right, where would you place yourself?”


The early 1990s found both PJ and UCR showing characteristics of the mass bureaucratic model: they had a wide territorial base with an organisation that spread across the country and branches in every town, they had a central bureaucracy, tried to appeal to wide spectrum of social strata and the leading members of internal groups or factions led the party.

5 See Jones, Mark P. ‘Evaluating Argentina’s democracy’, in Scott Mainwaring and Matthew Soberg Shugart, *op. cit.*, pp. 273-274. These figures are from 1993, and as such they must be treated with some caution; they are often criticised by those who claim that party membership has declined and that in 1993 some voters were still unwilling to declare their party allegiance for fear of a return to a military dictatorship. They are, however, still used to calculate state funding for political parties.
Frepaso (*Frente País Solidario*) emerged in the early 1990s as a third force, and by 1995 its presidential candidate managed to come second to President Carlos Menem, the PJ incumbent, handsomely beating into third place an UCR still weakened by the memories of their 1983-89 troubled Alfonsín administration. It was, and remains, a very diverse coalition of human rights groups born from the struggle against the military regime, New Left groups, Socialists, disillusioned Peronists and left-wing Catholics.

The political success of 1995, however, was promptly eroded as the UCR recovered its strength and Frepaso settled into a third-force role. The left in Argentina remains a far less attractive option than in the other Southern Cone countries or in Latin America as a whole; table 3 shows that only 15 per cent of the voters polled in 1998 placed themselves in the left or centre-left, as compared to 33 per cent in Chile, 26 per cent in Uruguay and 28 per cent in the full Latin American sample. This was also demonstrated in the 1999 elections when the *Alianza* ticket (UCR President, Frepaso Vice-President) won the presidential elections by a margin of 10 percentage points, but at the parliamentary and gubernatorial polls the UCR won six governorships, 20 senators and 86 members of the Chamber of Deputies, as compared to Frepaso's one senator, 38 deputies and a failure to win any governorships (including the emblematic one of Buenos Aires province).

In Chile, by comparison, a binomial electoral system that tends to reward the two highest pluralities in parliamentary elections has encouraged the formation of two multi-party coalitions, whilst simultaneously preventing the emergence of any third force significant enough to reach parliamentary representation. The 1999 elections were a confrontation between two broad coalitions: the *Concertación*, the centre-left coalition in office since 1990 bringing together the Christian Democratic Party (PDC), Radical Social Democratic Party (PRSD), Party for Democracy (PPD), Socialist Party (PS), and the small Liberal Party; and the right-wing *Alianza por Chile* (Alliance for Chile) formed by the extreme right-wing Independent Democratic Union (UDI) and the more moderate National Renewal (RN). These groupings represent different ideological standpoints, but the parties integrating them also show different organisational patterns.

The Christian Democrats emerged from the military dictatorship strengthened by the central role it played in the protests against the Pinochet regime since 1983; this was further enhanced by having Christian Democrats elected as Presidents at the first two post-Pinochet elections, Patricio Aylwin in 1989 and Eduardo Frei Jr. in 1993. Although the presidentialist nature of the Chilean political system ensured that both

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6 Parliamentary constituencies - both at the Senate and Chamber of Deputies levels - elect two seats, thus encouraging the formation of electoral alliances. The system favours those getting the second highest plurality, since the list coming first would have to double the votes of the runner-up list to get both seats.

7 Its full name is *Concertación de Partidos por la Democracia*, hailing back to its origins as *Concertación de Partidos por el No* at the 1988 plebiscite. At present, normally referred to as *Concertación*.

8 There were also four other minor forces presenting candidates, and ranging from right-wing Pinochet loyalists to environmentalists and the Communist Party.
Aylwin and Frei Jr. were able to govern fairly independently from the PDC, the party did play a central, quasi-hegemonic role within the government coalition.

The PS also came out strengthened from the period of military rule, having managed to re-unite after the fissiparous process it underwent after the 1973 coup and to incorporate other left-wing groups such as MAPU and the Christian Left. It operates in close proximity to the PPD, a party created in 1987 to contest elections without compromising the PS's rejection of Pinochet's 1980 Constitution. Although originally created as an instrumental party allowing dual membership PS-PPD, the PPD rapidly developed its own leadership and grassroots support, appealing to a less ideologically committed sector of the centre-left, particularly to those who had become politically active during the anti-Pinochet protests of the 1983-89 period. By 1997 dual membership was no longer allowed and whilst relations between PS and PPD remain generally close both at the national and local levels, they often clash either due to policy differences or to the assertion of their separate identities and clientelistic demands.

The PRSD is the successor of the Radical Party (PR), a traditional party born in the 19th century from the urban petty bourgeoisie and a key political actor in the 1940s and 1950s. Closely linked to white-collar unions, the state bureaucracy and the freemasonry, the PR was firmly opposed to the Catholic church's influence in fields such as education and family law. After a series of divisions into several Social Democratic groups, the 1980s' protests against the military government also facilitated their reunification as PRSD.

Whilst the PDC, PS and PRSD derive from the pre-Pinochet mass-party system, their organisation - as well as that of the PPD - is largely the one they acquired in the late 1980s. They have a grassroots membership and are organised at the local level in branches that are active in electoral campaigns, seek to make their municipal councillors and parliamentarians accountable, and elect representatives to regional and national instances. The national leadership is accountable to policy-making collegiate bodies, and aims to address both party members and the broad sectors of the electorate the party seeks to represent. In practice, accountability is limited and decision making is largely top-down, but leaders have to rely on grassroots support in the frequent disputes of internal factions.

These organisational patterns are to some extent facilitated, and even conditioned, by the nature of Concertación as a governing coalition, formed by parties that from the municipal to the national level need to recruit loyal bureaucrats and to defend - rather than to debate - government policies. More than a decade of incumbency also facilitate the development of clientelistic relations with the grassroots membership. Claims to represent specific socio-economic strata - mainly made by the PS, and to a lesser extent by the PRSD - were gradually abandoned in the early 1990s, and by the 1999 elections all the Concertación parties stressed inclusiveness and broad support for their policies.
The Alianza por Chile\(^9\) was also formed at the end of the dictatorship, by two groups seeking to form an administration that would continue the policies of the military regime, the right-wing UDI and the more moderate RN. They have remained united as the main opposition force and faced all parliamentary and presidential polls in an electoral pact, despite competing for hegemony.

Although UDI and RN have some differences in terms of policies and style, what mainly differentiates them - besides personalities - is their position with regard to the Pinochet regime and its legacies. UDI is a populist right-wing party, that makes strong profession of doctrinaire Catholicism and advocates market-centred, neoliberal policies. Its leadership consist mainly of civilians who held government posts under Pinochet and the party aims to represent the sectors that supported the Pinochet regime, both low income groups (the unemployed, self-employed, and those working in the informal economy) and higher income groups that benefited from that regime's policies. It has strongly defended the legacies of the military dictatorship, including those elements of the 1980 Constitution that give the armed forces a major say in political life and enable them to constrain the government\(^10\).

A more moderate approach is the one of RN, a secular, centre-right party that seeks to represent the middle class and avoids identification with the human rights violations and other abuses of the Pinochet regime, whilst supporting a continuation of the economic policies the latter applied in the late 1980s. Its leadership has been willing to negotiate constitutional reforms, as well as to discuss legislation on divorce and abortion.

Both RN and UDI try to compete with Christian Democrats, the former by aiming for the voters who identify with the centre of the political spectrum and the latter by appealing to Catholics. They do not present, though, major ideological differences, competing for electoral support with claims of efficiency and managerial skills. Although both parties have grassroots supporters, they have little or no vertical organisation.

Gradually, since 1989, RN and UDI have developed several of the characteristics found in Panebianco's model of the 'electoral-professional' party. The party professionals play a central role in campaigns; the leadership and the public representatives of the party are dominant in communications processes operated almost exclusively through the mass media, particularly television. Party finance comes largely from interest groups, hence they do not rely on party members for finance. Both RN and UDI are primarily concerned with appealing to an electorate they perceived as increasingly fragmented. Vertical links of accountability are weak so that the leadership is relatively unconstrained by party members. Their structure consists mainly of a national leadership - largely a parliamentary one - that

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\(^9\) The electoral pact of RN and UDI was originally called Democracia y Progreso at the 1989 presidential and parliamentary elections and subsequently became Alianza por Chile. It will be referred to as Alianza.

\(^10\) Those are particularly the direct funding of the armed forces from 10 per cent of the state income derived from copper exports, the inamovility of the commanders-in-chief of the army, navy, air force, and the carabineros police, the role of a National Security Council where the President can be out-voted by those commanders-in-chief, and the presence in Senate of a number of appointed Senators (including Pinochet himself) that have given Alianza a built-in majority and prevented constitutional reform.
concentrates on expressing their agreed positions through the media and Parliament; at the local level the contact is mainly an electoral one, largely relying on the leadership's links with local parliamentarians and bosses.

Campaigning as an intervening variable

Comparative work on electoral campaigning makes just passing references to Latin America, concluding that there has been an 'Americanisation' of campaigns in the new democracies south of the Río Bravo (Angell, Kinzo and Urbaneja, 1992; Farrell, 1996). Undoubtedly, there has been a major change in the techniques used, but it is a moot point whether that change has been a technological one as implied in an alleged Americanisation of campaigning. If technology consists of a tool level and an organisational level, this paper argues that the tools now used include those characteristic of professionalised campaigning, but within an organisational context different from that associated with that stage in Western Europe, the US or Canada.

Prior to the 1999 campaigns in the Southern Cone, Chile's electoral results and opinion polls had given some indication that, past the excitement of the 1989 return to electoral democracy, voters were becoming affected by the apathy associated with the electorates of post-industrial democracies; at the 1997 parliamentary elections nearly 18 per cent of Chilean voters cast blank votes, spoilt their ballots or abstained (in a system where voting is compulsory) and opinion polls showed that more than 80 per cent of voters sampled had not participated in the campaign beyond watching it on television.

However, the 1999 elections in Argentina, Chile and Uruguay did not provide evidence of apathy. At least in Chile and Uruguay – and to a lesser degree in Argentina – the campaigns were characterised by high levels of contestation and participation.

In the case of Chile, the two main coalitions chose radically different methods to nominate their candidates and to face the preliminary stage of the campaign (May-October 1999). Concertación had a difficult task in getting its four main partners to agree on a nomination, particularly since the two previous presidential elections (1989 and 1993) had been won with PDC candidates and now PS and PPD claimed their rights. Following the precedent set in 1993, the Concertación held a primary open to all voters, not only to the much depleted ranks of party members. This was expected to whip up support for their nominee as well as to demonstrate the transparency of the process.

The May 1999 primary confronted a PDC nominee, Andrés Zaldívar, with one jointly proposed by the PS and PPD, Ricardo Lagos. After a bitter campaign that mobilised almost 1.4 million people to vote, Lagos won the nomination by a very large margin, 71.3 to 28.7 per cent.

11 In Uruguay, the rate of electoral participation was of 91.8 per cent of those registered to vote. See Espíndola, R 'No change in Uruguay: the 1999 presidential and parliamentary elections', Electoral Studies, 2001, forthcoming.

12 The membership of the largest political party, the PDC, reaches some 120,000 members, for an electorate that exceeds 8 million voters.
However, the primary had a perverse effect, not anticipated by the *Concertación* leadership. The bitterly fought campaign and Zaldívar’s massive defeat left a deep resentment amongst PDC members, described at the time as a sense of bereavement and it took several months before they would join the Lagos campaign. This shows the difficulties posed by primaries, in which party structures are by-passed and voters are left with the media as their main intermediary and the main arena for public debate (Patterson, 1994: 182-191). Meanwhile, the *Alianza* had conducted their nomination process by negotiation between the leaderships of UDI and RN, having agreed by April on their candidate: Joaquín Lavín, the major of an affluent suburb of Santiago.

Similar phenomena occurred in Uruguay, where the centre-left *Encuentro Progresista-Frente Amplio* was badly split at the primaries by the choice between centrist Senator Danilo Astori and the left-wing mayor of Montevideo, Tabaré Vázquez. After the latter’s decisive victory at the primaries, where he got 82.4 per cent of the vote, the bitterness derived from the primaries led Vázquez to refuse to have Astori as Vice-presidential candidate and to nominate Christian Democratic leader Rodolfo Nin as his running mate. Meanwhile, the ruling *Partido Colorado* had no difficulty in using the primaries to its advantage, with rival factions rallying around candidate Jorge Batlle after the primaries.

The cases of Chile and Uruguay showed the differences between primaries taking place within a party, where temporarily-formed factions find it possible after the primaries to coalesce behind the party’s nominated candidate, and the same process taking place within a coalition of established parties, with ideological and historical rivalries.

Chile's 1999 campaign could hardly have been called 'Americanised', since both coalitions fought hard for the traditional ground by which campaigning success has been measured in Chile since the 1950s: the streets. All the techniques that characterise professionalised campaigning in the US and Western Europe were there (even the consultants were the same), but the main asset remained the ability to field party activists or 'volunteers', to hold mass rallies and to cover every wall, lamp, and any bit of public space with posters or just plain paintings of the candidates' names. The "grassroots gladiators" that Putnam misses in US campaigns (Putnam, 2000: 37) remain central to campaigns in the Southern Cone.

Candidates may engage in media-staged debates, but nothing has replaced the attraction of the mass rally or the razzmatazz of the candidates' visits to villages or to populous neighbourhoods. The campaign becomes the only game in town in a very literal sense, with all forms of commercial marketing using electoral themes and showing their centrality to social life.

This is particularly the case in Chile, the only Latin American country without a Carnival, where campaign activities are the closest thing to a street party most people experience. At the 1999 campaign, Lavín - the centre-right *Alianza* candidate - avoided public debates, conceding only one TV confrontation with Lagos. Instead, from June 1999 onwards he constantly toured the provinces. Each visit to a village was preceded by massive preparatory work by an advance group of activists and music bands, enabling the candidate’s arrival to become a carnival, all of it professionally videoed and photographed to be then provided free-of-cost to the media. The advance
party would have collected a list of the village’s demands and grievances, enabling Lavin to make specific reference to them in a brief speech and to sign an ‘agreement’ with the village, promising to meet those demands once elected. In some villages, considered to be emblematic of economic activities or cultural traditions (fishing, mining villages or Amerindian communities) Lavín would spend the night at the home of a local low-income family and even dress in local costume, all of it faithfully reported by TV news bulletins grateful for the ‘colour’ provided.

In the dichotomy between professionalised and personnel-intensive campaigns, there is no doubt that Alianza's was the former. It was highly personalised, run by political consultants, making extensive use of telemarketing, websites, opinion polls and focus groups, and successfully seeking to control media coverage. But to see that campaign as purely capital-intensive would be a mistake. Alianza had learnt from previous experiences, when Concertación activists had controlled the streets. This time Alianza fought also on that ground, but unable to mobilise party activists it relied on large numbers of paid young ‘volunteers’ who accompanied the candidate on his constant tours, and stood at street junctions in city centres waving Alianza’s blue flags and giving leaflets to drivers and pedestrians, whilst bouncers were paid to keep an eye on the propaganda painted on walls or placed by the side of busy roads. The door-to-door canvassing traditional of Concertación campaigns was also emulated by paid ‘volunteers’ who visited low-income neighbourhoods, knocking at doors to offer “a present from Lavin”, or provided free kit for the local football team.

On the other hand, the centre-left Concertación's campaign style stressed door-to-door canvassing, motorcades, and neighbourhood meetings that combined carnival style bands, performances by local artistes, games for children, chess competitions, and free services provided by Concertación supporters, from legal, medical and social work advice, to hairdressing and fortune-telling. In other words, Concertación unleashed its infantry.

But the difficulty experienced with bringing the sore Christian Democrats on board meant that Concertación had a late start and found it difficult to regain the ground lost to the Lavín campaign, particularly in terms of the candidate’s image. Lagos is a man in his late 60s, a traditional politician, brilliant as an orator, but uncomfortable without coat and tie and unable to develop a touchy-feely style. He had to face not only a younger opponent, but also one enjoying the support of all main newspapers and having huge financial resources.

Whilst the Lavín campaign was by far the most professionalised and the one making most effective use of political marketing, both main candidates made full use of experts, advisors, TV spots, focus groups, and every political marketing tools. In the Chile legislation limits TV electoral advertising to two daily free spots simultaneously broadcast by all stations. No such restraint existed in Argentina, where marketing techniques were also much used at the 1999 presidential and parliamentary campaigns. In the Argentine case the two main contenders for the presidency were the incumbent Peronists, represented by Eduardo Duhalde, and Alianza por la Justicia, el Trabajo y

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13 These were mainly unemployed young people. Those we interviewed at a Santiago crossroads claimed to receive US$10 a day plus a packed lunch, to wear the Alianza blue t-shirts, wave flags, hand leaflets to car drivers, and to look neat and cheerful. In Concepción, young left-wing students confessed with some embarrassment to supplement their income by guarding Alianza publicity by night
Both government and opposition candidates had highly professionalised campaigns. Just as in the Chilean case, this emphasis on political marketing went hand-in-hand with a retention of the mass rally and the candidates’ touring of provincial villages. Personnel-intensive campaigning, however, was better undertaken by the parties with a territorial network across the country, namely the Peronists and UCR, rather than Frepaso, whose main strength was amongst intellectuals, students and the professional middle class.

Top international political consultants were engaged by De la Rúa and Duhalde, the former hiring Dick Morris and the latter being advised first by James Carville and then by the Brazilian Duda Mendonça. However, and like in Chile - it was the opposition candidate the one making the most effective use of political marketing and conducting the most professionalised campaign; besides Morris, Alianza had a large team of political marketers as well as top image specialists such as Sebastián Guerrini.

A similar use of foreign political consultants and local marketers was observed in the Chilean campaigns. Lavín, the centre-right candidate, was advised by Puerto Rico-based consultant Bruno Haring, and his campaign staff included top local pollsters. The centre-left Concertación had access to several foreign political consultants, including Jacques Séguéla, Éric Flimon and German advisors linked to CDU/CSU; this, however, had a limited value, since the advice from the French consultants hardly ever coincided with that coming from their German colleagues.

In both countries large sums of money were spent in campaigns; like in most of Latin America, neither in Chile nor in Argentina there is any legislation regulating electoral expenditure or requiring any form of transparency in campaign funding. There were, however, substantial differences in the resources available to parties and candidates. In Argentina, the state provides funding for parties, based on their prior electoral results; in 1999 the Alianza received US$23.3 million from the state and the PJ got US$18.5 million, but sources at both campaign headquarters agreed that those funds only covered a small proportion of their costs. The Argentine media were also evenly divided, with the two main media groups supporting different candidates. In Chile, the field was anything but level. The candidate of the right and centre-right, Lavín, had access to massive funding and media support, with both main media groups behind him. Weeks before the first round local newspapers claimed that the Lavín campaign had a cost of US$52 million and his representatives did not deny the figure; after the second round, analysts estimated the total cost of Lavín's campaign at nearly US$120 million. The cost of the Lagos campaign had been originally expected to reach no higher than a comparatively modest US$9 million, but a leading member of Concertación estimated expenditure to have reached US$40 million by the second electoral round.

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15 La Nación, 8 September 1999.
16 That was the figure given by the leader of the Socialist deputies, Francisco Encina, at a seminar held at the University of Salamanca, 1-2 June 2000.
Impact of new campaigning techniques

The Southern Cone 1999 campaigns demonstrated a growing presence of professionalised campaigning techniques. Something similar was observed in other Latin American cases, where post-modern techniques played an even greater role in the 2000 elections in Mexico, Peru and Venezuela, as they are indeed doing in the present Peruvian campaign. An important difference in that in the Southern Cone the use of professionalised techniques went alongside a continuous reliance on personnel-intensive techniques, to the point that in Chile the right-wing Alianza, short of an infantry of its own, hired one. Whilst there is no doubt that the availability and use of professionalised techniques affect political parties, the parties' organisation and relations with society can moderate that effect.

In terms of organisation and societal role, the Latin American parties that have emerged or re-emerged since the 1980s increasingly show electoral-professional characteristics, but in several cases that has been accompanied by a re-assertion of traditional elements closer to the mass or catch-all models. Particularly in the comparatively more stable politics of the Southern Cone, centre and centre-left parties (UCR in Argentina, PDC, PPD and PS in Chile, and Frente Amplio in Uruguay) have adopted some of the post-modern, capital intensive techniques that characterise electoral-professional parties when it comes to electoral campaigning, whilst retaining strong elements of personnel-intensive, territorial organisation.

The presence of modern techniques of political marketing, by itself does not demonstrate a professionalisation of campaigning. Although the main Argentine and Chilean coalitions made extensive use of political marketing, their campaigns were very different in terms of management, decision-making processes and the use of experts, and that difference was particularly noticeable between incumbent and opposition parties.

In Chile, the opposition parties forming the Alianza took a back seat during the campaign and did not openly participate in its management. Their national leaders were not on stage when Lavín appeared and even the UDI’s national headquarters in Santiago showed no visible sign of electoral activity. The campaign and the candidate distanced themselves from the Alianza parties, thus re-affirming Lavín’s apolitical image.

But that was also important in terms of technocratic decision-making, leaving decisions in the hands of experts. Lavín’s campaign team consisted of young professionals in their 30s or early 40s, without any formal link with the parties’ structure. Behind those young technocrats whose main asset was their closeness to Lavín, there was a team of political marketing experts led by Bruno Haring, with extensive experience of US electoral campaigning. The experts’ advice was promptly implemented since it did not have to compete with, or be processed through, political parties’ structures.

Paradoxically, a somewhat similar situation developed in the campaign of Argentina's centre-left opposition coalition, also called Alianza (but poles apart from their Chilean namesakes). The situation was not quite the same, since Argentine voters were also electing provincial governors and members of the federal Congress, a process in which
local parties had a major say. But at the level of the presidential campaign, management was directly in the hands of the candidate, De la Rúa, who run it on the advice of Dick Morris and a large team of political consultants. Just as in the case of Lavín across the Andes, much of the decision-making process was not in the hands of party leaders, but under the control of a small group of young technocrats led by De la Rúa's son, Antonio, and locally known as the 'sushi group'\textsuperscript{17}.

The Chilean centre-left campaign, on the contrary, had decision-making totally in the hands of political leaders and cadres from the Concertación parties, with the candidate only intervening to arbiter on the frequent disputes that emerged. The formal direction of the campaign was in the hands of prominent Christian Democrats, but de facto management was firmly controlled by PS and PPD leaders personally close to Lagos. This campaign had access to sophisticated data and analysis from several think-tanks that provided daily forecasts of potential conflicts to affect the government and therefore the campaign, analyses of rival campaigns, as well as results from surveys and focus groups.

But decisions were taken by a political committee representing the Concertación parties. Within that context, expert advice played a marginal role. That is clearly demonstrated in Jacques Séguéla's bitter complaints about his advice being ignored by Lagos's campaign team, describing key team members as "Judas", "consultant de pacotille", "imbu de lui-même", "à la solde des grands groups de presse locaux", "conseillers de fortune qui profitent du trouble du moment"\textsuperscript{18}. Obviously after having advised Mitterrand and Jospin in France, Barak in Israel, Kwasniewski in Poland and several others, he objected to being marginalised in Chile by the political cadres making campaign decisions.

Whilst somewhat similar situations arose in the campaign of Argentina's government party, there the situation was made certainly worse by the sharp conflict between the candidate and President Menem, who opposed the Duhalde's candidacy and focused on preparing his own return in 2003. The campaign, hence, was not led by one political team, but split between two\textsuperscript{19}. Political consultant James Carville had impressed Duhalde with his work for President Clinton's campaigns, and he did try to impress on the candidate the need to conduct the campaign with independence from Menem-dominated PJ structures. After a while, Carville could not take any longer a campaign that had to fight on two fronts and he left in August 1999, claiming that the candidate was "listening to too many bells at the same time"\textsuperscript{20}.

The comparison of the centre-left campaigns in Chile and Argentina, though, shows different effects the use of professionalised techniques can have on political parties and on the governments of new democracies. In Chile, the control the Concertación parties exercised over the campaign meant that most of them were strengthened by the process\textsuperscript{21} and have been able to exercise considerable influence in the government.

\textsuperscript{17} Allegedly because of their taste for Japanese food.
\textsuperscript{18} Séguéla, Jacques, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 56-57.
\textsuperscript{19} Menem reportedly showed his contempt for Duhalde by telling his lieutenants: "Give him whatever he wants, he is going to lose anyway", \textit{La Nación}, 7 September 1999, (my translation).
\textsuperscript{20} See \textit{Clarín}, 17 August 1999.
\textsuperscript{21} It could be argued that by the time the second electoral round took place in January 2000, the PDC was weaker than a year earlier, before the primaries and when a PDC President was in office, but that
Despite the presidentialist nature of the Chilean regime, government ministers on the whole toe their parties' line, or at least account for their positions to their parties when they are seen to deviate. The Argentine case is quite different. President De la Rúa rules with the support of the *sushi group* that conducted his campaign, within a few months after been elected parted company with his Vice-President and Frepaso leader, and by March 2001 had adopted policies and a cabinet that largely ignore his own UCR and left economic policies in the hands of the Domingo Cavallo, the presidential candidate presented in 1999 by the third-force, centre right *Acción por la República*.

**External variables**

Parties have reacted differently to changes in their opponents' campaigning and to the availability of new political marketing techniques. The experience of the Southern Cone indicates that different reactions have been to a certain degree related to internal factors, such as the party's history and ideology, but that a deciding element have been external events or shocks that have affected the party or the party system. Several external variables can be identified in these cases: 1) proscription during military dictatorships; 2) economic crises; 3) external support for democratisation; 4) electoral defeat and loss of office.

**Proscription during military dictatorships.** The military dictatorships that plagued Latin America during the 1970s and 1980s meant proscription or at least a severe restriction in the activities of political parties, and in any case long periods without elections. In all Southern Cone cases, this was accompanied by extreme repression including the imprisonment and execution of left-wing and human rights activists, appropriation or confiscation of party property, and the dismantling of party activities, networks and institutional life. Whilst parties managed to survive such shocks either by going underground or just by going into different forms of hibernation, long periods of socialisation by the military authorities - coupled, in the case of Argentina, with war and military defeat - had a profound intergenerational effect. The generations that grew up under military rule had no experience of elections and party activities and were socialised not to trust politicians; whilst the same generation was frequently active in seeking the overthrow of military dictatorships, recent surveys show that those aged 25-40 are more likely not to trust political parties than older generations that had experienced politics in the 1960s and 1970s, or the younger generation that grew up under democratic rule.

When parties emerged from those periods of dictatorship and hibernation, they had to re-adjust to new circumstances. In most cases, and particularly in the left and centre-left, this led to an abandonment of the mass party model and their claims to represent particular sectors of society. Instead, parties adopted the organisational patterns of catch-all parties, became inclusive and addressed broad sectors of the electorate. They also had to adjust to the generational gap, as their leadership often still reflected the one they had prior to the period of military rule; as Hite has shown, present leaders of

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was a result from the loss of the primaries rather than the campaign. After the April primaries, opinion polls showed a substantial drop in support for the PDC, but that drop was reduced as the campaign moved closer to the December-January electoral rounds. A year later, by January 2001 the PDC had recovered most of the lost ground in terms of support and was playing a strong role in the Lagos government.
centre-left parties were already leading figures in the early 1970s. Military regimes did not affect only the left and centre-left, they also did away with the traditional parties of the right, unable to survive the clash between their parliamentary traditions and brutal regimes installed to defend the same values and class interests the right claimed to represent. Particularly in the case of Chile, that led to the development of new political parties and organisations, initially seeking to channel civilian support for the military regime and later on to defend its economic policies.

**Economic crises.** In Argentina, the first civilian administration elected after the military regime, the government led by UCR leader Raúl Alfonsín, collapsed ignominiously in 1989, unable to control a massive economic crisis and rampant hyperinflation, having to handover the presidency to the newly-elected Carlos Menem earlier than constitutionally anticipated. Although the causes for the crisis were largely outside Alfonsín’s control and had more to do with the global economy and with the policies of the military regime (including their costly attempt to capture and retain the Falklands/Malvinas), this failure of the a civilian administration to handle an economic crisis had a substantial effect on voters' perceptions. As Table 4 shows,

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<td>A lot</td>
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<td>DK</td>
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<td>1264</td>
<td>1200</td>
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Source: *Latinobarómetro*, 1998

whilst a sector of the Southern Cone and Latin American electorates do not trust political parties, by 1999 such lack of trust was particularly marked in Argentina, where the majority of the *Latinobarómetro* respondents did not trust parties as compared with Chile, Uruguay and the whole of Latin America, where most respondents expressed some degree of trust in them.

This led to the emergence of new groups, both in the left (Frepaso) and the centre-right (*Acción por la República*). But it also led to major changes within UCR, which

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added to their electoral defeat in 1995, contributed to their adoption of professionalised campaigning in 1999.

**External support for democratisation.** By the early 1980s West European and North American governments, government agencies and major foundations began to take an active role in the promotion of a return to democracy in Latin America, and consequently in bringing military dictatorships to an end. In the US, the government launched in 1982 the Democracy Programme that the following year became the National Endowment for Democracy as an independent organisation funded by the government, with annual budgets that ranged from US$15 million to US$21 million in the 1983-88 period; out of those budgets, Latin American programmes received between US$4 million and US$6 million a year. By comparison, by 1989 just one West German foundation, the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, was spending US$23 million in its Latin American and Caribbean programmes.

In a few cases external actors went as far as to provide financial support to political parties and their leaders, but those were the exceptions rather than the rule. Some of the financial support, mainly from foundations, went to fund research programmes and centres, with the purpose of providing employment to academics and political leaders who found themselves cut off from their normal jobs by the military authorities. But a good deal of the external assistance was provided as training for party cadres and campaign organisers, as well as in the form of political consultants and electoral experts sent as campaign advisers.

Training and the provision of advisers were obvious forms of technology transfers, as the training and advice reflected the organisational and technical levels prevailing in the donor country. Thus, the professional campaigning techniques that prevailed in the US and Western Europe in the 1980s were transferred to political parties emerging from periods of authoritarian repression, as these underwent their re-organisation as catch-all parties. Nor surprisingly, the result was a combination of the traditional pre-modern campaigning parties had used in the 1960s, prior to their forced hibernation, with the modern techniques prevailing in local marketing and the professionalised campaigning favoured at donor countries.

**Electoral defeat and loss of office.** Some twenty years ago Panebianco had already noted, whilst discussing the German CDU of the early 1970s, that "expulsion from central power was the chief catalyst of change". Undoubtedly that has been a main cause for the professionalisation of campaigning in the Southern Cone parties, as demonstrated by UCR in Argentina, and UDI and RN in Chile; just as prolonged incumbency has reinforced the retention of modern and pre-modern forms of campaigning in the parties of the Chilean Concertación (in government since 1990) and in the Argentine PJ (1989-1999).

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24 Pinto-Duschinsky, Michael 'International political finance: the Konrad Adenauer foundation and Latin America' in Laurence Whitehead, *op.cit.*, p.250.
For UDI and RN the adoption of professionalised campaigning came as a natural development. Most of their leaders had emerged during the Pinochet dictatorship, as part of the neo-liberal civilian technocrats that supported the regime and occupied government posts; only few exceptions hailed from the pre-1973 political parties. Important priming variables were their professional training (mainly in economics, business studies and engineering) or business experience that led them to rely on marketing, and their electoral experience, which until 1989 consisted of applying marketing principles to putting forward the government side at the 1980 and 1988 plebiscites. The parties themselves developed during the 1980s and, not having to campaign for office until 1989, when they had to face elections from that year onwards they naturally exhibited electoral-professional characteristics. Their leadership is highly personalised and consists of public representatives, well-known figures who communicated through the media with the party and with the sector of the electorate whose opinion they claim to represent. The parties themselves have a weak vertical structure, relying locally on notables and political bosses rather than on a grassroots membership; funding comes from interest groups, firms and wealthy supporters in a country where there is no control or limit to political donations.

Whilst the UDI and RN show such characteristics, that does not mean that their conversion to professionalised campaigning is total. As already indicated, successive electoral defeats UDI and RN have led to modify their professionalised campaigning and to adopt commercialised versions of personnel-intensive techniques to compete with the ruling centre-left parties.

Another case where electoral defeat and loss of office has led to an adoption of professionalised campaigning, but without that leading to a professionalisation of the party, is the one of the Argentine UCR. After having failed to control hyperinflation in 1989, and having been soundly defeated by the Peronists at that year’s elections, the UCR went on to lose badly at the 1995 presidential elections, with 17 per cent of the votes to 49.9 per cent received by Menem, the PJ’s candidate. After 1995, the UCR elected several modernisers to its leadership and efficiently adopted some elements of professionalised campaigning. When the party faced the 1999 elections, the professionalisation of its campaign was evident, but that was particularly reflected in the staff running the presidential campaign, not in the local campaigns for provincial governors and parliamentarians, where many of the traditional techniques continued effectively to be used. The presidential campaign was run by a professional staff directly responsible to the presidential and vice-presidential candidates, with relatively little control of either the UCR or its coalition partner, Frepaso. Once the UCR candidate De la Rúa was elected President, many of those campaign staff members moved on to government posts, leaving the party’s organisation and style relatively unaffected.

Conclusion

The 1999 campaigns in the Southern Cone show a significant presence of professional campaigning, much of which has been introduced as a consequence of shocks or

26 The defeatist state of mind of the UCR at that time can be exemplified by the fact that some of the party's leading figures referred to their presidential candidate, as "a candidate for a defeat".
events that were largely external to political parties. All the main political parties
campaigned with political marketing techniques including websites, direct mailing and
telephone banks, shaping policies, strategies and even the candidates' images with the
guidance of focus groups and opinion polls. However, at the same time they combined
that with traditional, personnel-intensive techniques.

Campaign professionalisation had a substantial effect on some parties that adopted
almost archetypal electoral-professional organisations and whose campaigns were
fully run by professionals. Others, however, adopted some of the techniques but kept
the campaign under political control, retaining their own mass-bureaucratic
characteristics. The 1999 Southern Cone campaigns also showed that
professionalisation is not a unilinear process: just as all parties have adopted it to
different degrees and at different levels of proximity to their leadership, some of the
most professionalised campaigns had to adopt personnel-intensive techniques or seek
commercial alternatives.

The Southern Cone experiences suggest that where there has been a combination of
professionalised and personnel-intensive campaign techniques and ruling political
parties have retained their territorially based, mass-bureaucratic characteristics, the
role of parties as anchors of democratic consolidation has been strengthened. On the
other hand, where that has not been the case and professionalised techniques have
been seen as paying off, the role of parties has been weakened; those new democracies
seem to be dragging their anchors.

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