

Mexico's 2003 Mid-Term Elections

Implications for the LIX Legislature and Party Consolidation

Conference Proceedings

An International Conference hosted by

The Mexican Center,
Teresa Lozano Long Institute of Latin American Studies,
College of Liberal Arts,
The University of Texas at Austin

September 15-16, 2003

The University of Texas at Austin

**The Mexican Center,
Teresa Lozano Long Institute of Latin American Studies,
College of Liberal Arts**

Presents an International Conference,
Monday–Tuesday 15-16th September

**“Mexico’s 2003 Mid-Term Elections:
Implications for the LIX Legislature and
Party Consolidation”**

Monday 15th September.

Welcome: *Dr Victoria Rodriguez* (Vice Provost & Dean of Graduate Studies).

Introduction: *Dr. Peter Ward*, Director of the Mexican Center

Conference Goals: *Dr. Kenneth Greene*, Department of Government

Session 1. The July 6 Elections.

What do they Mean for Democratic Consolidation?

Chair/Moderator: Peter Ward.

José Antonio Crespo (CIDE) “Paradojas de la Abstención”

Roderic A’i Camp (Claremont College) “Winding through the Democratic Forest: Where Are Mexican Voters Going?”

Alejandro Poiré (ITAM) “A non-majority mandate in Mexico’s 2003 election?”

Federico Estévez (ITAM) “The 2006 Presidential Horserace”

(Discussion recorder: Clarissa Pérez Armendariz, UT Govt. Dept.)

Session 2. Results: Spatial and Social Patterns of Voting.

The New Electoral Landscape

Chair/Moderator: Kenneth Greene

Victoria Rodríguez (UT-Austin) “The 2003 Elections: Where are the Women?”

Frederick Solt (Rice University) “The National Effects of Subnational Institutions in Mexico: The 2003 Elections”

Joseph Klesner (Kenyon College) “The Not-So-New Electoral Landscape Post-July 6”

Alejandro Moreno (ITAM). “The Mexican Voter”
Presented by Federico Estévez

(Discussion recorder: David Crow – UT Govt. Dept.)

Session 3. The LIX Legislature: Composition, Challenges & Leadership

Chair/Moderator: Alejandro Poiré (ITAM)

Jeff Weldon (ITAM) “Ideology and Voting Coalitions in the 59th Legislature”

Benito Nacif (CIDE) “What is Wrong with Deadlock?
Democracy and Divided Government in Mexico”

(Discussion recorder: Jorge Morales Barud LLILAS)

**Session 4. What Are We Looking [Out] For?
Legislative Politics over the Short and Medium Term.
A Round Table Discussion**

Moderator: Kenneth Greene

Participants:

- *José Antonio Crespo* (CIDE)
- *Jeff Weldon* (ITAM)
- *Benito Nacif* (CIDE)
- *Roderic Ai Camp* (Claremont College)
- *Alejandro Poiré* (ITAM)
- *Omar Bazan* (PRI)
- *Consul General Javier Alejo*

(Discussion recorder: Jorge Morales LLILAS)

Tuesday 16th September

Session 5. Whither the Parties? The July 6th Elections and their Implications for Party Consolidation and Performance.

Chair/Moderator: Benito Nacif

Kenneth Greene (UT-Austin) “Opposition Party Building and Party System Consolidation in Mexico”

David Shirk (University of San Diego) “The Party That Never Was:
The Pan in the 2003 Mid-Term Elections”

Joy Langston (CIDE) “The PRI after July 6, 2003”

José Antonio Crespo and *Kenneth Greene* “The PRD: Introductory Speculations”

(Discussion recorder: Fred Cady, Govt.)

Concluding Remarks. Kenneth Greene.

Conference Sponsors: The Advisory Council of the Mexican Center of LLILAS, The College of Liberal Arts, The

Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost, Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies, The LBJ School of Public Affairs, the Department of Government.

Opening and Welcoming Remarks

Peter M. Ward

Director, The Mexican Center, University of Texas at Austin.

Ladies and Gentlemen: It is my privilege on behalf of the Mexican Center of the Institute of Latin American Studies to welcome you all to the University of Texas at Austin. Thank you all for giving up two or three days of your lives from busy schedules in order to participate in this conference on “Mexico’s 2003 Mid-Term Elections: Implications for the LIX Legislature and Party Consolidation.” This is an extremely distinguished group of scholars and political analysts from Mexico and the United States -- indeed, as my colleague Wayne Cornelius at UCSD described us - this is the “A-team”. One or two obvious people are missing and couldn’t join us, namely Kate Bruhn who is in Brazil, Chappell Lawson whose teaching duties at MIT prevent him from attending, and Alejandro Moreno (ITAM) who joins us “remotely” with a set of remarks that will be presented by his colleague (Federico Estévez), and will also be included in the Conference *Memoria*. I know that we all are greatly looking forward to what promises to be both very important and a very interesting series of discussions by people who are in the forefront of analyzing Mexico’s democratic consolidation and the new-found dynamics between the branches of government as well as the race to Los Pinos in 2006.

This is the first major event in the *Mes de México* that the Mexican Center is organizing during the month of September 2003 and I would like to take this opportunity of thanking those who have made this conference – and the month’s activities -- possible. Specifically, I should like to thank those which have supported us financially and which are recognized on the conference program: The Advisory Council of the Mexican Center of LLILAS, The College of Liberal Arts, The Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost, Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies, The LBJ School of Public Affairs, and the Department of Government.

As many of you know, Latin American Studies is a priority program on this campus, so much so that President Larry Faulkner in his first year as president made the “Latin American Initiative” one of his principal initiatives. Latin American studies is certainly one of the crown jewels on this campus: with more than 150 faculty whose mainstream research and teaching activities focus on the region ranging from salt domes in petrochemical exploration to understanding of Mayan glyphs; the Benson Latin American Collection which is widely regarded as the premier Latin American studies collection in the world; the treasures of the Blanton Art Museum and of the Harry Ransom Center (which include the Borges papers); as well as the Teresa Lozano Long Institute of Latin American Studies which manages the largest undergraduate and graduate program on the country. And since 2002, we have the privilege of editing and producing the *Latin American Research Review* - the leading journal in the field. For further details about Latin American Studies at the University of Texas may I invite you read the special issue of the *Discovery Magazine* available at the Latin American Initiative (LAI) website <http://utexas.edu/lai>

In the past decade the Mexican Center has organized a number of seminar conferences on campus that have led to major research publications on Mexican Politics – some of which have included distinguished scholars present today. There included meetings on “Opposition” Governments; on Women in Mexican Political Life; New Federalism; Judicial reform, etc. Our students and faculty benefit greatly by having an opportunity to meet and exchange ideas with academic and political leaders such as you from Mexico and the US. We hope that, as before, this conference may also prove to be significant, as we move forward in analyzing the process of democratic change and strengthening in Mexico, and as we try to figure out the implications of the new legislative and gubernatorial landscape in light of the July 6 mid-term elections for Congress, and in some cases for state and local governments also. I am especially pleased that this conference should be lead by a new colleague to the University, Dr. Kenneth Greene in the Department of Government who joined us a year ago. I will not steal his thunder further, and leave him to outline the goals of this particular meeting in further detail.

Once again, welcome.

Conference Goals

Kenneth F. Greene

Department of Government, University of Texas at Austin.

I would like to welcome you to the conference on “Mexico’s 2003 Mid-Term Elections: Implications for the LIX Legislature and Party Consolidation.” We have a star-studded line-up of presenters, representing ITAM and CIDE in Mexico, the University of San Diego, the University of California, Santa Barbara, Rice University, Kenyon College, and of course UT-Austin.

We have divided the conference into five sessions over the course of a day and a half. Our topics include a discussion of the process and outcome of the mid-term elections, voting behavior in these elections, and the implications of the results for politics in the legislature as well as the vitality of the main political parties.

Mexico, as you all know, has gone through a two decade-long transition from a dominant party system to a multiparty competitive democracy. This change involved the development of free and fair elections, the construction of a multiparty system, the emergence of a more active congress, and the creation of a new civic consciousness around the vote.

As these exciting changes took place, analysts of Mexican politics, many of whom are in this room, invented new concepts and new methods for understanding Mexico’s process of change and the functioning of its new democracy.

Based on the remarkably fast development of a high-quality survey research industry, we know a lot about how citizens vote, why they choose the parties or candidates they do, and what factors cause them to change their vote from one party to another. We are even beginning to learn about the thorniest of issues – abstention. During the first and second sessions today we will hear comments from analysts whose continuing work on voting behavior has pushed the envelope on these issues.

Even during the long period of single party dominance, Mexico of course had elections. But they were marred by episodes of electoral fraud, bribing voters with gifts big and small, some level of coercion, and, importantly, huge campaign spending by the PRI where the opposition parties could not keep up. As a result of this history, one of the key elements of change in Mexico involved the development of free and fair elections. Did 2003 – the first national elections after the PRI lost the presidency in 2000 – represent a further advance in this process? How much remains to be done to ensure that elections are not only free, but also fair? During our first session today we will ask how far we have come and what is left to do.

Mexico, as you know, was a system in which the president enjoyed strong partisan control over the Congress. Since 1988, this imbalance began to change, but it was not until the PRI lost the presidency in 2000 that the Congress really had the opportunity to develop as a political force. Now that Congress is an important arena for political debate, how are the parties and their legislators interacting? Can we speak of real representation? What are the prospects for cross-aisle coalitions, and how do the dynamics of a three party congress affect such bargaining? We will discuss these issues in session 3 today with formal presentations and then in session 4 with a roundtable of experts.

The last major issue we will attack concerns the development of Mexico’s political parties. Have the formerly opposition PAN and PRD been able to consolidate and expand their support? Has the PRI been able to make the shift from being a dominant party intimately linked to the power of the president to a modern political party in the opposition? The stakes are high here. Durable links between parties and voters can enhance representation and the stability of democracy. Weak links potentially imperils democracy, leading to a chasm between voters and their representatives, essentially gutting competitive elections of much of their meaning. These issues will be taken up tomorrow morning.

When I mentioned this conference to a colleague on campus, he rolled his eyes at the idea of talking about mid-term elections. After all, it wasn’t a presidential election, and of course all the fireworks in Mexico happened in 2000, right? 2000 was certainly spectacular and worthy of international news, but 2003 is like the second act in a three act play – it’s when all the tough issues begin to get worked out. During the course of this conference we will learn about tough issues related to political representation, the prospects for quality legislation from the Congress, and the prospects for political stability.

It gives me great pleasure to introduce this conference to you. Now, let’s get going. Our first panel is “The July 6 Elections. What Does it Mean for Democratic Consolidation?” chaired by Peter Ward.

Session 1

The July 6 Elections

What Does it Mean for Democratic Consolidation?

Chair/Moderator: Peter Ward.

Presenters:

- *Alejandro Poiré* (ITAM)

“A non-majority mandate in Mexico’s 2003 election?”

- *Roderic A’i Camp* (Claremont College)

“Winding through the Democratic Forest:
Where are Mexican Voters Going?”

- *Federico Estévez* (ITAM)

“The 2006 Presidential Horserace”

- *José Antonio Crespo* (CIDE)

“Paradojas de la Abstención”

- Discussion recorder: Clarissa Pérez Armendariz, UT Govt. Dept.

A non-majority mandate in Mexico’s 2003 election?

Alejandro Poiré

Instituto Tecnológico Autónomo de México

Introduction

The 2003 congressional election in Mexico was mainly interpreted as a clear-cut mandate for consensual politics. Most political leaders reacted to the outcome by arguing that the electorate had decided to consolidate the tendency of vote fragmentation since the 1997 midterm, not giving any of the parties a majority, and forcing them to increase their efforts at consensus-building politics. While this reading was right on point, to the extent that Mexico’s mixed electoral system did produce a non-majority House, where a party different from the President’s holds a comfortable plurality, the implication that voters *want* divided government and fragmentation of power, I here show, is incorrect. More broadly, I raise the theoretical question of whether there are mass preferences for *consensual* or *majoritarian* political processes.

I present three groups of evidence. First is the *consensual* evidence, which highlights the substantial fragmentation of the vote at the national level. Second is the *majoritarian* aggregate evidence, which uses district-level results to illustrate the clear majorities that underlie the national vote. Finally, I present original data from a national post-electoral poll on Mexican preferences for a majority or non-majority Congress. I show convincingly that the fragmented national outcome is simply the result of a very proportional electoral system, and by no means due to voters’ non-*majoritarian* preferences.

The evidence behind the *consensual* argument: the nation-wide vote [\[1\]](#)

1. The largest party did not get a majority of the national vote:

- a. The winning coalition, including PRI plus the PVEM (Green Party) and as well as their 97-district *Alliance for All*, got 39% of the national vote.
2. The margin of victory to the second largest party was slim:
 - a. The PAN got 32.8% of the national vote, only 6.2% behind the PRI + PVEM.
3. The third party is pretty large:
 - a. The PRD got 18.9% of the national vote.
4. Electoral fragmentation is high:
 - a. The national effective number of parties, N , is 3.34.

The district-level data: finding vast majorities.

1. The district-level winner is much larger than the national one:
 - a. On average, the winner in each of the 300 districts had 47.5% of the vote, pretty close to a majority.
 - b. Only in 1 of 10 districts does the winner get 39% of the vote or less.
 - c. Also, 99 of the 300 districts are majority districts, with the winner taking more than 50%.
2. At the district-level, elections are much less competitive than the national one:
 - a. The average district-level margin of victory is of 15%.
 - b. Half of the districts have a margin of at least 14%
3. On average, the third party at the district level is much smaller than the national one:
 - a. The average share of the third party is 12.5%.
 - b. In one third of the districts, this share is of only 9% or less.
4. Not surprisingly, the overall fragmentation of the vote at the district level is clearly smaller, with $N = 2.83$.

The survey data: most voters do want a majority Congress.

Reforma's exit-poll showed 48% of the electorate in favor of divided government, and only 39% for unified government.^[2] This evidence, however, could be influenced by voters' preferences for the PAN and/or Fox as President. In fact, one could argue that most of those wanting unified government are PAN sympathizers and the opposite holds for those in favor of divided government.

Hence, I designed a battery of questions to address this issue directly. In a *Parametría* post-electoral poll,^[3] respondents were asked who they had voted for, and then: "Thinking of the party you voted for in July 6th, would you have liked that party to hold a majority in the House?," if the answer was 'no', the following question was asked: "Would you prefer that there were no party holding a majority or that other party would hold a majority?". Table 1 shows that there is indeed a strong majority of *majoritarian* voters in Mexico:

Table 1. Preference for a Majority by 2003 vote... (%)

	PAN	PRI	PRD	Other	Total
Majority	71.3	74.4	72.0	69.7	72.6
No Majority	16.8	17.8	21.5	30.3	19.0
Other majority	12.0	7.8	6.5	0.0	8.4
Total	31.7	41.6	20.3	6.3	100

Conclusion

Much has been written about electoral mandates, and it is well worth being cautious about these. But Mexico's recent election was not a non-*majoritarian* mandate, yet simply the result of a very proportional electoral system. Moreover, the data presented above also suggest that a small minority of the electorate does have a systemic preference for *consensual* politics, a fact that only deserves further detailed study.

Winding Through the Democratic Forest, Where are Mexican Voters?

Roderic Ai Camp

Claremont College

1—Introduction.

The most important relationship to explore in order to understand the importance of the 2003 Legislative election is to understand the general characteristics of the Mexican voter, and in this particular election, what they were seeking. We can explore short and long term trends, but to me the much more valuable component is long term.

2—What are some notable characteristics of Mexican voters that might explain their behavior over the last 3 years and in this election in particular?

First—Mexicans in general are uninterested in politics. Even the 2000 presidential race did not stimulate their interest when the opportunity arose to fundamentally change the political model. Their interest did not increase significantly before and after the presidential race.

Second—Mexicans are disillusioned with political parties. Parties are among the institutions receiving the lowest level of confidence of any political institutions in Mexico. Specially, voters have little use for any of the three political parties. In fact, when asked what party they would like to have in charge of the government, they named a non-existing party.

Third—Mexicans are equally disillusioned with politics. Politics is a dirty activity. Two thirds of Mexicans who abstained in 2003 were disillusioned with it. Of all the political institutions, only the IFE attracts a high level of confidence among Mexican citizens. Indeed, the most important institutions in terms of their level of confidence are schools and the Catholic Church. The only state institution which receives a modicum of support, beside IFE, is the armed forces.

Fourth—Mexicans are widely divided in terms of their ideological preferences. They place themselves on an ideological spectrum, whatever it means, which is centrist and to the right. They also believe that the PRI is the party of the far right, the PAN center right, and the PRD center left.

Fifth—Most Mexicans are disillusioned with democracy, and specifically with congress. Congress attracts little interest from the voters. Most voters do not know their member of congress, and the structural impediments to reelection are also impediments to accountability, which would increase voter linkages to congress as an institution, and to congressional elections. The other structural variable that plays a role is that 40% of the members represent no district, further limiting the linkage between citizen and deputy.

- Only half the population is now satisfied with democracy. Only slightly more than half believes congress does anything useful. However, only a tiny 28 percent feel in some way represented by their legislator, and three-quarters do not or rarely believe congresspersons are accountable. Even more significant, 54 percent of the voters who voted for Fox in 2000, are now dissatisfied with democracy.

Sixth—Voters are most interested in what is going on in their backyard, which, in my opinion, is where the real action is taking place in Mexico in terms of democratic consolidation.

- For example, in elections where state governors are up for grabs, 54 percent of the voters turned out. In elections where even local deputies or city councils were being contested, 49 percent participated. Only in those elections where congressional districts alone were being contested, was the turnout so low—38 percent.

3—What did voters really want?

First—The election, as is often the case in the United States, was about the economy, and about personal economic situations. When asked what mandate they would give to the new congress once elected, a whopping 70 percent said fighting poverty and improving economic conditions. The only other issue receiving significant support, as it has in the last two presidential races, is fighting crime, or personal security.

Second—They want results. They want major legislation passed, and they give equal blame to congress and to the executive branch.

4—How are the results over the last three years tied to these characteristics?

First, while PRI may have won a plurality, it received its lowest number of votes for congressional candidates since 1994, even though it won 50 percent of those votes that same year. PAN on the other hand, although it declined dramatically from its 2000 congressional totals, it is back where it was in 1994 and above its 1997 absolute numbers.

Second, one of the most interesting patterns, long and short, is the geographical distribution of the vote. The PAN and PRD in particular are still not fully national parties in a geographic sense, with PRD concentrated in a few areas, and obviously in the Federal District. If we look at the state and local elections, PAN is now concentrated in the center-west, and PRI has recovered in the North.

- Competitiveness in districts is increasing, but the overall results regionally is increasingly skewed. In other words, a larger percentage of the 300 districts are competitive, which is healthy for democracy, but they are not evenly distributed. For example, PRI took all the districts in Oaxaca, Durango, Hidalgo, Guerrero, Nayarit and Tabasco, but did not win a single seat in the Federal District, Zacatecas, and the two Baja Californias.

Third, little party loyalty exists in Mexico. Voters want pragmatic results. They have shown in the last ten years, and since 2000, that they will discard any party which does not produce results related to their desired goals. Local elections are highly competitive, and the vote totals tend to be very close. The party which won these elections typically did so with approximately 44 percent of the vote. Parties are winning with pluralities, making it easier each time for the incumbent to lose.

- On the state level, it is the PAN, not the PRI, which shows the largest increase in average votes from 1991, to 1997, to 2003. The case of Nuevo Leon, where PRI won with 58 percent of the vote, was not the norm. The results in local legislatures show that PAN won 139 compared to 138 seats for PRI. Again, no party holds the majority of these seats, mirroring the pattern nationally. Caroline Beer's new work demonstrates just how these patterns play out in practice.
- The lack of party loyalty can be illustrated empirically by noting the municipal elections. For example, PRI won 78 new municipalities, 62 of them from PAN. PAN won 82 new municipalities, 74 from PRI. In percentage terms, PRI retained 53 percent of those it controlled prior to 2003, and PAN 42 percent. PRD only retained 40 percent. These data are not suggestive of any party dominating the electorate.
- Perhaps most importantly, the lack of party loyalty is reflected in the changing distribution of the number of competitive electoral districts, defined by the percentage of votes the winning candidate obtains in a given district.

Fourth--This is the first time a president's party has not won a plurality vote in the legislative branch, thus focusing attention even more fully on legislative-executive relations.

Fifth—The most interesting result, which is not tied to voter goals, but to voter behavior in 2000, is the altered outcome for female candidates. The parties ran more female candidates than in the past, but their election rate was not as strong as men, with 21 percent of the 228 female candidates. PRI put up the fewest women, but produced the most female victories in percentage terms. PAN and PRD ran 82 and 95 female candidates respectively. Women now represent 23 percent of the 500 seats compared to only 17 percent in 2000. However, in the 300 districts, they only won 16 percent of the seats.

5—What do these results mean for the policy process and Mexican politics?

- The failure to implement policy reforms can be attributed both to the executive branch and the legislative branch. One of the achievements of Mexican democracy is that Mexicans attribute more influence to congress than prior to 2000.
- Voters were punishing members of congress as well as the presidency for these failures. The only way congress can improve its image among voters is to help the executive branch implement needed reforms.
- The most important structural issue affecting congress which needs to be addressed, in order to complete the

consolidation of democracy on a third level, executive-legislative relations, is to reform the no reelection of deputies and senators.

Congress must make this reform immediately for at least two important reasons related to Mexican democracy:

First, it will remain a weaker institution if it doesn't allow some continuity in committee leadership and deputy expertise on complex issues. It needs to establish more permanent staff who are experts on complex issues and institutions, such as the armed forces.

Second, no local accountability exists in Mexico, and most Mexicans are ignorant of who their representative is. No-reelection has created party accountability, thus PRI and PRD improved their positions versus PAN in the chamber. But voters need to judge their individual representative, and develop a stronger sense of who that person is to take their demands to congress. Unfortunately, the majority of Mexicans are strongly opposed to reelection.

Paradojas de la Abstención

José Antonio Crespo

Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas

Hay una paradoja en el hecho de que la elección legislativa del 2003 haya sido la primera que se celebra bajo un gobierno distinto al del PRI, en condiciones probadamente equitativas y libres y, sin embargo, registró el mayor nivel de abstencionismo de la historia moderna. Al menos en cifras oficiales (59 %). Es también paradójico que haya sido la elección más costosa (el financiamiento público para los partidos, más 5 mil millones de pesos, casi duplicó el de la elección presidencial de 2000), y la menos concurrida.

En 1946 se fundó el Consejo de Padrón Electoral, órgano que centralizó a nivel federal el registro y credencialización del electorado. Antes de eso dicha función la hacían los gobiernos estatales. Desde luego, las cifras oficiales deben ser tomadas con gran reserva, pues en aquellos tiempos nada impedía incrementar la votación artificialmente para legitimar un sistema poco o nada competitivo. Pero en los últimos años, poco a poco el padrón fue siendo más confiable, así como los comicios mismos. Bajo esa precaución, al analizar el patrón de participación electoral desde 1946, nos percatamos que conforme fue pasando el tiempo la brecha del abstencionismo fue creciendo como tendencia histórica.

Una variable central (que no la única) para explicar la abstención de la elección de 2003 es el hecho de que fue intermedia; se renovó sólo la Cámara Baja y no la presidencia. Por lo cual, para evaluar la creciente abstención, conviene comparar la elección de julio con sus precedentes intermedias, más que las presidenciales. También la participación fue bajando en los comicios intermedios.



La elección de los legisladores no parece ser tan motivadora para el elector medio como la del poder Ejecutivo, sea a nivel federal o estatal. Esto lo refleja el hecho de que en las seis entidades donde hubo elección concurrente en que estaba en juego el cargo de gobernador, la participación fue mayor que el promedio nacional; superior en todos al 50 % de concurrencia (salvo en San Luis Potosí, que es la excepción a la norma). El promedio de abstención en ese conjunto de estados fue del 45.7 %. Es decir, 13 % menos que en el promedio nacional. Entre las entidades que no celebraron elección de gobernador, sólo Jalisco muestra un nivel de participación superior al 50 % (es la excepción en esta categoría).

Entonces, si la variable que parece decisiva no es sino la diferencia entre elección meramente legislativa y ejecutiva (estatal o federal) presumiblemente el mismo fenómeno podría encontrarse en otros comicios intermedios, en particular el

de 1997, también celebrado ya en condiciones más confiables (bajo la autonomía recién adquirida por el IFE, y un nuevo marco legal). Al repetir el ejercicio de comparar el nivel de participación en los estados en que se celebraron elecciones concurrentes para gobernador, frente al bloque de entidades en que sólo hubo elecciones legislativas, el resultado es el siguiente. Los siete estados que tuvieron elecciones para gobernador, promedian una abstención del 36.2 %, es decir, ocho puntos porcentuales menos que el promedio nacional, y más diez puntos menos que el promedio de las entidades que no celebraron elecciones para gobernador; 47.5 %.

Si tomamos otra variable clásica con la que se intenta explicar la participación electoral, es decir, el desarrollo económico de los estados, vemos que no fue en realidad decisiva para explicar la abstención en esta elección. Para aislar esta variable, hemos dividido los 26 estados en que no hubo elección para gobernador en tres grupos, a partir del índice de desarrollo humano propuesto por Naciones Unidas (*México social. 1996-1998*. Banamex- Accival). El grupo de mayor desarrollo (Jalisco, Distrito Federal, Aguascalientes, Tamaulipas, BC Sur, México, Chihuahua y Baja California) promedia un 57.9 % de abstención; el grupo de desarrollo intermedio (Yucatán, Morelos, Tabasco, Sinaloa, Durango, Nayarit, Quintana Roo y Coahuila) promedia un 60.6 % de abstención; finalmente, el grupo de menor desarrollo (Guanajuato, Zacatecas, Oaxaca, Hidalgo, Puebla, Michoacán, Tlaxcala, Guerrero y Chiapas), arrojan un promedio de 59.7 % abstención. Como puede apreciarse, el grupo de estados de menor desarrollo registra un nivel de abstención mayor por dos puntos porcentuales respecto de los de mayor desarrollo. En cambio, hay diferencia sustancial al comparar cada uno de estos tres grupos de estados donde no hubo elección de gobernador respecto de los que sí la tuvieron. Por otro lado, podemos tomar dos estados con índices de desarrollo intermedio (más bien bajo) pero similares (ocupan lugares contiguos en la escala nacional), Colima y Tlaxcala, pero en el primero hubo elección de gobernador y no en el segundo. Colima registra 62 % de participación, en tanto que Tlaxcala muestra sólo un 34 % de concurrencia a las urnas. Casi la mitad. Tomemos ahora dos entidades con un índice elevado de desarrollo, que también ocupan lugares contiguos en la escala nacional (el primero y el segundo); el Distrito Federal y Nuevo León. En el primero, donde no hubo elección para gobernador (aunque sí para congreso local) se registró una participación del 44 %, en tanto que en el segundo acudió el 54 % de los electores, un 10 % más. Todo lo cual nos lleva a concluir que, al menos en estos comicios, la variable central fue que estuviera en disputa el cargo de Ejecutivo Estatal.

ABSTENCIONISMO Y DESARROLLO HUMANO (PORCENTAJE) 2003

TOTAL	58.2
CONCURRENTE	45.7
NO CONCURRENTE	60
MAYOR DESARROLLO	57.9
DESARROLLO INTERMEDIO	60.6
MENOR DESARROLLO	59.7

Lo mismo ocurre haciendo el mismo ejercicio con otro indicador, el de marginación, desarrollado por el Consejo Nacional de Población (1995), y toma en cuenta carencias en bienes y servicios de la población. Bajo ese indicador vemos igualmente que las tasas de abstención entre los grupos de estados con mayor, regular o menor marginación no varían significativamente, y si lo hacen todos respecto de los estados con elección para gobernador.

ABSTENCIONISMO Y MARGINACIÓN (PORCENTAJE) 2003

TOTAL	58.2
CONCURRENTE	45.7
NO CONCURRENTE	60
MENOR MARGINACIÓN	60.5
MARGINACIÓN INTERMEDIA	58.9
MAYOR MARGINACIÓN	60.5

Entonces, si la variable que parece decisiva es el carácter intermedio de la elección, sin contienda por el poder Ejecutivo (ni federal ni estatal), ¿por qué el nivel de participación fue menor en esta ocasión que en elecciones intermedias anteriores, como la de 1991 o la de 1997? Lo que podría decirse como hipótesis general es que en aquellos años estaba

en juego el cambio de régimen de partidos y electoral. En 1991 se había inaugurado el Instituto Federal Electoral (IFE), además de que se había realizado una credencialización más confiable. Pero en esa ocasión se puso en cuestión la vieja hipótesis según la cual el abstencionismo representaba un voto opositor potencial, pues el PRI obtuvo una votación del 61 %, lo que incluso provocó que esa elección fuera calificada por algunos estudiosos como de la “Restauración”. En 1997 habían también condiciones que estimulaban la participación; una nueva reforma electoral mediante la cual se brindaba al IFE plena autonomía respecto del gobierno, el padrón era más confiable, y estaba en juego la mayoría absoluta del PRI en el Congreso (que perdió), así como, por primera vez en setenta años, la jefatura del gobierno capitalino (que ganó el PRD).

En otras palabras, es posible que tras la alternancia presidencial del 2000, estemos frente a una normalización democrático-electoral, en donde paradójicamente los estímulos para acudir a las urnas sea menor, pues ya no está en juego la transformación del sistema partidista. Eso, al menos en el caso de comicios intermedios donde no se pone en disputa el poder Ejecutivo. Es altamente probable que, por lo mismo, el nivel de participación en la elección presidencial de 2006 sea mayor que en 2003, pero no sabemos si lo será respecto de 2000 (la cual registró un menor nivel de participación respecto de los comicios presidenciales de 1994). En todo caso, no es posible descartar el escenario según el cual, en adelante, en los comicios intermedios una alta abstención será la norma y no la excepción. A menos que, como lo han planteado diversos observadores, y entendido los propios partidos políticos, la abstención haya tenido mucho que ver con el enojo ciudadano por el elevado costo de las campañas en general. En tal caso, una reforma para reducir significativamente el financiamiento público de los partidos podría estimular la participación en el futuro. Con todo, bien sabemos que son muchas las variables que inciden en ese complejo fenómeno.

Rapporteur's Report

Session 1: The July 6 Elections: What do they Mean for Democratic Consolidation?

Clarisa Pérez-Armendáriz

Department of Government, University of Texas at Austin

Discussant Kurt Weyland of the Department of Government, University of Texas At Austin, opened the discussion with two ideas related to democratic consolidation. First, he suggested that concern over democratic consolidation might be misplaced for the case of Mexico. Consolidation has typically been considered a problem in Latin America countries that combine presidentialism with a multiparty system. Since Mexico technically endows the president with somewhat lesser powers than in other countries and the level of party system fragmentation is lower, the consolidation of democracy may not pose as large a concern as the panelists suggested. Instead, he argued, analysts should focus on the “quality of democracy.”

Second, Weyland argued that in analyzing the future of the PRI and its role in the political process, Mexico's dominant party should be differentiated from formerly dominant parties in Eastern Europe. Ousted Eastern European dominant parties virtually ceased to compete in elections in their prior form, whereas the PRI has continued to compete as essentially the same party. Weyland suggested that because the PRI did not suffer the same degree of punishment and exile as the European parties, but rather has remained a strong party following the regime transition, it might not learn anything new about what it needs to do to win. He noted that this was another example of how non-institutional factors might influence the quality of democracy.

Questions from the floor:

1. Is low voter turnout attributable to disenchantment with the parties, and could high rates of abstention become the norm? Alternatively, is the rate of abstention in 2003 explained by the fact that these were midterm elections? Will turnout increase again for the 2006 presidential elections?
2. José Antonio Crespo's argument about voter turnout seems to explain the low turnout in 2003 quite well, but it does not seem to explain the higher turnout in the 1994 and 2000 elections. Can he extend his model to account for these elections as well?
3. Does apportionment help explain some of the puzzles raised by the panelists?
4. Why are voters against allowing reelection for Congress?

5. 144 districts have been never been won by the PAN. In these locations, the PAN and PRD are losers to start off with. Do you think PAN and PRD will respond to this?
6. Voters frequently shift their support from one party to another. What do parties need to do to make Mexican voters less fickle?

Crespo: Looking at the data on turnout, Mexican voters appear to be different from voters in other countries, or there are significant errors in the available data. For example, despite significant electoral reforms just before the 1979 elections, turnout in Mexico reached a record low. The lowest turnout in a presidential election was, surprisingly, reached in 1988 when the race was more competitive than it had ever been before. Yet in the 1991 midterm elections, reported voter turnout was significantly higher at 66 percent. How do we explain this paradoxical behavior on the part of voters? Either there are puzzling contradictions in Mexican voting behavior that we cannot yet understand, or the data on voter turnout in the past was overblown for political reasons.

Camp: There is a lot of evidence that voters are disillusioned with the parties. Since all three major parties existed before the historic 2000 elections, they are all in some sense contaminated by association with Mexico's prior political regime. This might explain why voter turnout in 1994 was greater than in 2000. Additionally, the Mexican government and Congress have not addressed issues of social justice that voters define as important. On another issue, voters are against reelection because of Mexico's historical revolutionary heritage; there is a historical emphasis on the danger of monopoly over power, and the danger of permanent control of the legislature. In view this, voter attitudes about reelection are not really illogical.

Poiré: Even though the majority of voters are opposed to reelection, survey data show that a substantial minority (30%) supports the idea. In light of Mexico's history, one might argue that this level of approval represents a good base from which to start building support for such reforms. The fact that there is no reelection in Mexico speaks to the quality of democracy in the country. It is intimately tied to the fact that parties are not addressing issues, and voters are not voting for issues at the local level. In fact as a preliminary hypothesis we might argue that if there is no reelection, fourth parties will continue to grow as a way to punish the three major parties. With regard to redistricting and reapportionment, the IFE should have done this in 2000. There is some evidence of malapportionment now in Baja California Norte where congressmen represent twice as many people as in Baja California South. We need to increase the number of single member district seats, but growing Congress has its own problems.

Estevez: With regard to redistricting, the problem of distortion is not so big, though, certainly over ten years, the system has developed some biases. The original districting occurred fairly and transparently; there was a decent division among states in terms of apportionment, and egregious offenses such as the breakup of municipalities did not occur. Nevertheless, because malapportionment can lead to significant skews in outcomes, the districting issue is on the agenda.

Session 2

Results: Spatial and Social Patterns of Voting The New Electoral Landscape

Chair/Moderator: Kenneth Greene

Presenters:

- *Victoria Rodríguez* (University of Texas at Austin)

"The 2003 Elections: Where are the Women?"

- *Frederick Solt* (Rice University)

"The National Effects of Subnational Institutions in Mexico:
The 2003 Elections"

- *Joseph Klesner* (Kenyon College)
“The (*fijase*) Not-So-New Electoral Landscape Post-July 6”

- *Alejandro Moreno* (ITAM)
“The Mexican Voter” presented by Federico Estevez

- Discussion recorder: David Crow – Government Department, University of Texas at Austin

Where are the Women?

Victoria Rodríguez

LBJ School of Public Affairs, University of Texas at Austin

In this intervention I pick up on the arguments presented in my book, *Women in Contemporary Mexican Politics* (UT Press, 2003), by adding the results of the 2003 midterm election and reflecting on how this election impacts the presence of women in Mexico’s political scene.

In the first part of the presentation I discuss the background to the title of my presentation today. I first asked the question “Where are the Women” back in 1994, when I began this research project. What triggered my curiosity then, among other things, was that 1992 had been declared the “year of the Woman” in the U.S. because an unprecedented number of women were elected to office that year; there was a buzz in the air internationally as delegations of women from all over the world prepared for the 1995 United Nations Conference on Women that was to take place in Beijing; the process of political opening was firmly taking root in Mexico, and as new political actors came to the fore, I wondered where the women fit in. The responses to that question form the substance of my book.

Before analyzing the 2003 results, I want to share with you a table from my book that shows the representation of women in Congress beginning in 1953, when women obtained the right to vote and to be voted into office (Table 4.1, pp. 142-143). The Table shows the steady increase through time, with some significant drops in the 1991 midterm and 2000 presidential elections. The explanation I provide for these drops is that both of these elections were critically important for the political parties at the time, and that when parties are confronted with this type of election they are less likely to have women as candidates. When an election is risky and much is at stake, the number of women candidates tends to decrease; the women are placed as candidates in districts where the party is not likely to win; at the bottom of the proportional representation list; or as *suplentes*. As the Table shows, the real takeoff for women was in the presidential election of 1994, when the number of women in the Chamber of Deputies almost doubled, from 44 to 70; then increased to 87 in the 1997 midterm election; and dropped to 80 in the 2000 presidential election. The 2003 election proved to be a recovery for women, who increased their number in the lower house to 114. This raises the percentage of women in congress from 16.4 percent to 22.9 percent, the highest to date.

Table 2 below shows the gender breakdown of the 2000-2003 and the 2003-2006 legislatures. Let us analyze the party trends. The PRI shows a steady increase, from 32 to 37, maintaining a stable percentage from 15.2% to 16.6%. The PRD presents an interesting phenomenon in that the number of women more than doubled, from 13 to 27, yet when looking at the percentages, these increased only modestly, from 25% to 28.4%. But the truly fascinating story of this election is with the women of the PAN: their number almost doubled, from 24 to 45, but the proportion of women in the overall panista bloc in congress increased from 11.6% to 29.8%, i.e., almost triple!. What makes these gains for women all the more striking is that the PAN’s overall low performance in the election is certainly not reflected on the women.

This leads me to some interesting conclusions and speculations for the future, which I hope to address in the revised edition of my book as it is being translated into Spanish. In the last chapter of the book, “Reframing Mexican Democracy: What does the Future hold for Women?” I conclude that democracy is moving apace in Mexico, yet the women are not being fully included. Considering the results of the 2003 election, I posit that the real winners are the women of the PAN. Will they lead the charge for change? Will they demonstrate that there is strength in numbers? Are they now in a position to act as a “critical mass”? In my book I argue that even though the PAN is the most conservative of the three major political parties when it comes to women, nonetheless it is the party that has been more effective in promoting women’s representation and supportive of the women’s section of the party. Compared with the other parties, the women of the PAN are better

organized, more professional, and the most tightly knit group, cutting across generational lines. It is now up to them to take advantage of their electoral gains to promote and support the position and well being of Mexican women at large.

TABLE 1. COMPOSITION OF THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES
58TH AND 59TH LEGISLATURES

Party	Direct Seats		PR Seats		Total		% Vote	
	00-03	03-06	00-03	03-06	00-03	03-06	00-03	03-06
PRI	132	160	78	62	210	222	42.0	44.8
PAN	136	80	71	71	207	151	41.4	30.6
PRD	24	55	28	40	52	95	10.4	19.0
PVEM	6	3	10	14	16	17	3.2	3.4
PT	2	0	6	6	8	6	1.6	1.2
OTHERS			7	5	7	5	1.4	1.0
TOTAL	300	298*	200	198*	500	496*		

Source: H. Cámara de Diputados del H. Congreso de la Unión. Instituto federal Electoral. www.camaradediputados.gob.mx; www.ife.org.mx.

Direct Seats = Mayoría Relativa; PR Seats = RP: Representación Proporcional.

In fact by April 2003 the PRI had two seats less (one moved to the PRD and the other declared himself "independent).

*496 since the IFE removed two direct election seats from the PAN instructing that fresh elections be undertaken, and two plurinominal seats were also help back pending those elections. None of the 4 was held by a woman, however.

TABLE 2. GENDER COMPOSITION OF
THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES (LOWER HOUSE)
58TH AND 59TH LEGISLATURES

Party	Women		Men		Total	
	00-03	03-06	00-03	03-06	00-03	03-06
PRI	32 (15.2%)	37 (16.6%)	178	185	210	222
PAN	24 (11.6%)	45 (29.8%)	183	106	207	151
PRD	13 (25%)	27 (28.4%)	39	68	52	95
PVEM	8 (50%)	5 (29.4%)	8	12	16	17
PT	2	0	6	6	8	6
OTHERS	3	0	4	5	7	5
TOTAL	82 (16.4%)	114 (22.9%)	418	382	500	496*

Source: H. Cámara de Diputados. www.camaradediputados.gob.mx; información a enero de 2001 & author's calculations (Hector Robles).
Notas:
1) Para abril de 2002, la composición de PRI cambió a 33 mujeres y 175

hombres. Ello se explica por deserciones de 2 hombres a otros partidos, y la incorporación de una mujer como diputada propietaria.

2) Para abril de 2002, el PAN tiene 26 diputadas y 181 diputados. Se explica por la incorporación de dos mujeres como diputadas propietarias.

3) Para abril de 2002, el grupo del PRD se componía de 11 mujeres y 42 hombres. Dos diputadas propietarias dejaron el cargo y lo asumieron sus suplentes-hombres y un diputado del PRI se sumo al PRD.

TABLE 3. GENDER COMPOSITION OF THE SENATE, 2000-06

Party	Women 2000-06	Men 2000-06	Total
PRI	11	49	60
PAN	7	39	46
PRD	2	14	16
PVEM	4	1	5
CONV.	0	1	1
TOTAL	24	104	128

Fuente: Senado de la República. www.senado.gob.mx;

The National Effects of Subnational Institutions in Mexico: The 2003 Elections

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Electoral Pluralism in Mexico's Federal Elections

Conventional wisdom is that the dominant pattern in Mexico is two-party competition--but with different parties in different states. The PRI, of course, is a national party. The PAN challenges the PRI in some states, mostly in the north, but also in places like Yucatán; the PRD challenges the PRI in other states, mostly in the south, but also in places like Baja California Sur--but three-way competition is rare.



Figure 1: Electoral Pluralism in Mexico's Federal Elections, State Average

That was clearly the case for the 1991 congressional elections, and probably a fair-enough description of what happened in 1994, but since 1997, the average effective number of parties across the states has been pretty close to three. The overall increase obscures continuing differences across the states, however. In the 2003 elections, for example, the effective number of parties in the vote (N_v) ranged from 4.4 parties in Morelos to just 2.4 parties in Yucatán.

Pluralism in Presidential and Federal Systems

Electoral pluralism is important: for a given electoral system, more pluralism yields more parties in the legislature and so

more pressure for the institutionalization of the legislature as a representative body able to check executive abuses. Cross-national studies indicate that the timing and format of presidential elections are critical to pluralism: legislative elections held concurrently with or in the run-up to a presidential election exhibit less pluralism, but this effect is counteracted if the presidential election is by run-off.

Jones (1997) has demonstrated, however, that in Argentina, the importance of provincial-level politics leads to strong effects of subnational institutions. Concurrent gubernatorial races and provincial electoral systems both affect the pluralism in federal congressional elections in Argentina, but, due to these strong federalism effects, concurrent presidential elections do not have the strong effect found cross-nationally.

In Mexico, state electoral institutions vary considerably. Six states elect governors concurrently with the mid-term federal elections, and ten elect governors the following year. Further, the proportionality of the system used to elect *state* legislators varies greatly--the effective magnitudes range from 1 to 33.3--creating very different incentives for the formation and consolidation of state-level parties. These differences had powerful effects on electoral pluralism in the 2003 federal congressional elections, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Effects of State Institutions on Federal Electoral Pluralism (N_V), 2003



These effects appear to be growing stronger: in a pooled time-series analysis of the four federal elections since 1994, the effects of these three variables over the entire period were estimated to be approximately half the size they were in 2003. All three were smaller than the estimated effect of the concurrent presidential races of 1994 and 2000.

All politics in Mexico may not be local, but state institutions have had important effects on federal elections since 1994, and these effects appear to be growing stronger. These results suggest that federalism in Mexico may be even stronger than we often think and that, as a result, parties are increasingly reacting to the political environment created by state-level institutions.

The Not-So-New Electoral Landscape in Mexico

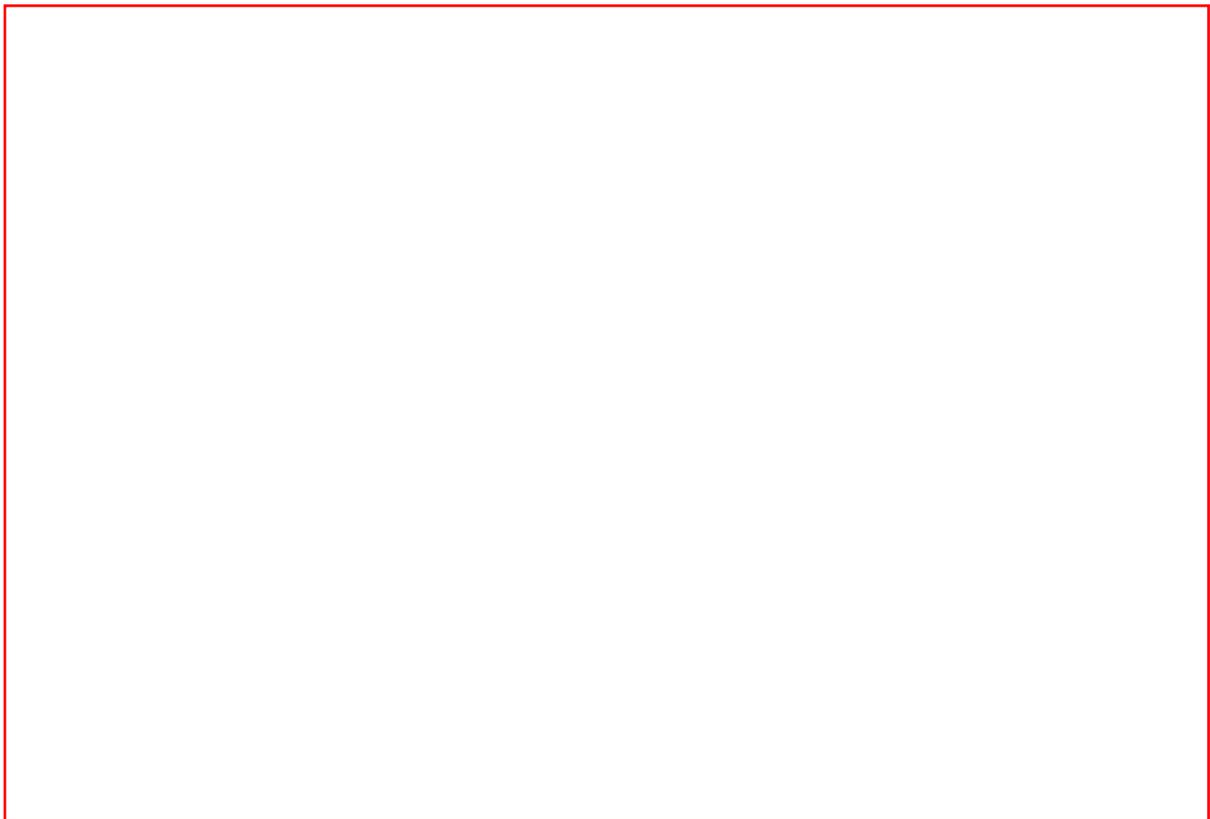
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Kenyon College

Most observers have regarded the 2003 Mexican midterm elections as a severe setback for Vicente Fox's National Action Party (PAN). Certainly the PAN lost much ground in the Chamber of Deputies, dropping over 50 seats from its 206-member deputation in the 2000-3 Congress. Losing the Nuevo León governorship also cost the party control of an important statehouse. If the 2003 election was a referendum on President Fox's performance, the message of the Mexican voters was a resounding negative.

In the aftermath of the elections, though, we must ask how much change really came to Mexican electoral politics in 2003. A careful look at the results—patterns of competition, the social bases of the parties' vote, emerging partisan attachments,

even the great decline in participation—would suggest that Mexico’s electoral landscape has not changed so much in the past three or even six years, which is why Fox’s party was sanctioned by the electorate and why neither the PRI nor the PRD really gained that much in the July contest.

In terms of the competitiveness of Mexico’s party system, 2003 looks remarkably like 2000 and 1997 before it. About a third of the electoral districts have two-party contests, in another third a third less competitive party joins two strong competitors, and in about a quarter, three or more parties compete relatively evenly. This pattern, which emerged in 1997, has changed little since then. In more than half of the nation’s electoral districts, the PAN and the PRI face off; in a much smaller number of districts, the PRD competes against the PRI. In 2003 it became apparent that in a small number of districts—less than 10 percent—the PRI has declined so much so that the competition is between the PRD and the PAN. All of these districts, as well as most multiparty districts, are in the greater Mexico City area.

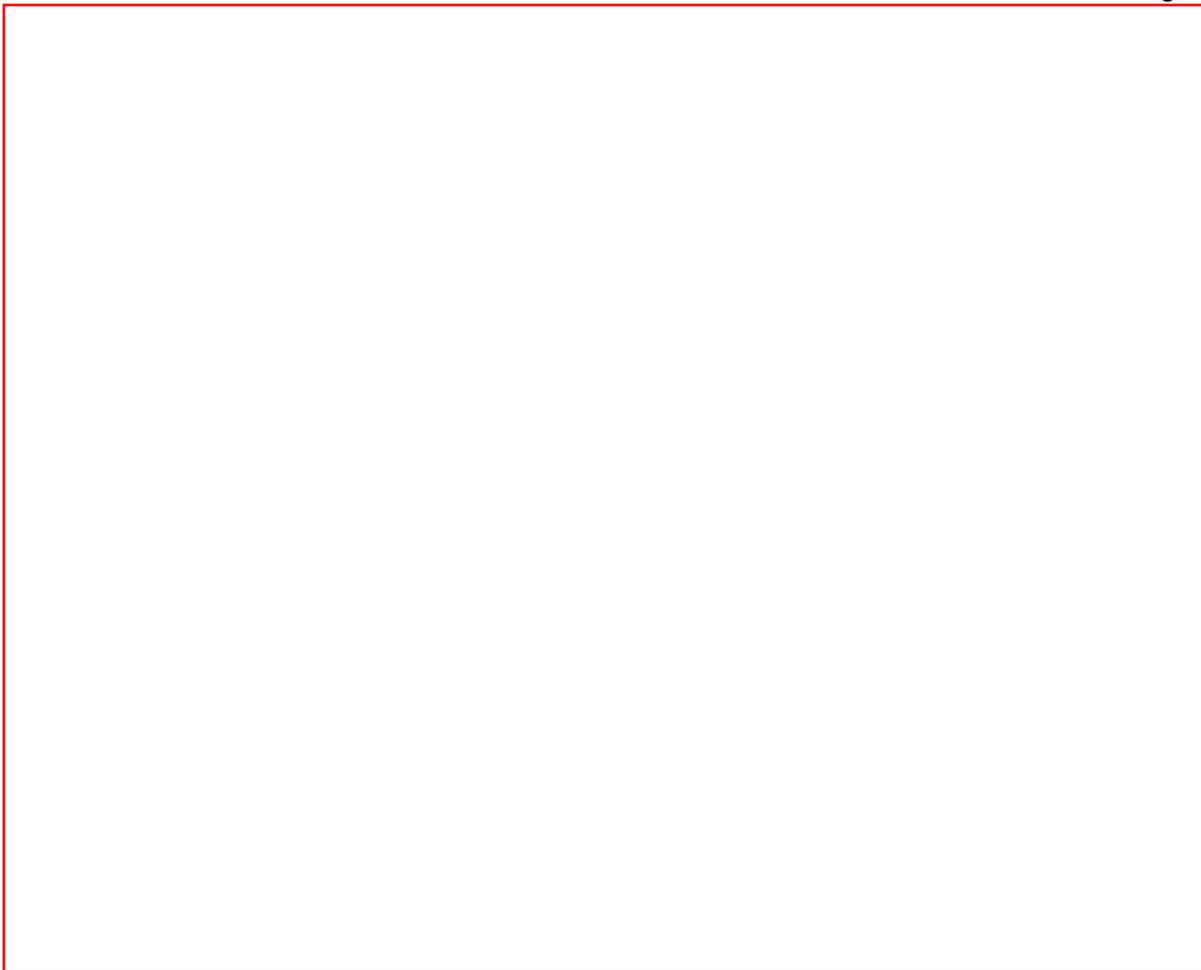


Examination of vote shares to the parties over time would indicate an important decline for the PAN between 2000 and 2003. However, we must remember that in 2000 the PAN ran in alliance with the PVEM as the Alliance for Change, an alliance that promptly changed. If we subtract the PVEM's contribution to the PAN in 2000—setting it at roughly 5 percent, about halfway between the 3.8 percent it received in 1997 and the 6 percent or so that it gained this year—the PAN's trend line does not look so unfavorable. And both the PRI and the PRD did no better compared to 2000. The gain in the electoral arena has gone to the small parties, including the PVEM, but others too. And we should remember that small parties have regularly complicated the political arena in Mexico, drawing votes and seats from the three main parties.



If we consider the social bases of the parties by means of ecological analysis of aggregate electoral data at the district level, we find very little change in the significant explanatory variables in the past three years. The PAN's strength lies in districts that are urban and where there is a significant manufacturing sector workforce. It does better in the center-west than in the Mexico City area, the south, or even the north, after controlling for socioeconomic modernization. There are new patterns; however, the PAN did more poorly in areas with concentrations of Catholics than in recent years, again controlling for the other factors just mentioned. The PRI does better in rural areas, as we all know, and for some time it has performed poorly in the center-west and Mexico City area. Its novel partial alliance with the PVEM in 2003 yielded some interesting results in patterns of electoral support. If we aggregate votes for the Alianza para Todos, the PRI, and the PVEM, we find that the two parties together performed well in districts with larger shares of the labor force in manufacturing and poorly with higher percentages of individuals who declare themselves Catholic. For the PRI alone (in the 200 districts where it ran alone), these patterns do not hold. So, the PVEM seems to have carried along the industrial and secular districts. The PRD's biggest strength is now in districts with lower percentages of the workforce in manufacturing—it does well where people are employed in services—and its real base is the Mexico City area.

Turning to turnout, the unprecedented low rate of electoral participation has caused much concern. The 42 percent turnout rate was certainly low, even for a midterm election of late—participation rates in 1991 and 1997 were considerably higher. However, more was at stake in those midterm elections; when compared to 1979 and 1985, when about half of the registered voters cast ballots (and registration rates were lower), the 2003 turnout does not compare as unfavorably. Still, 42 percent is a low rate of participation, and that low rate of participation probably hurt the PAN more than the other parties. In recent elections, higher turnout rates have been associated with higher rates of voting for the PAN, a relationship that continued to hold in 2003. So, when and where turnout is low, the PAN suffers. An important pattern in 2003, however, was that the recent trend in which low turnout favored the PRI did not emerge this year.



This brings us to partisanship and the role of floating voters. First, the PRI and PRD were much more able to hold the allegiance of those who voted for Labastida and Cárdenas, respectively, than the PAN was with Fox voters. Of course, Fox outperformed the congressional candidates of the PAN in 2000 by a considerable margin, so we know that some Fox voters were ticket splitters in 2000. That barely half of the 2003 voters who voted for Fox cast ballots for the PAN this year cannot be encouraging for the president's party. Who new voters and those who otherwise did not go to the polls in 2000 supported this year is a little less clear—different exit polls (Consulta Mitofsky and *Reforma*) give different suggestions. However, regardless of poll is more accurate, neither indicates that one party took the lion's share of new voters.

**FloatingVotes
(Consulta Mitofsky Exit Poll)**

Vote in 2000	Vote in 2003					
	PAN	PRI	PRD	PVEM	Others	Total
Fox	52.0	16.4	16.3	9.7	5.6	100
Labastida	6.8	79.9	4.5	6.1	2.7	100
Cárdenas	6.3	3.8	79.1	4.6	6.2	100
Non-voter	36.8	24.6	12.1	15.1	11.4	100
Total	30.5	33.7	19.4	8.2	8.2	100

An important bottom line is that a significant part of the Mexican electorate remains independent (or unwilling to indicate its partisan attachment). Mexican partisanship is not low by regional standards, but enough Mexicans remain unattached—or dealigned—to allow for relatively large swings from election to election—we've now had 1997, with a significant PRD upsurge behind Cárdenas's Mexico City coattails; 2000, with the Fox phenomenon; and 2003, where a mediocre PAN campaign allowed the PRI to regain some ground. The PRI retains the allegiance of those who formed their attachments

before 1988. The partisan attachments of *panistas* and *perredistas*, in contrast, are relatively new. And many young people remain independent and available for recruitment to any of the parties.

**New Voters and Non-Voters from 2000:
How Did They Vote?**

Vote in 2000	Vote in 2003					
	PAN	PRI	PRD	PVEM	Others	Total
Non-voter (Consulta Mitofsky)	37	25	12	15	11	100
Non-voter (Reforma)	27	41	15	10	8	101

Dealignment has characterized the sociology of Mexican elections for at least fifteen to eighteen years. Floating voters allow campaigns to matter. Campaigns and candidates mattered a lot in 1997 and 2000. Nothing about 2003 suggests that campaigns and candidates will not matter in 2006—indeed, with a large part of the population unattached, with many voters choosing not to vote if they're not won over by convincing campaigns, and with no incumbent advantage to speak of, we can fully expect that a rousing campaign in which the stakes are high will bring out large numbers of voters in 2006 and could well lead to the victory of the presidential candidate of any of the parties.



Left-Right Orientations and Party Support in Mexico, 2000-2003

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During the 1990s, the predominant meaning of the left-right scale among Mexican voters reflected political views toward democracy and authoritarianism (Moreno 1998, 1999). This political content explained why, contrary to previous common wisdom, the PRI drew its support mostly from the right of the political spectrum, where authoritarian views were more likely than democratic ones. At the mass level, PAN supporters spread along the left-right continuum, giving that party a catch-all nature and an average centrist position (Magaloni and Moreno 2003). The PRD drew most of its support from the left and center-left. At first, it seemed that the democratic-authoritarian divide was another way of referring to what researchers had observed in the 1980s, arguing that Mexican parties could be clearly differentiated along a government-opposition axis of conflict (Molinar 1991). However, after the 2000 presidential election, when the PAN was raised as the governing party and the long-ruling PRI becomes part of the opposition, we could have expected a change in the ordering of the political parties' mean positions on the left-right scale. This did not happen in the 2003 congressional election. According to exit poll data, PRI supporters remained to the right of the other two major parties, the PRD on the left and the PAN in the middle.

In the 2003 election, the party positions on a left-right scale, according to their supporters' self-placements, were as follows: The PAN lost some support as compared to the legislative vote of 2000 and also moved slightly to a more rightist position, still remaining to the left of the PRI. The PRD showed a remarkable stability in its position from one election to the next, and the PRI moved slightly to the left but remained to the right of the other major parties. This move to the left is consistent with evidence that shows that, at least in a dimension of socioeconomic issues, which has been secondary to the political divide and even to an axis that taps social issues, the PRI electorate became significantly more leftist in the last few years of the 20th Century (Moreno 2003).

There were 11 parties competing in the 2003 election, two of them—PRI and PVEM—in a partial alliance covering 97 of the 300 electoral districts. Only 6 obtained the necessary share of votes (at least 2 percent of the total national vote) in order to keep their registration with the election authority, IFE. Where did all these parties get their support from? The 2003 political spectrum shows an interesting ordering of the parties and gives us some clues (see Figure). The figure relies on mean placements reported by voters on Election Day. On the very left was Mexico Posible, a party recently founded by intellectuals, human rights activists, and feminists. The MP position to the left of the PRD shows a more polarized placement as compared to Democracia Social's three years earlier. DS not only had some of MP's politicians, but also advocated some of the most liberal policy proposals. MP had a more significant performance in Mexico City, even gaining a local representative. On the other pole, to the right of the PRI, we find two minor rightist parties, Fuerza Ciudadana and Sociedad Nacionalista. Another minor party located on the right was the Mexican Liberal Party, a Mormon-based party which used the "liberal" label to evoke the 19th Century liberal struggle for freedom of religion. It is likely that their supporters were rather conservative in other social issues. It seems, then, that the nationalist voters and the Mexico Posible voters defined the most extreme points of the spectrum.

The Green Ecologists and the Workers' Party are the largest and perhaps more consolidated of the minor parties founded since 1994, and they both had centrist positions. Alianza Social, which was part of the Cardenista coalition in 2000, also appears on the center, as does Convergencia. It is significant that the three minor parties that drew more than 2 percent of the vote, did so among the centrist and independent voters. In fact, the exit poll shows that part of the PVEM, PT and Convergencia success was that they really attracted support from the independents, a support almost absent in the other minor parties. None of the most extreme ones was able to keep their registration.

With this brief account of the parties' ideological positions in 2003, we can reach some preliminary conclusions that may serve as hypotheses for further research:

- The ideological center is, indeed, the most electorally profitable place in Mexican elections. However, the quintessential centrist party, PAN, did not benefit from it in 2003. This obviously needs some elaboration.
- The average party positions seem to endure alternation. Despite the PAN's loss of votes, it shows a remarkable stability in the centrist position of its average supporter, while the PRI actually moved slightly toward the center, but it still is the major party on the right.
- Minor parties who drew their support from the center of the left-right continuum did better than those who polarized their positions, attracting more independent voters.

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Mexico's Political Spectrum, 2000-2003

Average ideological positions of party supporters
(Vote choice for Chamber of Deputies)



*Other parties in 2003: PAS=1.81; PT=2.02; Convergencia=2.03; PLM=2.22.

Source: *Reforma*, national exit polls. Sample sizes: 2000=3,380; 2003=2,779.

Note: The number for each party is the mean on a collapsed 3-point left-right scale; numbers above the distribution curve are percentages for each category.

Rapporteur's Report

Session 2: Results: Spatial and Social Patterns of Voting. The New Electoral Landscape

David Crow

Department of Government, University of Texas at Austin

Victoria Rodríguez: "The 2003 Elections: Where Are the Women?"

The number of women elected to political office in Mexico has increased over the past 50 years, yet they are still woefully underrepresented, argued Professor Rodríguez. In the 1952-1958 Senate, there were no female senators and women occupied only 0.7% of the seats in the Chamber of Deputies. In the 2000-2006 Legislatures, their representation had increased to 17.2% and 16.0%, respectively.

In general, women have seen an increase in their representation in Congress since the 1982-1988 administration of Miguel de la Madrid. Despite this overall positive trend, there were two drops in women's representation over the past 20 years. During Salinas's *sexenio* (1988-1994), the number of female deputies in the lower chamber dropped from 59 to 44. After doubling during Zedillo's term, there was a slight decrease in the 2000 election. The percentage of women legislators by party increased for all three parties from 2000 to 2003, going from 15.2% (32) to 16.6% (37) for the PRI, 25% (13) to 28.4% (27) for the PRD, and 11.6% (24) to 29.8% (45) for the PAN.

The setbacks in numerical representation occurred during critical elections in 1991, when the PRI came back after the challenge of 1988, and in 2000. Rodríguez argued that the parties view men as more electable, and thus during critical elections they tend to nominate fewer women. Despite a voluntary quota adopted in the 1990s that party lists include 30% women candidates, parties have effectively skirted the quota by running women as alternates or putting them at the bottom of PR lists, thus making it significantly less likely that they will win office.

Rodríguez argued that despite progress, women face an uphill battle for representation in Mexico. "For women, it has been two steps forward, one step back" she stated. "That is, Mexico is now democratic and that represents important progress, but women are losing ground in terms of the numbers of representatives in Congress." On the one hand, there is evidence of a conservative backlash against women candidates that comes out most clearly in critical election. On the other hand, Rodríguez argued, women themselves are partly to blame: they have failed to define a coherent agenda and, as a movement, they are fragmented (as exemplified by the disputes between Amalia (García) and Rosario (Robles) in the PRD and Beatriz (Paredes) and Elba Esther (Gordillo) in the PRI—women, in Mexican politics, Rodríguez noted, are always called by their first names). The women of the PAN may lead the charge for greater political representation, since they are better organized, more professional, and exhibit cross-generational solidarity. This is somewhat surprising since the PAN is not particularly open to gender issues. Because of this, Rodríguez argued that the real winners of 2003 elections were the women of the PAN.

Joseph Klesner: "The Not-So-New Electoral Landscape Post-July 6"

The general perception is that the 2003 dealt the PAN a blow and represented a negative referendum on the party's performance in government. However, if one subtracts the roughly 5% of the 2000 vote for the PAN-PVEM alliance attributable to the PVEM (then called the Alliance for Change), the PAN obtained about the same vote share in 2003 as it did in 2000. The 2003 results, then, aren't as unfavorable for the PAN as they might first appear.

Taken as a whole, the pattern of competition between parties remained stable at the district level. Using Juan Molinar Horcasitas's NP Index for counting the number of effective political parties in a dominant party system, about half of the electoral districts have two-party competition, while a quarter have three-party competition. This aggregate pattern differs little from 2000. One difference is that while two-party competition has traditionally pitted the PRI against either the PAN or

the PRD, in 2003, competition emerged between the PAN and the PRD, at least in Mexico City's urban area.

The three parties' social bases of support exhibit continuity as well. The PAN remains urban, industrial, and Catholic, while the PRI is rural, non-Catholic, and doesn't attract voters in Mexico City. The PRD's base is more diffuse, incorporating some lower class and some middle class voters, although it remains primarily an urban party.

Voter participation in 2003 was low, registering only 42%. Such low turnout is not surprising, however, since more was at stake in previous midterm elections when the PRI still commanded a dominant position. Turnout has bounced around quite a bit, declining after electoral reforms and spiking upward during episodes of party mobilization. Turnout volatility will probably continue since a Mitofsky exit poll for 2003 showed that there are still many "floating voters" with weak or no party attachments.

According to the results of a quarterly series of voter surveys done by *Reforma* newspaper, party identification has remained stable over the past few years, with about 30% of voters consistently identifying themselves as independents. This level of partisanship has continued, despite the fact that the issue basis of party competition shifted after 2000. Before 2000, political reform issues were more salient, but following the PRI's loss, socioeconomic issues have taken center stage.

It is still too early to tell what will happen for the 2006 presidential elections. According to current poll, Andrés Manuel López Obrador is winning 70% support among PRD partisans, while Santiago Creel (PAN) and Roberto Madrazo (PRI) are winning a smaller percentage of their partisans' preferences.

Frederick Solt: "The National Effects of Subnational Institutions in Mexico: The 2003 Elections"

The dominant pattern of party competition in Mexico is bipartisan, with PRI-PAN contests dominating in the north and Yucatán and PRI-PRD races prevalent in the south and Baja California Sur. Three-way competition is relatively rare. These patterns appear stable, despite the fact that the effective number of political parties has increased steadily overall since 1991, from a national average of two parties in that year, to 2.5-plus in 1994 to around three since 1997 (2.9 in 1997, 2.8 in 2000, and 3.0+ in 2003).

The increase in pluralism comes in part from the PAN and PRD's ability to expand their share of the proportional representation seats in Congress. Nevertheless, regional biases remain and are show dramatic variation in the effective number of parties across states. The state with the highest effective number of political parties is Morelos with 4.4, and the lowest is Yucatán with 2.4 (vote shares of 46% for the PRI, 44% for the PAN, and 5% for the PRD).

Although some analysts have expected presidential systems to generate bipartisan competition at the national level, Mexico exemplifies the broader Latin American trend of pluralism in presidential systems. Regional variations in party support have created more than two national-level parties. This increased pluralism is also due to both the *timing* and the *format* of presidential elections. Where presidential elections are concurrent or separated by a year, pluralism tend to decrease (i.e., there are fewer parties). On the other hand, the existence of runoff elections counteracts the effect of concurrent elections and increases pluralism. These findings concur with those of Mark Jones whose work on Argentina indicates that the number of provincial parties affects national levels of pluralism.

At the state level, the number of effective parties is determined not only by concurrency with presidential and gubernatorial races (six states are concurrent, 10 hold them a year apart) but also whether the states have plurality, proportional representation, or mixed electoral systems, and whether there is a "governability clause" that overrepresents the plurality winner. Using data from the 2003 elections, pure proportional representation systems increase the effective number of parties by 0.33, while concurrent elections produce 0.5 fewer parties than in non-concurrent elections and 0.25 fewer parties than in cases where the governor is elected the following year. These effects are smaller for time series data since 1994, but still noteworthy.

Raúl Madrid: Discussant

In an impromptu response to the presentation, Raul Madrid remarked that Mexico seems to be looking a lot more like the United States and less like the rest of Latin America:

- 1) In midterm elections, the president's party is faring poorly.

- 2) Turnout is declining.
- 3) The number of female legislators is increasing in both countries.
- 4) There is relative stability of party identification, or little volatility.
- 5) State politics are increasingly affecting national politics
- 6) There are more two-party than three-party districts and states in Mexico.

Session 3

The LIX Legislature Composition, Challenges and Leadership

Chair/Moderator: Alejandro Poiré (ITAM)

Presenters:

- *Benito Nacif* (CIDE)

“What is Wrong with Deadlock?

Democracy and Divided Government in Mexico”

- *Jeff Weldon* (ITAM)

“Ideology and Voting Coalitions in the 59th Legislature”

- Discussion recorder: Jorge Morales Barud, LLILAS, University of Texas at Austin.

What is Wrong with Deadlock? Democracy and Divided Government in Mexico

Benito Nacif

Centro de Investigación de Docencia Económicas

1. Political and Divided Government

Transition to democracy in Mexico involved the transformation of the hegemonic party system into a competitive party system including the old-dominant PRI, the center-right PAN and the center-left PRD. This transformation undermined two central features of the previous authoritarian regime: a) the hegemony of a single political party and b) centralization of power in the presidency of the Republic

The development of a three-party system affected Congress. In 1997 the PRI lost its majority in the Chamber of Deputies (lower house of Congress) for the first time, starting a period of *divided government* that has continued after Fox won the presidency in 2000 and is likely to become a regular feature of Mexican democracy for the foreseeable future.

Divided government has had an enormous effect on the role of the Mexican president in the policy-making process. After 1997, policy change no longer resulted from negotiations between the president and the PRI in Congress, but rather involved forging agreements between the president’s party and at least one of the major opposition parties.

2. Does Divided Government Mean Deadlock in Congress and Is It a Problem?

Some argue that the new and more limited power of the presidency since 1997 and the divided Congress mean that Mexican democracy is mired by policy deadlock and unable to respond to the demands of society with substantive

changes. These analysts argue that the source of the problem is institutional and that without a profound reform to the Constitution the Mexican democracy will not be able to deliver comprehensive policy change.

I argue that most of what identified as “deadlock” is actually not deadlock and when deadlock in fact happens is not necessarily bad for democracy.

Three problems with the way deadlock is measured.

- a) Measuring deadlock by the volume of legislation.
- b) Measuring deadlock by legislative “productivity” (share of bills enacted as a percentage of bills introduced).
- c) Measuring deadlock with the rate of success of bills introduced by the president.

I argue that deadlock should be thought of as a situation in which the status quo policy prevails despite the fact that there is a majority in Congress supporting a different policy. This situation can only happen when the president uses his veto to prevent a majority in Congress from enacting a new policy.

Typically we think of the minimum condition for policy change in a democracy as the existence of a majority voting bloc on an alternative to the status quo. In Mexico, the constitution requires more than this minimum condition for change. Specifically, the executive veto can be sustained by 1/3 of the vote in one of the chambers of Congress. This means that the executive veto in fact supports the status quo.

Deadlock is in fact very difficult, if not impossible, to measure. We need to identify those cases in which Congress abstained from passing a bill anticipating that the president would veto it.

3. Is Policy Change Necessary for Democratic Stability?

I am inclined to think that democracies need successful policies. Policies are successful when they adapt to changing circumstances; however, they also need to be stable to attain their goals.

Comprehensive and rapid change is not conducive to success in the policy process. On the contrary, good policy making requires moderation and the opportunity for all legitimate interests to be taken into account.

In Mexico, the present constitutional arrangement based on checks and balances to the presidential party is more conducive to policy success in the long-term.

4. Conclusions

Deadlock is a much abused term. A proper definition of deadlock would take into account the minimum requirements for policy change from the status quo. There is little evidence that deadlock is a regular feature of Mexico’s nascent democratic regime. On the contrary, the last two presidents have used the executive veto rather sparingly.

But even if deadlock actually occurs, there is no substantive reason to expect that it is bad for democracy. What democracy needs are successful policies. Giving the government the ability to deliver rapid and substantial change will not necessarily lead to policy success.

Rapporteur’s Report

Session 3. The LIX Legislature: Composition, Challenges and Leadership.

Jorge Morales-Barud

Lozano Long Institute of Latin American Studies, University of Texas at Austin

According to Alejandro Poiré, session moderator, it seems that congressional deadlock is not a problem in Mexico; rather, the problem is one of multiple equilibria in which various types of party alliances could win on any given issue.

The questions raised by the audience during the discussion session were the following:

- What is the basis of divisions within the PRI? Are the divisions related to different policy preferences or are they

- explained by the specific personalities of PRI leaders?
- Is there evidence that party leaders influence on roll-call votes in Congress?
- Do intra-party struggles cause decreases in legislative productivity?
- Why is there a gap between the Congress' performance and voters' perceptions of its performance?

Panelists' Responses:

Gridlock in the Mexican Congress does not result from institutional rules specified in the Constitution, but rather it is a consequence of the incentive structure among legislators. Given that the incentive structure militates against legislative majorities, President Vicente Fox could exercise more influence over Congress; however, he has been hesitant to use his veto power and therefore has been largely ineffective in crafting legislative majorities.

Committees in Congress could also help solve problems of deadlock; however, as the panelists pointed out, the committees have unstable structures and are largely instruments of the political parties. In fact, it is the political parties themselves rather than the Congressional delegations that make legislative policy decisions. Therefore, even if agreements are made in committee, they may often get defeated on the floor if party leaders do not agree.

Whom to blame for legislative inefficiency? Currently, the president lacks consistent allies in Congress. The three parties – PRI, PAN, and PRD – are quick to defect from legislation that they believe could diminish their popularity in the electorate. As one potential partial solution to this problem, one panelist suggested repealing the prohibition against reelection to Congress.

Another persistent problem in that elections occur in Mexico at some level of the political system every year. Consequently, parties are always concerned about their public image and seem to worry more about popularity than policy. As one potential solution to this problem, panelists suggested making elections for governors, state legislators, and municipal officials concurrent. One panelist raised an objection, arguing that concurrent elections would create a situation in which legislative mid-term elections are strongly influenced by the governors' elections.

There was no direct answer to question of internal division in the PRI legislative group. It was said that the president of the party would be the arbiter in case of differences among the main PRI congressional leaders.

Citizens' general perception of congress is not favorable, and some panelists argued that the media fuel these negative perceptions through inaccurate reporting and a negative skew.

Session 4

Roundtable

What Are We Looking [out] For? Legislative Politics over the Short and Medium Term

Chair/Moderator: Kenneth Greene (University of Texas at Austin)

Participants:

- José Antonio Crespo (CIDE)
- Jeff Weldon (ITAM)
- Benito Nacif (CIDE)
- Roderic Ai Camp (Claremont College)

- Omar Bazán (PRI)
- Consul General Javier Alejo

Rapporteur's Report

Session 4. Roundtable

What Are We Looking [out] For? Legislative Politics over the Short and Medium Term.

Jorge Morales-Barud

Lozano Long Institute of Latin American Studies, University of Texas at Austin

Kenneth Greene was the moderator of this round table. He initiated the session by listing a number of highly salient policy reforms that could theoretically be undertaken by the LIX Legislature, if it were an extremely activist Congress. His intention was to provoke discussion on heated public policy issues. Among the issues listed were reforms to the energy sector, including privatization, fiscal reforms, including the value added tax (VAT), agriculture and land-tenure reforms, the reelection of legislators and municipal presidents, labor law reforms, and party finance reforms, including the possible reduction of expenditures on elections and public finance for the parties.

Panelists Responses:

Energy Sector Reforms. All panelists agreed that substantial reforms to the energy sector are unlikely during this legislature. Despite the fact that President Fox recently appointed Felipe Calderón Hinojosa, a senior *panista*, as Secretary of Energy, no one thought that real reform would be on the horizon. Despite the need for capital investment in the sector, it is unlikely that any of the main political actors will support privatization unless there are dramatic technical problems that create a significant economic slowdown and public outcries.

Fiscal Reform. Panelists agreed that fiscal reform is unlikely as well. While all agreed that the Mexican government needs new sources of revenue, the Value Added Tax (VAT) will likely not be raised nor will exemptions on food and medicine be lifted because both the PRI and the PRD are deadest against it.

Electoral Reform. Many of the panelists focused on the importance of rescinding the ban on reelection to Congress. They argued that reelection would professionalize the legislature and lead to both higher quality legislation as well as enhanced accountability to the voters. Nevertheless, no one thought that this much needed reform would occur during the upcoming legislature. As noted above, political party leaders wield an enormous amount of power over their congressional delegations. If reelection were allowed, this power would diminish and legislators would become more independent. As a result, the parties oppose reelection. For similar reasons, the parties oppose changing the proportional representation (PR) tier of the electoral system, currently set at 200 seats divided into five nationwide districts. The PR system uses closed-lists such that the parties control nominations and list order. If the system were reformed, it might enhance legislators' accountability to the voters, but it would diminish party control. As a result, party leaders oppose such a change.

Some panelists suggested that there might be support for reducing the number of PR seats from 200. Doing so would increase the weight of the single-member district seats in the Congress, and could enhance legislators' accountability to the voters. The PAN favors such a reduction, the PRI is currently ambivalent, and the PRD opposes the change.

Several panelists thought that there is enough support to revise the extensive public financing system for political parties. Currently, Mexican elections are the most expensive per capita in the world. An extensive public financing system was put in place during the 1990s to help level the playing field between a capital-rich PRI and capital-poor opposition parties. However, this system grew to be so large, that it now attracts significant negative public attention. It is now possible that the upcoming legislature will respond to public pressures to diminish the amount of public finance.

Labor Law Reform. It is very unlikely that labor law reform will pass because the largest labor confederation in the country – the CTM – opposes it. A reform would diminish union power by making hiring and firing easier and by creating open shops. In the past, the PRI might have been able to control the CTM and secure its political acquiescence; however, now that the PRI is out of power, the CTM is more independent and unlikely to bow to political pressures for labor law reform.

How Much Legislation Will Pass?

Overall, the panelists and moderator agreed that very little legislation is likely to pass on the most important issues. One reason concerns the electoral cycle. The only period during which reforms might pass is the second semester of 2003. Immediately after that, state election campaigns begin in 2004.

The moderator noted what seemed to be a contradiction. On the one hand, it was argued that gridlock is not a problem in Mexico. On the other hand, all panelists agreed that the most pressing reforms would not occur during the upcoming legislature. This apparent contradiction was “resolved” when panelists noted that in fact Congress has produced a lot of legislation in the past and is likely to pass much more in the future with a high degree of consensus; however, this legislation is likely to deal with more minor political issues.

Session 5

Whither the Parties?

The July 6th Elections and their Implications for Party Consolidation and Performance.

Chair/Moderator: Benito Nacif

Presenters:

- *Kenneth Greene* (Department of Government, UT Austin)
“Opposition Party Building and Party System Consolidation in Mexico”
- *David Shirk* (University of San Diego)
“The Party That Never Was:
The Pan in the 2003 Mid-Term Elections”
- *Joy Langston* (CIDE)
“The PRI after July 6, 2003”
- *José Antonio Crespo and Kenneth Greene*
“The PRD: Introductory Speculations”
- Discussion recorder: Fred Cady (Department of Government, University of Texas at Austin)

Opposition Party Building and Party System Consolidation in Mexico

Kenneth F. Greene

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Mexico’s party system is in surprisingly bad shape. About 60% of the electorate votes consistently for one of the three major parties, and the other 40% float between the options. The major parties are viewed as relatively unrepresentative of

the average voter's interests and the parties' legislative delegations are seen as engaging in factional squabbles more than in designing high quality legislation. Support for democracy, while higher than in many other new democracies, is lower than anytime since sample survey research on the mass public began in Mexico in the mid-1980s.

There are a lot of potential reasons for this reasonably sorry state of affairs, including rough economic times and the grandiose expectations for change after the 2000 elections. Another reason has to do with the way that the main opposition parties, the PAN and PRD, were constructed. Unlike parties in fully democratic systems, the PAN and PRD were built as outsider organizations that had virtually no hope of accessing power for decades. Their outsider status affected the type of candidates and activists the parties could attract, their organizational structures, and the policy appeals that they made in the electorate. Today, I'll show you evidence to support the idea that the PAN and PRD were built as niche parties that have had a hard time expanding, even when voters began to turn against the PRI in the 1980s and 1990s. I think that the rigidities built into the opposition parties helps explain not only why they were under-competitive for so long, but also why the major problems with Mexico's party system that I listed at the outset persist in 2003.

So in order to flesh-out and substantiate my claim that the PAN and PRD were built as niche parties rather than as ones with broad appeals, I'll show you data on two themes: the parties' policy appeals and their capacity to recruit more activists.

From studies on the voters, we know that most voters want policies that are middle of the road. In this sense, the Mexican electorate is a lot like the U.S. electorate. There certainly are voters who prefer very leftist or very rightist policies, but if a party wants to win, it would do better to offer more moderate policies.

Nevertheless, the PAN and PRD haven't been moderate in their appeals. Instead, the PAN has been significantly on the right and the PRD significantly on the left. Both parties even declared their positions on the issue by joining the Socialist International and the Christian Democracy International. The reason for their non-centrism on the issues comes from the type of candidates and activists they were able to recruit over the years.

In order to examine the characteristics of opposition party activists, I conducted a series of sample surveys at party conventions and national council meetings in 1999. The resulting data set has almost 1,500 responses across the three major parties.

I was particularly interested in the policy preferences of the leaders and activists in the surveys. One of the key partisan divisions in Mexico concerns economic policy. Some voters and activists support an economic policy that involves a big role for the state and others support the free market. In Figure 1 we see that, on the whole, voters are quite moderate – indicating incentives for the parties to establish moderate appeals – but we also see that national level leaders and activists in both parties are more extreme on the issues.

Figure 1. Left-Right Economic Preferences of Party Leaders/Activists and Voters

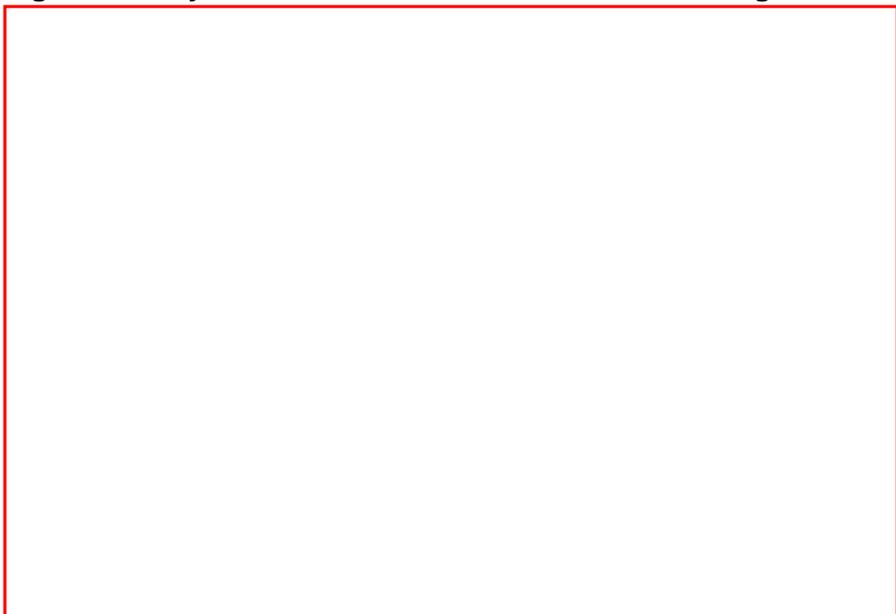


We also see that there are real differences between personnel inside each party. In the PAN there are hard-core market-

oriented personnel and those closer to the center-right. In the PRD, some personnel are extreme in their preference for state involvement in the economy, while others could be characterized as center-leftist. What causes these differences?

In Figure 2, I show predicted policy positions from a regression model that included numerous controls. The figure shows that leaders and activists in both the PAN and PRD who joined earlier were less centrist than those who joined later.

Figure 2. Party Leaders and Activists' Predicted Left/Right Economic Policy Preference



Of course the PRD was founded in 1989, so why does it appear that some activists joined earlier? What was important for me was the year when an activist initially joined the opposition and 45% of PRD activists were members of socialist and communist parties that existed prior to 1989.

What's really surprising here is that these policy preferences were expressed in 1999 and by this time, the electoral advantages to moderation were pretty clear. So the year of initial affiliation with an opposition party had durable effects on the policy preferences of activists.

Why would early-joiners endorse more radical policies than later joiners? Those who joined a challenger party early did so when the probability of victory was very low and there was a real possibility of risking repression. The only activists willing to affiliate with a challenger under these conditions were those who endorsed policies that were very distant from the status quo. As the PRI weakened, more moderate activists found it worthwhile to join.

This process of party building had effects on the PAN and PRD's organizational character and its ability to expand. Early-joiners with less moderate policies tended to rise to leadership positions, and they created tight links to small core constituencies in the electorate. This meant that they appealed to a limited slice of voters and that they had a hard time recruiting new activists from outside of their specific groups.

Both the PAN and PRD recruited activists from specific and identifiable segments of the population through feeder organizations. As you can see in Figure 3, the average number of organizational memberships for PAN activists in the left panel was about 2.5 overall, and even higher at about 3.5 for PRD activists. Interestingly, the reliance on specific feeder organizations reduces over time, paralleling the recruitment of more policy moderate activists.

Figure 3. Party Leaders and Activists' Organizational Affiliations (PAN y PRD)



The point that I want to make today with these data is that the reliance on feeder organizations to recruit new activists tended to create islands of support inside electoral districts and block the parties from broad expansion. Figure 4 shows national level data with the number of activists in each party by year and the coverage of the national territory. The way this coverage measure works is that if a party has the same number of activists in every area of the country, whether that is one or one million, it gets a score of 1. The more uneven the coverage, the lower the score.

Figure 4. Party Size and National Coverage



What we see here is that neither party is well spread out over the whole country, as we would expect. Perhaps a little surprising is how many activists the PRD claims. But what I am more interested in is the direction of movement on the nationalization score as the party adds members. Notice that as the PRD adds new activists, it is not spreading out more; rather, it is deepening its presence in areas where it already has a core constituency. The PAN seems to be spreading more, but notice that increases in national coverage occurred between 1992 (not shown) and 1997. In other periods, the party actually contracted its coverage as it expanded.

My argument is that the path-dependent process of opposition party building in Mexico's dominant party regime yielded challenger parties of a particular character: their niche orientations with specialized appeals to core groups of voters in the electorate made them rigid to innovation and expansion even when negative retrospective evaluations of the PRI in the electorate suggested that an opposition party should have been able to win.

What are the implications of this argument for the consolidation of Mexico's party system? I want to focus on four:

- Large and persistent group of non-aligned voters.
- Incentives for candidate-centered campaigns and personalist politics.
- Maintenance of 3p system
- Enhanced opportunities for the PRI to maintain / comeback

The Party That Never Was: The Pan in the 2003 Mid-Term Elections

David Shirk

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Introduction

In the wake of the 2003 Mexican mid-term elections, many pundits pronounced the results to be a shocking and dramatic defeat for the administration of President Vicente Fox, a member of the center-right National Action Party (PAN). Seen by many as a referendum on Fox's promises to bring "change" to Mexico, the campaign for control of the Mexican Congress – as well as 6 of 32 state-level governments and dozens of major cities– lasted 109 days and cost nearly half a billion dollars in public funds. For all the effort and expense, only 26 of 65 million eligible voters –a paltry forty percent– showed up at the polls, setting a new record for abstention in Mexican federal elections. Meanwhile, both of the PAN's major opposition parties –the Revolutionary Institutional Party (PRI) and the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD)– improved their performance relative to the PAN. In final analysis, the election was widely proclaimed a "Fox hunt" and a major defeat for both Fox and his party.

While the PAN's dramatic losses in the legislature certainly presented very real setbacks for the President and his agenda, the end result was hardly surprising, proved to be far less an indictment of Fox than many suggested, and in some ways merely perpetuated the *status quo ante*. Both before and after the election, the majority of the Mexican legislature remains opposed to the President; the PAN continues to govern the same number of state governments; and Fox's popularity remains extraordinarily high. Two sets of factors seem important for understanding the final outcome of the 2003 elections, and their implications for party politics in Mexico. On the one hand, the 2003 elections showed considerable consistency with recent trends in Mexico, including a tendency toward divided government, weak party identification among voters, and a growing importance of sub-national institutions and processes. On the other hand, and more importantly, these elections clearly demonstrated that the country's new ruling party is far weaker than many had imagined. That is, the 2003 electoral results revealed that the PAN, as a party and electoral competitor, was never as strong as suggested by the results of the 2000 elections.

Rather, the PAN in 2000 was the beneficiary of Fox's victory, not the reverse. Fox's victory resulted from a highly popular campaign, a massive protest vote against the PRI, and substantial "split-ticket" voting from supporters of other parties. While the PAN benefited from modest coattails in the process, it was not –in its own right– a well-developed mass party with a strong civic base in the Mexican electorate. In this sense, the PAN's experience in the 2003 elections provided a telling illustration the precarious world of Mexican party politics after 2000. In the aftermath of its transition from one party rule, Mexico is adjusting to a new reality that is increasingly characterized by candidate-centered campaigns, access to generous public funding, media-driven politics, and wavering voter interest.

Mexico's New Context

Going into the elections, many factors hinted that a loss of support for Fox's party was highly probable. Indeed, a decline in support for the president's party in democratic mid-term elections is often likely, since voters are not mobilized by a highly public national campaign focused on easily identifiable individual candidates. This frequently results in higher incidences and greater margins of divided government. For example, in the United States, divided government and mid-term losses for the President have been the norm, not the exception, since WWII. However, the PAN's loss of nearly 11% of electoral support and a third of its seats was hardly "normal." Compared to other similar presidential elections, where the average loss appears to be less than 5%, the PAN suffered a dramatic blow.^[4]

Other signs boded poorly for the PAN, as other parties started to regain their footing after 2000. Over a decade of decentralization of governmental resources to the state level –and newfound liberation from an omnipotent president– greatly strengthened state-level machines of the Revolutionary Institutional Party (PRI). Also, the left-leaning PRD made significant gains, thanks to popular up-and-coming 2006 Presidential candidate Andres Manuel López Obrador and by running on its own ticket, instead of pooling votes with the slew of mini-parties with which it allied itself in previous campaigns. In short, a number of factors seemed to place the PAN at a disadvantage going into the 2003 elections.

However, the organizational under-development of the PAN was probably the most significant factor contributing to the 2003 result. Indeed, much less a commentary on President Fox –whose overall popularity leading up and after the elections remained high (near 60%) – the 2003 elections proved to be a defeat for the PAN. Or, more appropriately, the 2003 elections provided a much more genuine representation of the actual organizational and electoral weakness of the PAN as a political party than seen in the 2000 elections. In short, the real puzzle is not really why the PAN won so few votes in 2003, but why they won so many in 2000.

The 2003 Mid-Term Elections

Fox's first three-years in office were complicated by an opposition majority legislature, and a bureaucracy still run by largely members of the PRI. For this reason, the PAN ran on a slogan asking voters to "take the brakes off of change." Nonetheless, in the aftermath of the election, the Congress remained in the hands of the divided opposition, led by a still recovering PRI and a rapidly rising PRD. Four of Mexico's small parties failed to obtain the minimum two percent of the national vote required to keep their registrations, which will send them to the graveyard of political history. The death of Mexico's "Lilliputian" parties, which confuse voters and tie up public funds, was perhaps the best news for those hoping to strengthen the mandates of the three larger parties. Indeed, the PRI gained a total of 17 seats, rising from 207 in 2000 to 224 in 2003, an 8% gain; the PRD made even larger relative progress, nearly doubling its total number of seats from 52 to 95. Meanwhile, the PAN lost over a quarter of its seats in the Congress, with the actual number of seats dropping from 207 to 151. Still, the PAN remained well ahead of its more mediocre 1997 mid-term performance, when it gained only three new seats in the legislature.

In this sense, the PAN's losses –while severe– were partly a correction for the boost the party experienced in the 2000 elections. Indeed, its losses in 2003 suggested that the party's gains in the 2000 were the result of significant "coattail" effect related to Fox's campaign. In effect, the 2003 elections proved that the PAN never actually succeeded in building a party organization capable of maintaining the gains made in 2000. The election was therefore less a reflection of lost PAN support, than of the party's excessive dependence on the strength of its candidates and the relative weakness of its organization. The implications for the PAN's near-term electoral prospects and its ability to govern effectively are potentially quite gloomy. Given the improbability of increasing the PAN's membership base over the remainder of Fox's term, the organization is unlikely to expand its ties to civil society.

Further Implications: Prospects for Mexican Democracy

Despite the PAN's losses in 2003, most signs pointed to the positive side of the "change" Fox had promised during his 2000 campaign. That change was not, perhaps, what many anticipated or hoped for, but it was something new to Mexico, nonetheless. Change meant orderly adherence to democratic procedure, instead of the massive frauds and post-election devaluation hangovers of the past. Change meant an end to the orgy of abusive power under a single omnipotent party, and its replacement by the drudgery of congressional cohabitation by multiple, significantly weaker parties. Change meant gridlock, seen in the United States as the hallmark of a democratic balance of power known as "checks and balances." Change meant that after 2000, the Mexican president and other politicians would be held accountable for their actions, or inaction, in public office. None of this necessarily spelled an end to effective governance. In fact, as illustrated by Jeff Weldon's conference remarks, Mexico's fractionalized 58th Congress passed twice as much legislation under Fox as the equally divided legislature that preceded it under Zedillo. Thus, Fox's failure to pass highly controversial legislation – including a value-added tax on food and medicine and energy sector reforms– during the first half of his terms simply proved that his mandate was for political change, not wholesale economic restructuring.

An additional point worth noting is that "change" in Mexico after 2000 also meant that state and local politics now mattered more than ever before, thanks to nearly two decades of growing fiscal, political, and even demographic decentralization to the "periphery." Bolstered by new reforms giving them control over more than half of all tax revenues, Mexican state governors and municipal mayors are increasingly important players in the new political scenario. Indeed, the PRI's

resilience in the 2003 election was less due to the effectiveness of its national leadership, than to the strengthening of its 17 newly empowered state governors and the local political machines operating in hundreds of municipalities, the fattened children of decentralization. This surely explains why the PRI was able to hang on in states like Campeche and Colima in 2003, and gained several new seats in the legislature. Meanwhile, the fact that the PRI won Nuevo León, is more likely a result of local PAN failures than a clear mandate for the PRI. The still contested race in the border state of Sonora may ultimately yield a victory and net *gain* (from 9 to 10 states) for the PAN, whose creeping growth at the state level remains its saving grace.

Most importantly, the 2003 elections left each of the three major parties within striking range of the presidency in the next federal elections, slated for 2006. The PRI's legislative gains and consolidation of its state and local power bases left it well positioned to set the agenda in that election, and gave it the greatest numerical odds of winning. Meanwhile, the PAN remained the country's second largest party, with several of potential candidates aspiring to follow in Fox's footsteps. Sadly for would-be PAN nominees, Fox's circumvention of the party in 2000 six made it even more likely that party leaders would try to apply a restrictive nominations process in the next election, meaning that the party's candidate would be more representative of the PAN than the general electorate. Finally, the spectacular performance of the left-leaning PRD caught many pundits by surprise in the 2003 election, as it ground against both the PRI and the PAN, and polled roughly a fifth of the national vote. The PRD's performance was bolstered by the rising popularity of Mexico City mayor Andrés Manuel López Obrador, also known by the acronym "AMLO," whose ambitions to seek the Mexican presidency in 2006 were made obvious from the outset of his term (2000-2006). While pundits likened López Obrador to Brazil's President "Lula," who showed that the modern left *can* behave itself in Latin America, his similarities to Fox may ultimately prove more *apropos*. Following in Fox's footsteps, López Obrador began early in his term as Mexico City mayor to generate popular support through impressive public works and popular social programs. Perhaps even more importantly, he turned for financial support to Mexico's business community, drawing early backing from Carlos Slim, Mexico's wealthiest businessman. In the absence of a strong party organizations with organic and democratic ties to civil society, the average Mexican –now burdened by worsening economic conditions– may yet again turn to the candidate best capable of creating an image as Mexico's savior.

In short, following the example of Vicente Fox in 2000, López Obrador may prove that presidential candidates no longer need a strong party base to win the Mexican presidency. Yet even if he fails in his ambitions, Mexico's great political experiment with democracy has changed the parameters of the possible and the probable. For the PAN, the party that became the vehicle for this enormous change, it will be necessary to adjust to these the new political dynamics. As I have attempted to show, the PAN has been blessed with a firm foundation, strong convictions, and deeply committed activists. Now, as always, the difficulty confronting the party is not finding people of valor to guide the party through newfound challenges, but choosing among them.

The PRI after July 6, 2003

Joy Langston

Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas

I have three central themes in my talk today.

First, *The unity of the PRI*.

- a. The reasons why one should have expected the PRI to split.
- b. Some of the reasons why the PRI has maintained internal unity.
- c. The new statutory rules.

Second, *The decentralization of power within the party*.

Here, I'll talk about the different aspects of gubernatorial power.

Third, *the challenges for the PRI and Madrazo in the near and medium term*: the reforms in Congress, the 2004 gubernatorial elections, the dispute between Manlio Fabio Beltrones and Elba Ester Gordillo, and finally, the presidential nomination process.

There were many, myself included, who thought there were good possibilities that the PRI would fragment as an organization, and its members search out other party options (or leave politics altogether). The president had always acted as the Leviathan who forced members of the party to cooperate over time. This cooperation had benefited the party as a whole, and many or most of the individual members within it. By forcing the PRI politicians to accept the dictates of the president, especially over candidate selection, ideological platforms, and campaign strategy (among other things), the party continued to win elections and maintained internal unity. Individual ambitions were sacrificed to the good of the regime as a whole (as understood by each president in turn).

So, once the president of Mexico was no longer a member of the PRI, one would have expected that cooperation would have fallen by the wayside. Furthermore, statutory rules had still not been capable of determining outcomes without the backing of the president so that the pressures of personal ambition would have won out over the interests of the party organization. This fact, together with the exit opportunities for disgruntled politicians should have caused internal ruptures and even fragmentation after the loss of the presidential chair.

There were several key moments when it appeared that the party was about to split:

- a. right after the 2000 elections.
- b. When they were attempting to organize the National Assembly.
- c. During the National Assembly of November, 2001.
- d. During the election of the new president of the CEN in February, 2002.
- e. During the candidate selection process of 2003.

We have seen the general forces that could have led to a rupture, but what were the particular pressures?

First, the vaulting ambitions of Madrazo to take over and impose his candidacy for the presidency of the CEN always with an eye toward the presidency of the Republic. Second, the distrust of the other power members of the PRI who had been adversaries of the former governor of Tabasco since 1994 and then 1999. Third, the ambitions of other members of the party to take over the most important party positions. Two related fears: the first, that Madrazo would leave the party, and second, that Madrazo would ruin the party's chances in future elections through a misguided strategy.

So, *why hasn't the party fragmented?* Just as the figure of Roberto Madrazo, is the center of rupture worries, he has much to do with the success of the party, and this success keeps the party together because it is still considered a viable electoral option, and so it delivers benefits to ambitious politicians. The PRI has not performed badly at the local and state levels, making clear that the party label is still a valuable asset in many states.

Madrazo has been able to remain on the front pages of the newspapers, participate in government through his role as party president, enjoy access to money through the IFE financing, and place his allies in party positions, and more importantly, in candidacies. He also has been developing relationships with local party politicians through his work with the *Comités Directivos Estatales*. All these activities give him power. By maintaining himself in a dominant position, he has kept other potential leaders on the defensive, except of course, Elba Ester Gordillo, leader of the huge Teachers' Union.

The party members in Congress discovered that by blocking Fox's government programs that had to go through the legislature; they did not jeopardize their popularity. Rather, the voting population rejected the party in power, not the opposition PRI. By finding a successful strategy in congress vis-a-vis the Executive, this helped maintain the unity of the party, as ideological preferences and electoral strategy called for the same legislative behavior.

According to one important political actor during this period, the party didn't fracture because of a rational decision on the part of some of its strongest anti-Madrazo leaders. They believed that if didn't get to participate in an open fashion, which is what would benefit him (at that moment) then he would leave the party. This internal rupture would have been an enormous blow to the future of the organization; one that DMS and BP at least, wanted to avoid. Therefore, they made a calculation: (in her words, *con Madrazo en el partido había esperanzas, pero en caso de una ruptura, ya no la había.*) it was better to lose in this round and allow RM to take over the party structure, rather than not allow him to participate which would cause a split. Other analysts believe that Madrazo has had such success not because of a rational calculation on the part of other actors, but because of their miscalculations: they believed Madrazo when he said he would abide by the rules or the accords, and then seemed to be taken aback when he went back on his word, and won the day.

Formal Rule Changes

What has been emphasized is the new importance of the CPN and the state CPs. They now draw up the *convocatorias* for choosing the candidate nomination method.

(I'm thinking that the form in which you choose the members of the CPs is now more democratic). Her doubt was that the CPs would be strong enough by 2005 to resist the attempts to steal the candidacy by the "caudillo" of the party.

Another important change was the inclusion in the statutes of *consultas a las bases* for diputado federales. However, there are still other forms available, and you can still have candidates of unity.

Decentralization of power

The governors of the PRI have become far more important political actors than ever before, or at least since the 1920s. For example, the system of quotas has changed a great deal in determining candidates for federal deputies. The CTM has in large part seen its quota reduced to a minimum. The CNC, because its candidates can still win elections in certain areas, has done better. The amorphous CNOP continues, at it always has, to hold the most deputies, but clearly most of these politicians are only nominally leaders of a CNOP organization. This is a residual category that doesn't tell us much about why the politician won the nomination.

Since 1997, the governors have had far greater influence in placing allies (most local politicians) in the Lower House, and even in the Senate. This trend is even more pronounced now that the presidency has been lost to the PAN.

In majority positions, the governors held sway. In the pluris, Madrazo came home with the prize, and in imposing his allies, he closed the door to many other groups, such as EZ allies, and the CNC. In states in which there is no PRI governor, strong state party organizations were able to choose in open methods candidates that weren't tied to any particular group or sector, but whom were popular with the average voter. Jalisco would be an example. But in weaker opposition states, RM again was able to impose candidates.

In the 97 districts in which there was an alliance with the Green Party, the regular statutory rules did not apply and these candidates were designated by the CEN. In the other 203 districts, there were *convocatorias* for open primaries, but of these, at least 90 were *candidatos de unidad*. These candidates were supposedly chosen or selected through processes of negotiation, between the governor, the interested parties, and the CEN.

Aside from their ability to win candidacies for their allies, the PRI governors are strong for other reasons.

1. they are becoming king-makers in the sense that they can make alliances with national figures. In fact, there were complaints from Manlio Fabio Beltrones that the Governor of Veracruz was influencing the vote of the deputies from his state in the vote for the coordinator of the PRI fraction in congress.^[5]
2. some of the governors are vying to become the next presidential candidate. Montiel and Natividad Para are apparently two of the strongest contenders.
3. many of them can use their state resources for party ends.
4. the governors control their state party organizations.
5. they are far more able to impose successors or at least help their allies win the gubernatorial nominations, either via a manipulated primary, or via negotiations with the central party headquarters.
6. they are capable to negotiating with the president over fiscal matters, and have organized a group to do so (CONAGO).
7. if they are able to coordinate, they could play a large role in the succession process within the PRI.

This is a new aspect of PRI .

The Near Future

As of now, the party and the President of the Party have been greatly strengthened by the election results of 2003; however, both have some serious challenges in the near future.

The first challenge would be the division between Madrazo and Gordillo. Many have recognized that the SNTE is one of the few sectors or peak level functional associations that still holds serious power in Mexico. The SNTE gives Gordillo power

beyond her position as second in command of the party. She is able to negotiate with presidents, governors, and the leader of the PRI. It's not clear to many within the PRI what the Maestra wants: to be leader of the PRI or of the nation, or to play an important role in the presidential succession. She could even leave the party. So in the short to medium run, Madrazo must block her from becoming even more powerful without creating too much animosity. If Gordillo is able to move forward with the legislative reforms that she and Fox have been advocating, and the economy moves forward (and these two sets of event don't have to be causally related), we may find that the leader of the PRI fraction in the lower house is far better positioned for a run at the presidency or to block Madrazo's.

Not all believe that the July 6th elections were totally positive for the tricolor. In fact, many caution that while the PRI did not take a dive, it did lose votes, and what greatly enhanced its total number of seats in congress was the even distribution of the votes across many districts.

So, there is the question of how to read the election results, which requires careful work with a post-electoral poll that CIDE and ? have carried out. Did the voters reject Fox, his administration's inability to carry reform packages through congress, the economic downturn, or the general ideological and developmental direction of the nation, i.e., neo-liberalism? The PAN attempted a campaign blaming the PRI for obstruction tactics in Congress (take the break off change), but this failed, but this does not mean that the voters will accept an obstructionist.

The reading of these elections is important: If the voter is rejecting the ideological bent of the PAN administration, then clearly Madrazo should only negotiate those reforms that will aid him when he is president, namely the fiscal reform. Otherwise, he can block everything, and there will be no costs at the ballot box. If, however, the voter is rejecting something else, and recognizes the PRI's legislative tactics, then Madrazo's strategy could backfire for the 2006 elections. Benito argued in an article in *Enfoque* that the PRI's legislators were moving toward the Left. I would argue that they had never left the Left; simply put, the presidents of Mexico had shifted toward a neo-liberal development plan, and because of the structure of the party and regime, the priistas had no choice but to vote with them. I think the anti-reform tactics we're seeing now are heart-felt ideological stands on the part of the vast majority of PRI stalwarts. It remains to be seen how well this model can be packaged and sold in 2006. It is also credible to think that if the PRI's sympathizers choose the next presidential candidate, they could very likely select one that is as far to the left as the PRD's candidate, leaving a great deal of room for the eventual PAN candidate to maneuver, and very little for Lopez Obrador.

In the 2004 election cycle, Madrazo will have to contend with 10 gubernatorial elections and four other local elections. Of the 10 state races, two are especially important, Veracruz and Puebla, which are large states in terms of electoral districts and voters. The problem for the CEN is the huge fine that was imposed by the IFE and which has cut down dramatically on spending.

If Madrazo can come up with financing (and there are some indications that he does have money), he would be able to support both the nomination and the campaign efforts. This would of course allow him to make allies in at least some of these 10 states. If however, he does not deliver good results, at least as good as six years ago, than again, we could begin to see problems. According to some, Madrazo at this point enjoys the support of approximately six governors. He could build a far larger coalition in the next year through the judicious distribution of support and resources.

The Presidential Nomination

Madrazo now says that it's dangerous and divisive to hold an open primary to choose the next presidential candidate for the PRI. The CPN will choose the form in which this will take place (Article 81, section XII). The available options are: primary, and convention (Article 181). It remains to be seen how many members of this body are beholden to the leader of the CEN.

The governors, especially those entering now, could be a threat to Madrazo's aspirations to win the nomination, even more so because of his low acceptance in the polls. The most likely PRD candidate, Lopez Obrador leads the other two party's probable candidates with 37% of the preferences, followed by Creel with 23% and Madrazo with 20%. Among PRI supporters, Madrazo holds 42% of the preferences. Arturo Montiel, follows with 13% of support among PRI sympathizers. Alejandro Moreno, *Reforma* (8 septiembre 2003).

Rapporteur's Report

Session 5: Whither the Parties? The July 6 Elections and Their Implications for Party Consolidation and

Performance

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Following formal presentations by Kenneth Greene, David Shirk, Joy Langston, and José Antonio Crespo, Benito Nacif and Wendy Hunter framed questions and issues for discussion.

Wendy Hunter, in her role as discussant, Hunter made four major observations concerning the panel presentations. First, she argued that the main political parties in Mexico seem to be tremendously irrational. Second, she said that it appears history and institutional rules matter, as was stressed in Kenneth Greene's presentation. Third, individual ambition matters. Though it doesn't seem as if Roberto Madrazo and Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas are very popular with the Mexican public, their personal desire to be president is affecting their respective political parties heading toward 2006. Fourth, organization matters, as both David Shirk and Kenneth Greene demonstrated when discussing the electoral performance of the Partido Acción Nacional (PAN) and Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) in 2003. She was surprised how seldom economics was mentioned by the panelists, as it probably would have been if the panelists were discussing political parties in other Latin American countries. In her opinion, a broader interpretation of the theme could have aided in understanding party performance.

Benito Nacif observed that there seemed to be a big mismatch between what party leaders want and what their voters want.

The panelists and members of the audience began with the questions of rationality in party strategies and the apparent disconnect between parties and the electorate.

Kenneth Greene agreed with the "collective irrationality" argument presented by Hunter. He said that the parties just "don't get" the benefits of moderating. He then pointed to another form of irrationality that exists in some of the parties. This form of irrationality occurs when individuals seek party leadership and then once obtaining it, they run the party in a limited and controlling fashion. This hierarchical style limits the parties' ability to expand and win elections.

Clarissa Pérez Armendariz asked whether it is ever rational for a party to remain toward the extremes on the issues and avoid moderating. *Greene* responded that in the context of three party competition, there are electoral incentives for moderation but not complete convergence on the median. An exception to this logic would obtain if the parties are concerned about abstention due to voter alienation. In other words, if voters on the extremes are not voting because they view the parties as too centrist and if there are many voters on the extremes, then parties would have incentives to stay away from the center in order to increase turnout (and presumably increase the votes a party receives). So not moving to the center can, at times, be considered rational behavior for a political party. However, the distribution of voters' preferences in Mexico is normal and centrist, so there should be advantages to moderation. Fox engineered his campaign specifically to promote moderate appeals, but in order to do so, he had to make an "end run" around his party in 2000. López Obrador will have to do the same in 2006 if he wants to win.

Langston argued that the parties act irrationally with respect to the voters because they do not know where the voters are (ideologically). They either do not have or systematically ignore information on voters' preferences and thus cannot act with strategic rationality. Pushing the logic one step further, she argued that the parties may be able to convince voters to move their issue preferences, especially since Mexico is in a period of political transition. Langston then argued that the PRI suffers from a kind of nomination irrationality, using the case of party president Roberto Madrazo as an example. The party structure is an important resource in and of itself and (in regard to candidate nominations) it does not always follow the most popular candidate, as is generally the case with political party structures in the United States. Instead, party insiders who are able to gain control of intra-party resources often come to control the party organization and the nomination process. This can result in a form of nomination irrationality. Despite these strategic problems, Langston argued that the PRI is returning to the median voter with respect to its stands on economic issues, following its neoliberal economic policy positions since the mid-1980s.

David Shirk continued the theme and argued that individual ambition is a sort of "liquid rationality." According to the Iron Law of Oligarchy, a leader will maintain, or try to maintain, power even if it is not good for the party as a whole. He then commented that the trend of television/candidate centered elections has reached Mexico. Vicente Fox's 2000 campaign and recent actions by Mexico City Mayor Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO) are examples of this new reality. In reference to points made during an earlier presentation, Shirk said that he does not see Felipe Calderón as a viable

candidate (for the PAN's 2006 presidential nomination) outside of the PAN. Calderón has never won an election and Carlos Medina Plascencia (the other name mentioned as a possible PAN nominee in 2006 during a previous presentation) has only won the municipal presidency in León, Guanajuato. He pointed out that in 2006 "the left" is likely to be larger than it currently is because he sees the Mexican economy getting worse between now and then. Given this, an important question to ask is to what extent can the PRI take advantage of faltering economic growth.

Federico Estévez contended that Hunter's comments on rationality miscued the discussion. He argued that the purpose of the old opposition parties was to bring democracy to Mexico, and that was accomplished. Achieving democracy was their most important goal and the organization that they had (in being "cadre-based parties") was sufficient to reach it. He said that the organization of the former opposition parties is not a defect because the old valence issue of democracy is still relevant to the voters. Estévez added that the early attention given to the potential 2006 candidates will flush some of them out and also force the candidates to take stands, so he sees little wrong with the early attention given to the 2006 presidential race.

Kenneth Greene disagreed with Estévez and stated that although the pre-2000 form of organization among the opposition parties was functional for mobilizing core activists to push for democracy, it also built in rigidities that make it difficult to expand into catchall parties with broad appeals in the electorate, not just among activists. Candidates have had to fix these defects by trying to engineer end-runs around the existing organizations, and this has set off power struggles between candidates and their parties over strategic positioning.

A member of the audience noted that in a prior panel on voting behavior, Alejandro Moreno presented data indicating that PAN identifiers have always been more centrist than PRI identifiers. If that is so, then the PAN is in a strategically advantageous position. Greene responded that left vs. right positions are difficult to interpret in Mexico. Before 2000, left-right orientations tapped both the degree to which voters supported democracy or authoritarianism and the degree to which one supported state involvement in the economy or market mechanisms. This two-dimensional competition space confused the meaning of left vs. right and made it difficult to interpret responses to simple questions on mass opinion surveys. After 2000, the political divide disappeared, or decreased dramatically in salience, making it likely that left vs. right refers to economic development policy; however, we need more data to determine if this is so.

David Shirk agreed with Estévez to an extent and commented that cadre-based parties can reconfigure themselves. In addressing Consul General Alejo's remarks about the PAN not winning the 2000 presidential election (stating it was Fox and not the PAN that won), Shirk agreed with the statement and pointed out that for the PAN, 2000 was an aberration and not the norm. Although the PAN has been able to develop a model to win local elections – a model based on promising and delivering good government at the local level – the party now faces the challenger of figuring out how to grow as a party at the national level without losing its local model.

José Antonio Crespo turned to the theme of candidates and argued that image politics and a brand of populism have been effective. Fox's popularity is high because the public has sympathy for his good intentions and not because of what he has accomplished. President Fox has now realized that his popularity and good image has not helped him get things accomplished. With policies such as giving stipends to older residents, López Obrador's government has gotten things accomplished in the Capital, and this has helped the PRD out quite a bit in Mexico City.

Peter Ward commented that it seems as if the parties are looking for "a man on the horse" to strengthen them. Currently, Andrés Manuel López Obrador is that man on the horse for the PRD. Does the PRI have such a candidate?

Joy Langston responded that the former communist parties of Eastern Europe were first decimated and then reemerged from the ashes. The PRI has not been punished like the communist parties of Eastern Europe, and it still maintains a national presence that would be the "pride and joy" of other parties around the world. The PRI may no longer be a mass based party, but it has done a good job at transforming itself from a party of social sectors into a party geared toward campaigns. Comparing the PRI to the KMT in Taiwan, she said that the KMT is getting progressively weaker despite the fact that it has not split. The PRI will do better than the KMT, though the KMT has thus far done better than the former communist parties of Eastern Europe.

José Antonio Crespo argued that Madrazo is well positioned in his post as party president to compete for the nomination. He does not have to "raise his hand" and declare his potential candidacy, like some PRI governors have been doing, because of his position within the party. Crespo said that the use of party posts to obtain candidacy slots could be the subject of future party reforms. Finally, campaigns for the presidency are likely to begin early. Vicente Fox launched his

candidacy for the 2000 race in 1997. So we might expect to see campaigns for 2006 launched this year.

[1] All aggregate data comes from the final count of the PREP (Programa de Resultados Electorales Preliminares), and updating with the final official count should yield minimal .

[2] “Prefieren gobierno dividido”, *Reforma*, July 7, 2003: 16A.

[3] August 24-27, 2003, face to face nation-wide poll, n=955.

[4] Personal correspondence with David Samuels (7/8/03). Drawing on an overall dataset of over 100 countries, Samuels suggests that mid-term seat losses for the president's party in electoral systems similar to Mexico's are on average -4.6% (and -2.2% when comparing all types of systems).

[5] Information from *Reforma*, 18 July 2003, “Razonan Su Voto” and *El Norte*, 20 July 2003, “M.a. Kiavelo”.