



City Research Online

## City, University of London Institutional Repository

---

**Citation:** Benton, A. L. (2017). Configuring authority over electoral manipulation in electoral authoritarian regimes: evidence from Mexico. *Democratization*, 24(3), pp. 1-23. doi: 10.1080/13510347.2016.1236789

This is the accepted version of the paper.

This version of the publication may differ from the final published version.

---

**Permanent repository link:** <https://openaccess.city.ac.uk/id/eprint/23088/>

**Link to published version:** <https://doi.org/10.1080/13510347.2016.1236789>

**Copyright:** City Research Online aims to make research outputs of City, University of London available to a wider audience. Copyright and Moral Rights remain with the author(s) and/or copyright holders. URLs from City Research Online may be freely distributed and linked to.

**Reuse:** Copies of full items can be used for personal research or study, educational, or not-for-profit purposes without prior permission or charge. Provided that the authors, title and full bibliographic details are credited, a hyperlink and/or URL is given for the original metadata page and the content is not changed in any way.

---

---

---

City Research Online:

<http://openaccess.city.ac.uk/>

[publications@city.ac.uk](mailto:publications@city.ac.uk)

---

# **Configuring Authority over Electoral Manipulation in Electoral Authoritarian**

## **Regimes: Evidence from Mexico**

Version: September 2016

[Word count: 9,000, including text, notes, references, tables, figures, maps]

### **Allyson Lucinda Benton**

División de Estudios Políticos  
Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas, A.C. (CIDE)  
Carretera México-Toluca 3655  
Colonia Lomas de Santa Fé  
México, D.F. C.P. 01210  
Tel.: (52) 55-5727-9800, ext. 2408  
Fax: (52) 55-5727-9871  
E-Mail: allyson.benton@cide.edu  
E-Mail: allyson.benton@gmail.com

**Keywords:** authoritarian regimes, electoral authoritarian regimes, subnational  
authoritarian regimes, electoral manipulation, authoritarian decentralization, Mexico

# **Configuring Authority over Electoral Manipulation in Electoral Authoritarian Regimes: Evidence from Mexico**

**Abstract:** How do electoral authoritarian autocrats choose strategies for manipulating elections? Most scholars assume that autocrats strategize all electoral manipulation from above, with local regime agents charged with carrying out these top-down strategies. In contrast, a few assume that local regime agents strategize all electoral manipulation from the bottom up. More likely, reality lies in between. To make this point, I build an argument for how autocrats might configure the distribution of decisions over electoral manipulation among regime agents. I argue that autocrats delegate decisions about electoral manipulation to local regime agents in core regime districts – to ensure aggregate support – and to regime agents in recently marginal regime districts – to ensure territorial control. In contrast, autocrats determine strategies in long-time marginal districts and in those turned adverse to the regime. Statistical analysis of a unique political reform in one state in electoral authoritarian Mexico – where autocrats transferred the authority to restrict political rights and the secret ballot to some pro-regime agents but not to all – supports the argument. It also reinforces the proposition that wholly centralized/decentralized decision-making about electoral manipulation only occurs under specific political conditions, undermining the empirical validity of these assumptions in current research.

**Biography:** Allyson Lucinda Benton is a research professor in the Division de Estudios Políticos at the Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas (CIDE). Her research focuses on how economic factors affect voting behaviour, inter-governmental relations, and inter- and intra-party dynamics, as well as on how political factors affect investment flows, stock markets, and domestic economic and fiscal policy choices, especially subnational debt decisions, in Latin America. Beyond political economy, she is examining participatory governance measures undertaken in other states during Mexico's electoral authoritarian regime. Her research has appeared in a variety of venues, including *Business & Politics*, *Comparative Politics*, *Comparative Political Studies*, *Governance*, the *Journal of Theoretical Politics*, *Political Research Quarterly*, *Public Budgeting & Finance*, and *Publius: The Journal of Federalism*, as well as Spanish language venues. She has consulted for the Inter-American Development Bank, as well as advised financial institutions, corporations, governments, and credit ratings agencies on political risk in Mexico and in Latin America. A member of Mexico's Sistema Nacional de Investigadores (Nivel II), Dr. Benton has worked at CIDE since 2001. She received her PhD in Political Science, specializing in comparative politics and methodology, from the University of California, Los Angeles in 2001.

**Acknowledgements:** I would like to thank Francisco Cantú, Federico Estévez, Sebastian Garrido, Carolina Garriga, Ezequiel González, Micah Gell-Redman, Joy Langston, Greg Love, Gerardo Maldonado, Scott Mainwaring, John Marshall, Kunle Owolabi, Vidal Romero, Paul Schuler, and Milan Svolik for comments that greatly improved this study. Francisco Cantú, Michelle Dion, Carolina Garriga, and Greg Love provided statistical advice, while Sebastian Garrido and Luis Felipe Álvarez León at Cartográfica taught map-making. Thanks also go to participants in CIDE's Seminario de Política y Gobierno in October 2012, GIGA's research seminar in April 2013, ITAM's Seminario de Investigación in September 2014, CIDE's Political Economics Symposium: Institutions and Rational Choice in December 2014, and the University of Notre Dame's Comparative Politics Workshop and the Kellogg Institute's Mexico Working Group in December 2015. A version was also presented at the Midwestern Political Science Association's annual meetings in April 2013.

## **Introduction**

How do electoral authoritarian autocrats choose strategies for manipulating elections? The “menu of manipulation”<sup>1</sup> includes a variety of technologies that can be used to bias election processes in their favour.<sup>2</sup> Autocrats can legally manipulate formal electoral rules ahead of elections, such as district magnitudes and boundary lines, candidate selection and list placement, and campaign resource allocations. They can also engage in a variety of informal and illegal practices, such as the discretionary enforcement of formal electoral rules, candidate and voter intimidation, vote buying and voting fraud.<sup>3</sup>

The variety of ways that autocrats can manipulate elections has led to a surge in studies examining why, how, and to what extent they do. Most studies assume that autocrats rely on local regime agents to carry out electoral manipulation.<sup>4</sup> However, the precise role that local regime agents play in determining strategies for electoral manipulation has been given little theoretical treatment.<sup>5</sup> Recent theories about electoral manipulation have tended to adopt highly stylized views about the role of regime agents in it. At one extreme, some scholars assume that autocrats strategize all electoral manipulation from the top down, with local regime agents merely carrying out these strategies on the ground. They use this as a starting point for theorizing about how autocrats’ vary top-down strategies according to local political conditions.<sup>6</sup> At the other extreme, some scholars assume that local regime agents take all decisions about electoral manipulation from the bottom up, with autocrats entirely delegating these decisions to them. They use this as point of departure for examining how local regime agents’ decisions change with local political conditions.<sup>7</sup>

These two highly stylized views operate as simplifying assumptions allowing scholars to examine other questions. However, the risk that poorly executed electoral manipulation will trigger anti-regime backlash<sup>8</sup> suggests that autocrats may not take such extreme approaches. The possibility that wholly bottom-up decision-making by local regime agents will result in the overproduction<sup>9</sup> of electoral manipulation – raising the chance of its detection and therefor backlash against it – should lead autocrats to question the benefits of the wholly decentralized approach. Efforts to avoid the overproduction of electoral manipulation may lead autocrats to consider wholly centralized decision-making but such top-down strategizing may prove inadequate for ensuring victory on the ground. Clumsy, last-minute central decisions to inflate aggregate vote totals are easily detected, something that should lead autocrats to rethink the benefits of the wholly centralized approach as well.

The aim of this study is thus twofold. I seek to provide evidence that wholly centralized and wholly decentralized characterizations of electoral manipulation are not the only choices available to autocrats but anchor two ends of a centralized-decentralized decision-making continuum. I also seek to show that the local political conditions said to determine either autocrats' or regime agents' strategies for electoral manipulation are most likely driving autocrats' decisions about how to distribute responsibility over electoral manipulation instead. Observed variation in strategies for electoral manipulation may not result from autocrats' or local regime agents' choices but from variation in who enjoys this responsibility in the first place.

To this end, I build an argument for how autocrats might distribute authority over electoral manipulation among local regime agents. Joining research showing that

successful authoritarian rulers preserve aggregate regime support<sup>10</sup> and territorial regime control,<sup>11</sup> I argue that autocrats should follow a territorial-based political-distributional logic when determining the distribution of authority over electoral manipulation. The need to ensure aggregate regime support should lead autocrats to transfer responsibility over electoral manipulation to regime agents in charge of core regime districts. The need to ensure territorial control should lead autocrats to transfer this authority to regime agents in recently marginal regime districts as well. Autocrats should retain authority over electoral manipulation in long-time marginal and adverse districts. In other words, regional variation in patterns of regime support should lead autocrats to asymmetric approaches to the distribution of authority over electoral manipulation among regime agents, with wholly centralized or wholly decentralized strategies only occurring under specific political conditions.

I provide preliminary support for the argument using data from electoral authoritarian Mexico. Although scholars suggest that Mexico's electoral authoritarian rulers often decentralized decision-making about electoral manipulation,<sup>12</sup> no one has tested this proposition – or developed a general theory to explain why and how it occurred – due to the lack of reliable data on which regime agents (state governors, municipal mayors) enjoyed centralized and decentralized authority over electoral manipulation. However, autocrats in one state granted some municipal incumbents the authority to choose mechanisms for selecting incoming officials that could restrict political rights and force public ballots – two practices normally considered manipulative<sup>13</sup> – but forced others to follow a common set of electoral rules that limited their the capacity to manipulate elections without state autocrats' support. This reform provides a rare

opportunity to observe autocrats' decisions about the distribution of authority over electoral manipulation and to test arguments about it. It also shows a case where decisions about electoral manipulation were not taken entirely from the top down or the bottom up, in contrast to what is sometimes assumed.

## **Argument**

Most scholars take a territorial view of electoral authoritarian rule and describe vertically-structured authoritarian regimes as divided into localities administered by local regime agents. Even so, most scholars note that autocrats seek to maximize aggregate regime support (the share of citizens supporting the regime in authoritarian elections) to legitimize their rule, strengthen regime loyalty, and deter regime defections.<sup>14</sup> A few scholars note that autocrats must also preserve territorial control (maximize the number of districts under their control) to minimize opposition safe-havens from where opposition groups can mount challenges against the regime.<sup>15</sup> Joining these insights, I argue that autocrats face a situation similar to that of democrats in mixed-member district electoral systems. To survive, autocrats must target core districts for decentralized authority over electoral manipulation in the interest of maximizing aggregate support, while they must target marginal districts for decentralized authority over electoral manipulation in the interest of preserving territorial control.

Research on democratic systems shows that party leaders facing large single nationwide or regional multi-member districts tend to target policy benefits, pork-barrel projects, campaign resources, and particularistic benefits among core voters that are easier to mobilize<sup>16</sup> and cheaper to turnout.<sup>17</sup> When party leaders must maximize aggregate

support in single nationwide or regional multi-member districts but administrative structures limit resource distribution to lower local-level districts, they will concentrate resources among core local-level districts.<sup>18</sup> The loss of a partisan control over marginal local districts is inconsequential for maximizing aggregate support, so party leaders concentrate resources on core local districts where most voters are loyal and easier to mobilize.<sup>19</sup> This same logic should guide autocrats concerned with maximizing aggregate regime support. They should transfer authority over electoral manipulation to regime agents in core local districts where citizens are already loyal, and their support cheaper to mobilize and thus easier to inflate. Regime agents in core districts count on extensive loyal populations, so their efforts to inflate regime support are unlikely to be controversial. They also face weak opposition, so it is unlikely that manipulation will be noticed or result in anti-regime backlash if it is.

The transfer of authority to regime agents in core local districts enjoys the additional advantage of triggering competition among them to develop the best locally-tailored strategies for inflating regime support in precisely those localities most important for maximizing aggregate regime totals and that enjoy little chance of anti-regime backlash. Regime agents enjoying decentralized authority will be driven to take advantage of their superior information to develop innovative technologies tailored to local political dynamics, similar to what occurs with policy and political decentralization in authoritarian nations.<sup>20</sup> The decentralization of electoral manipulation should raise its incidence (overproduction), as each regime agent seeks to deliver the most inflated regime support. The disadvantage of decentralized electoral manipulation lies in the inability of autocrats to rein in regime agents in response to unforeseen national political or economic

dynamics and opt for a more targeted or restrained approach – including clean elections – if considered best. Autocrats should therefore be highly reluctant to decentralize electoral manipulation to all regime agents – unlike what is sometimes assumed – and only choose to do so under specific political conditions.

Research on democratic systems also shows that party leaders who must maximize political representation through maximizing territorial control over single-member plurality districts will tend to concentrate policy and campaign resources in marginal local districts rather than core ones.<sup>21</sup> I argue that this same logic should guide autocrats concerned with maximizing territorial control. The loss of territory to opposition groups can provide them with a base from where to launch anti-regime activities and spread anti-regime sentiment, leading to further territorial losses. It can also undermine aggregate regime support by demonstrating the lack of regime legitimacy and by providing safe-havens for defectors. Because the loss of marginal local districts threatens territorial control, autocrats should take steps to allow regime agents to deploy their local expertise to bring their districts more firmly under regime rule. As above, decentralization to agents in marginal districts provides the additional benefit that it triggers inter-agent competition to develop the most innovative strategies for manipulation.

Yet, autocrats should not treat all marginal local districts equally. The benefits of allowing regime agents to compete to deliver regime support are greater in some marginal districts, because some voters are easier to manipulate. In recently marginal districts, it is easier to persuade recent regime defectors to return and therefore easier to inflate regime support without drawing undue opposition scepticism. New opposition groups count on fewer resources and shallower support networks, and are less able to keep regime

defectors loyal, detect activities against them, and mount sustained anti-regime backlash if they do. In contrast, regime agents in long-time marginal districts face stronger opposition groups, raising the difficulty of undertaking electoral manipulation against them. Older opposition groups count on deeper networks of support and greater resources, and are more likely to ensure the loyalty of regime defectors, detect electoral manipulation against them, and engage in sustained anti-regime backlash if they do. Gans-Morse, Mazzuca and Nichter (2014) draw a similar distinction between voters with weaker and stronger partisan loyalties in machine-politics-based democratic systems.<sup>22</sup>

The same logic holds for adverse local districts, where regime opposition is even deeper rooted and wider spread. Autocrats should thus prefer to retain control over electoral manipulation conducted by regime agents in long-time marginal and adverse districts. The advantage of centralized electoral manipulation lies in autocrats' capacity to respond to unexpected political and economic dynamics. The disadvantage lies in its loss in variety, innovation, and incidence. It is the larger scope of autocrats' territorial domains of responsibility and their greater distance from local dynamics that reduce their capacity to develop a wide variety of innovative strategies for manipulating support fine-tuned to local contexts. Although local regime agents in centralized systems will compete to demonstrate their value to autocrats, they must rely on a narrower set of technologies authorized by autocrats to this end. Autocrats should thus be highly reluctant to wholly centralize electoral manipulation away from all regime agents – contrary to what is sometimes assumed – and only do this under specific political contexts.

I thus expect:

*H1: Autocrats will be more likely to decentralize electoral manipulation to regime agents in charge of local districts where regime support is higher, all else being equal.*

*H2: Autocrats will be more likely to decentralize authority over electoral manipulation to regime agents in local districts where both regime support and recent declines in regime support are higher, all else being equal.*

If local regime support plays a role in the distribution of authority over electoral manipulation, then wholly centralized and wholly decentralized electoral manipulation would only occur under particular political conditions. Autocrats would only wholly centralize decisions about electoral manipulation away from all regime agents if they face low regime support resulting from steady losses across all localities, an unlikely scenario as these regimes would be facing transition. Autocrats would only wholly decentralize decisions about electoral manipulation to all regime agents if they enjoy strong regime support or face traditionally strong but sudden declines in support across all localities, a more plausible scenario but one not often assumed.

I present the argument in terms of national-local dynamics but it should operate at all levels of vertically-structured authoritarian systems, such as between national leaders and regional (state) regime agents, regional (state) leaders and local (municipal) regime agents, and national leaders and local (municipal) regime agents. Lower-level regime agents must deliver aggregate support and territorial control to their higher-level superiors if they are to rise within the system. I assume that authority over electoral manipulation is finite, with any lower-level decentralization implying a loss of higher-level control. I also

assume that lower-level regime agents enjoy similar levels of information and would be equally innovative in manipulating elections if allowed. I assume that autocrats gather information about political and social dynamics informing their decisions from sources at all levels, although final decisions are taken by autocrats, not by regime agents. Higher-level autocrats enjoy authority over lower-level regime agents, not the reverse.

### **Empirical Strategy**

The challenge with studying electoral manipulation is that it is usually unobservable as those engaging in it strive to keep it from view. Some scholars rely on reports by aggrieved parties or election observers to identify manipulation.<sup>23</sup> However, aggrieved parties have an incentive overstate it, while election observers may underestimate it as fraudulent activities shift locations in response to their presence.<sup>24</sup> Others examine voting results for suspicious patterns suggesting manipulation.<sup>25</sup> However, unsuspecting patterns can occur in dirty elections and suspicious ones in clean contests.<sup>26</sup> To address these problems, scholars conduct field experiments<sup>27</sup> and exploit natural ones.<sup>28</sup> I take advantage of an unusual electoral reform in electoral authoritarian Mexico to identify centralized and decentralized authority over electoral manipulation.

Mexico's Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) managed the typical electoral authoritarian regime during the 20<sup>th</sup> century (until 2000), holding regular federal, state, and municipal elections. PRI autocrats used formal electoral laws, like party registration rules, electoral formulas, and campaign resources, to bias results.<sup>29</sup> They strategized candidate selection and the distribution of resources; selectively applied electoral laws; coerced candidates and voters; bought votes and stuffed ballot boxes.<sup>30</sup> Some scholars

assume that electoral manipulation was strategized nationally from the top down<sup>31</sup> but others suggest that national autocrats took a more flexible approach, noting that national autocrats allowed state governors autonomy to manage state political affairs, as long as they delivered PRI support and social stability.<sup>32</sup> Governors “successful” in this regard were rewarded with fiscal transfers, capital investment, social spending,<sup>33</sup> and promotions to federal or party posts.<sup>34</sup> “Unsuccessful” governors controlled centrally or removed.<sup>35</sup>

Although compelling, this description suffers from three problems. First, scholars describing that national autocrats decentralized political authority to state governors do not develop a general theory to explain why or how this decentralization occurred. Second, they also do not provide evidence for their descriptive inferences: those showing that “unsuccessful” governors were removed from office neglect to demonstrate that those left in place were “successful” in delivering political support and social control.<sup>36</sup> Those associating rises in fiscal transfers with the decentralization of authority over electoral manipulation fail to explain how PRI autocrats would have simultaneously used fiscal transfers to “punish”<sup>37</sup> “unsuccessful” regime agents without reducing their authority over electoral manipulation or how they would have used fiscal transfers to “reward”<sup>38</sup> “successful” regime agents without granting them greater authority over manipulation. Finally, scholars tend to focus descriptions on national-state relations, often assuming that state governors enjoyed wholly centralized control over municipal mayors. Yet, the same criteria leading higher-level autocrats to decentralize authority over electoral manipulation to lower-level regime agents may operate at all levels of the system.

There is, however, a state in Mexico – Oaxaca, with a population over 3.8 million people – where autocrats undertook reforms that distributed authority over electoral

manipulation to some municipalities but not all, providing in a unique opportunity to test arguments about this decision-making process. A firm PRI bastion, Oaxaca's governors were handpicked by national PRI presidents to deliver PRI victories and social stability.<sup>39</sup> However, during the early 1990s, Oaxaca's governors worried about the decline of state and municipal PRI support amidst increasingly disgruntled indigenous and peasant groups inspired by the 1994 armed Zapatista insurgency in neighbouring Chiapas, leading them to consider different approaches to ensuring support.<sup>40</sup> In early 1995, state autocrats began to negotiate a state electoral reform that would divide Oaxaca's 570 municipalities into those granted the authority to create local rules for selecting municipal officials – called “Usos y Costumbres” (UyC) or “Customary Law” systems – and those required to follow state electoral rules– called “Partidos Políticos” or “Political Parties” systems (PP). This division is still in place today.

Conveniently for the purposes of this study, UyC system assignment delegated authority to incumbent municipal leaders to choose electoral rules considered manipulative by scholars of electoral malpractice.<sup>41</sup> All UyC municipalities must follow the federal constitution and select a mayor, municipal councilmen (aldermen), and a community representative (ombudsman). The selection of these authorities occurs during a general community assembly is run by a supervisory board composed of municipal incumbents who determine which rules will be used. The board can restrict participation by sex, age, marital status, birth and residency requirements, and satisfactory participation in unpaid community service (called the *tequio*), thereby limiting the municipal “selectorate.” The board can restrict the candidate pool by these same criteria and according to fulfilment of local unpaid community administrative positions (called

*cargos*). The board selects the voting mechanism used by the assembly “selectorate,” and can create procedures ranging from the secret individual ballot to publicly cast votes in single or multiple rounds, with most choosing public ballots. Municipal incumbents – through their boards – can change assembly rules at will. They also determine whether hamlets will share authorities with municipal seats, or whether they will select their own authorities. Although Oaxaca’s community assemblies may appear a form of participatory governance, that supervisory boards can restrict political rights and secret ballots conflicts with this view.<sup>42</sup> Such restrictions are contrary to the tenets of democratic participatory governance,<sup>43</sup> with participatory rules failing to respect such rights undermining democracy.<sup>44</sup> Instead, Oaxaca’s UyC rules are comparable to participatory institutions in authoritarian regimes.<sup>45</sup>

Municipalities assigned PP systems were kept under central state control and required to follow state electoral rules that technically honoured universal political rights and the secret individual ballot (traditional liberal democratic norms). State autocrats retained the authority to oversee and check any electoral manipulation in them. This does not mean that municipal leaders did not engineer elections in PP systems or that state leaders did not encourage them in this regard; it means that state law did not decentralize the choice of technology to them. State leaders retained authority to intervene in PP processes and deem them in contravention of state law, giving them direct oversight over regime agents. State officials determined whether communities outside the municipal seat would share municipal leaders or select their own.

The formal assignment of municipal UyC systems was negotiated in closed-door meetings between state governmental authorities, state electoral authorities, and

opposition party leaders.<sup>46</sup> Most municipal leaders appear to have been unaware of negotiations,<sup>47</sup> although some may have been consulted before determining assignment. Between the law's legislative (rubberstamp) approval on 30 August 1995 and the 12 November 1995 municipal elections, 410 municipalities were assigned UyC systems. This number rose to 412 in early 1996 and to 418 in 1997.<sup>48</sup> Oaxaca's remaining municipalities were codified as "Political Parties" systems. Since 2012, there are 417 UyC and 153 PP systems. Map 1 presents the original 1995-96 distribution.

– Map 1 –

Oaxaca's UyC reform is unusual but not exceptional. Many state PRI autocrats allowed these systems informally,<sup>49</sup> while those in the non-indigenous states of Puebla (1984) and Tlaxcala (1998) formalized UyC systems into law. In Tlaxcala, sudden PRI losses in 1995 midterm state elections led state autocrats in 1998 to decentralize authority to municipal leaders to determine whether hamlet-level governments would use PP-style systems or UyC rules. In Puebla, widespread PRI support led state autocrats in 1984 to decentralize authority to municipal leaders to organize hamlet-level elections, using of what they called "plebiscitary" systems with restricted political rights. In contrast, in Chiapas, declining PRI support, amidst ongoing losses of territorial control to rebel and radicalized indigenous groups after the 1994 Zapatista rebellion, led state autocrats to undertake centralizing UyC measures to strengthen state political control. Although these 1999 measures recognized the use of UyC practices for selecting traditional leaders in "indigenous communities," communities enjoyed no formal political-administrative status which left them dependent upon state authorities for recognition.

In Oaxaca, autocrats had long allowed municipal strongmen to engineer PRI municipal candidate lists informally using UyC practices.<sup>50</sup> State autocrats would authorize the use of informal UyC practices when they thought municipal leaders would be able to use these systems to prevent the emergence of competing party lists or to guarantee PRI victory. Those municipal leaders able to engineer an unopposed single PRI list then reported it as receiving 100% PRI support without holding formal elections. When opposition lists emerged, formal elections were held and the (often fraudulent) results reported to state authorities. The PRI's informal internal party UyC systems was supported by the state's non-independent electoral institute that overlooked the failure to hold formal elections, made it difficult for opposition parties to register competing lists, and ignored complaints about electoral irregularities.

However, in response to national legislation creating and strengthening an independent national electoral institute (1992-1994), Oaxaca's state autocrats created (1992) and strengthened (1994) an independent state electoral institute. This changed the context in which informal internal PRI UyC practices would operate.<sup>51</sup> An independent state electoral institute could force municipal leaders to hold formal municipal elections, facilitate the registry of opposition party lists, and investigate electoral irregularities. The formalization of municipal-level UyC systems could counteract these effects. Municipal-level UyC systems would authorize municipal incumbents to engineer a single list of candidates for the municipality and register it with state authorities as the new municipal administration, without holding formal elections. (The 1995 reform allowed municipalities to register this slate under a party label but 1997 reforms prohibited this.) Municipal-level UyC systems would also allow municipal incumbents to use political

practices – like restrictions on political rights and public ballots – usually considered illegal by independent state electoral institutes. Although the formal assignment of UyC systems reduced autocrats’ capacity to authorize/restrict municipal authority over electoral manipulation, they guaranteed the survival of practices that had been very useful for delivering PRI support.

Even so, there is a debate about Oaxaca’s UyC reform. Political opponents of the reform and numerous scholars have argued that the reform was the result of state PRI autocrats’ concerns about growing municipal turnover to opposition parties and losses of support among its traditional rural indigenous voters, often living on communal lands.<sup>52</sup> UyC reform was aimed at preventing additional opposition incursions. By couching the reform as the recognition of indigenous and multicultural rights and participatory community rule, they hoped to shore up PRI support while dampening social unrest among radical indigenous and peasant organizations. Interview evidence of the PRI’s political motives, that UyC assignment was determined by state political elites, and that highly indigenous municipalities received PP systems and non-indigenous ones UyC rules – shown in Table 1 – is used to support their case.<sup>53</sup>

Yet, evidence that the PRI did not follow an indigenous or multicultural logic when assigning UyC systems does not confirm interview accounts that a political logic drove this reform instead. Advocates and some scholars of UyC systems continue to assert that UyC reform was designed to promote indigenous and multicultural rights and participatory rule. Citing individual cases, these scholars contend that UyC systems, through their community assemblies, strengthen municipal oversight, raise community political participation, and improve policy decisions,<sup>54</sup> despite the fact that nearly all UyC

systems restrict political rights and secret ballots.<sup>55</sup> Quantitative research showing that UyC systems raise abstention,<sup>56</sup> winning margins, and PRI support<sup>57</sup> are not convincing to advocates armed with evidence of successful cases.

Until Oaxaca's UyC assignment is adequately theorized and tested, individual cases where UyC systems improved local governance will be considered representative of the entire universe of UyC cases, rather than as outlying ones that should be examined for what makes them distinct. The examination of Oaxaca not only tests the theory in this study about the political and social conditions leading autocrats to decentralize electoral manipulation, it also helps resolve this ongoing empirical debate. If Oaxaca's PRI autocrats worried about aggregate political support and territorial control, then they should have assigned decentralized UyC systems to municipalities with high PRI support (H1) and to municipalities with traditionally high PRI support that had faced recent dramatic declines (H2). Because longer-term marginal and adverse districts, even if in PRI hands, would have been more difficult to engineer back to firmer PRI control, PRI autocrats should have assigned centralized PP systems to these places. Empirical support for this rationale would dismiss the possibility of more altruistic multicultural motives.

## **Statistical Results**

I evaluate support for the argument using logistic regression analysis. The dichotomous dependent variable (*UyC 1995*) codes whether the municipality received decentralized UyC (1) or centralized PP systems (0) in the initial 1995-96 assignment. I use the share of PRI support and changes to it in the 6 August 1995 state elections as the principal explanatory political variables. The level of PRI support in these elections is

said to have played a deciding role in UyC assignment, given the proximity of the 12 November 1995 municipal contests.<sup>58</sup> I use election data from the 8 November 1992 municipal elections to identify the 536 municipalities under PRI control and separate them from the 26 municipalities under opposition rule (data was missing for eight, four receiving UyC systems and four PP systems).<sup>59</sup>

I test the argument on municipalities under PRI control. Theoretically, the argument addresses autocrats' decisions about how to distribute authority over electoral manipulation among localities with local regime agents, with the absence of regime agents placing them outside autocrats' control. Empirically, PRI officials are said to have allowed opposition leaders to take decisions about the few places under their rule.<sup>60</sup> I return to the 26 municipalities under opposition control, as they provide additional support for the argument.

The argument implies that state autocrats should be leery of decentralizing electoral manipulation to places known for opposition mobilization. I thus include a variable that captures the presence of post-election conflicts during the 1989, 1992, and 1995 state election processes (1 = yes, 0 = no) (*Conflicts 1989*; *Conflicts 1992*; *Conflicts 1995*), capturing the capacity of groups to mount sustained rebellion.<sup>61</sup>

I include controls for other factors sometimes said to have guided UyC assignment: the share of population living on communal lands (*Communal Pop.*) and in rural areas (*Rural Pop.*), an index of municipal migration (*Migration*) and poverty (*Poverty Rate*), the municipal population (*Population*), the share of population that is Catholic (*Catholic Pop.*) and indigenous (speakers over age five, *Indigenous Pop.*), and a measure of indigenous group concentration (the Herfindal-Hirschman index of market

concentration, *Indig. Herf. Index*).<sup>62</sup> The Catholic Church voiced support for UyC systems.<sup>63</sup> Municipal migration affects local political and social dynamics.<sup>64</sup> Municipal population (*Population*) controls for the difficulty of using UyC in large urban areas.<sup>65</sup> I return to the rural, communal, and indigenous population variables later.

Poor rural indigenous peasant voters living on communal lands were traditional sources of PRI support,<sup>66</sup> which could confound estimates of the effect of political support on UyC assignment. I thus regressed 1992 and 1995 state PRI support on all socio-demographic variables. Figure 1 shows that only the poverty rate mattered for PRI support by the 1990s, but the low (0.10) correlation between these variables means that it did not affect the analysis. A test for colinearity among all independent variables in the logistic regression models (below) shows that the mean Variation Inflation Index (VIF) was 1.48 (and none of the variables' VIF above 2.08), with none of the variables' Tolerance (T) levels falling below 0.52. Descriptive statistics are in the appendix.

– Figure 1 –

Model 1 (Figure 2) examines the impact of regime support on UyC assignment among the 536 PRI-run municipalities. Hypothesis 1 predicts that UyC adoption among PRI-led municipalities would be more likely where the state PRI was strongest, with Model 1 (Figure 2) showing that this was the case: the *PRI Support 1995* coefficient is positive and significant. Figure 3a graphs the predicted probability of UyC adoption estimated across all PRI-run municipalities. The share of PRI support won in the August 1995 state elections across PRI-run municipalities ran from 0.05 to 0.99 (mean 0.57, standard deviation 0.17), so I estimated predicted probabilities across the full range of 1995 state PRI support. Although there was a high chance of UyC adoption among all

PRI-led municipalities, municipalities with greater levels of state PRI support, that is, core PRI districts, were more likely to get UyC systems, as expected.

– Figure 2–

– Figure 3–

Hypothesis 2 predicts that sudden strong declines in PRI support would raise the incentive for PRI autocrats to impose UyC systems. The results for Model 1 (Figure 2) show that greater declines in PRI support were associated with greater chances of UyC adoption, with the coefficient for changing PRI support negative and significant. The argument also suggests a more complex interaction between the level of PRI support and changes to it capturing the difference between recent and long-time marginal status. Marginal districts experiencing larger recent declines in support (making them recently marginal) would be more likely to receive UyC rules than districts equally marginal but having experienced smaller recent declines in support (making them longer-term marginal). Data restrictions lead me to measure recent and long-time marginality in this way; state electoral data by municipality is not available for Oaxaca prior to 1992.

Figure 3b assesses the interaction between PRI support and changes to it using estimations of the predicted probabilities of UyC adoption across all levels but fixed changes in PRI support, holding all covariates at their means. The figure shows the impact of PRI support in two types of municipalities: one with declines in support one standard deviation (-0.18) below the mean loss (-0.21) [with a -0.40 decline in PRI support] and one with declines in support one standard deviation above (+0.18) the mean loss (-0.21) [at basically no change in PRI support (0.00)]. I graph levels of PRI support from 0 to 0.60 (anything above cannot accommodate a -0.40 loss). Marginal

municipalities, say, with PRI support around a 0.50 share, facing a large recent loss in support, were more likely to be assigned UyC than municipalities that were already marginal (facing no recent loss) at the time of the 1995 state election.

Figure 3b also reveals something unexpected: PRI autocrats also delegated UyC rules to recently adverse districts. The probability of UyC adoption among municipalities facing larger declines in PRI support grows at lower levels of PRI support, while the chance of UyC adoption declines at lower levels of PRI support among municipalities facing no changes in PRI support. This suggests that the expected benefit of decentralizing power to local regime agents facing newer and less established opposition groups is high in both recently marginal and recently adverse districts.

The argument implies that Oaxaca's PRI officials should have been reluctant to assign UyC systems to municipalities where voters had a history of unrest. Figure 4 shows that post-election conflicts in 1989 (*Conflicts 1989*) and 1992 (*Conflicts 1992*) both had a negative and significant effect on the chances of UyC assignment among PRI-run municipalities. Post-election conflicts in 1995 had no effect, probably because they were still playing out through the 12 November 1995 municipal elections. Figure 4a graphs the estimated effect of 1992 conflicts across all municipalities at different levels of PRI support (holding covariates at their means). Figure 4b graphs the effect of post-election conflicts across different levels of and changes in PRI support (as above) to show that the impact of conflict was negative and strong across the board.

– Figure 4 –

### **Alternative Arguments**

Evidence that national PRI autocrats bypassed state regime agents to make UyC assignments would undermine the argument that Oaxaca's state autocrats enjoyed decentralized political authority to approve the 1995 UyC reform in the first place. If the argument here is correct, there should be no evidence that national regime support mattered during distributional decisions. Model 2 (Figure 5) shows that federal elections played no role in UyC assignment; variables for PRI support in the 1994 federal congressional elections (*Federal PRI 1994*) and changes to it (*Chg. Federal PRI 1991-94*) were not significant.<sup>67</sup>

–Figure 5–

Evidence that opposition leaders asserted authority over regime agents in long-time marginal and adverse districts, despite these places being in PRI hands, would undermine the argument that PRI autocrats made decisions about the decentralization of political manipulation among regime agents across districts under their control, raising concerns that the argument is not correct. I thus re-ran the analysis in Model 1 (Figure 2) on the full sample of both PRI-run and opposition-run municipalities using a dummy variable and its interaction to distinguish whether the municipality was opposition-run (*Opposition Wins 1992*) (yes = 1, no = 0). Model 3 (Figure 6) present the results. If opposition party leaders had determined UyC assignment in both opposition-run and PRI-run long-time marginal and adverse districts, then they would have prioritized these systems where PRI support was weak and conflictive in both types of places, which was not the case. Figure 7a shows that falling PRI support in opposition-run municipalities raised the chance of UyC adoption, while falling PRI support in PRI-run municipalities lowered it (holding change in PRI support at 0 to reflect a long-time marginal district and

other covariates at means). Figure 7b also shows that conflicts had the opposite effect in opposition-led and PRI-run places. These findings are consistent with the conclusion that opposition leaders took decisions in localities under their control and PRI autocrats took decisions in localities under theirs.

– Figure 6 –

– Figure 7 –

Empirical findings that a political logic drove UyC assignment helps dismiss a multicultural indigenous or participatory logic. Even so, the variables for indigenous population (*Indigenous Pop.*) and communal lands population (*Communal Pop.*) were positive and significant, requiring discussion. Advocates of UyC systems argue that these populations enjoyed pre-existing UyC institutions and thus merited UyC assignment. Rather than providing support for this contention, however, the results provide evidence in favour of the PRI's territorial based political-distributional logic. Under the multicultural or participatory logic, unified indigenous groups – with better access to indigenous group organizational elites – should have been more likely to cooperate on informal UyC systems and better able to demand and receive UyC assignment. However, the variable capturing the level of indigenous population concentration in a single group (*Indig. Herf. Index*), defined above, was not significant (Model 1, Figure 2).

Given empirical support for the territorially-based political-distributional logic, the positive and significant effect of the indigenous (*Indigenous Pop.*) and communal lands (*Communal Pop.*) population variables on UyC assignment reflect state autocrats' view that these traditional PRI voters – alongside rural ones (*Rural Pop.*) – would be easily engineered back to the PRI under UyC rules. Demands for multicultural rights and

participatory rule could have been addressed met by state leaders through the prioritization of UyC systems among organized indigenous and peasant populations, but this was not the case. Only an authoritarian regime aimed at political survival would have decentralized the authority to restrict political rights and the secret ballot according to political considerations, in the face of organized indigenous and peasant groups demanding UyC systems.

The political exigencies of strengthening aggregate regime support and territorial regime control thus led state autocrats in Oaxaca to transfer authority over electoral manipulation to regime agents in core and recently marginal districts. State autocrats also decentralized electoral manipulation to regime agents in recently adverse districts, an unexpected result but one that is consistent with the logic that autocrats consider the ease through which new opposition voters can be manipulated back to the regime. State autocrats were unlikely to decentralize control to regime agents in long-time marginal districts and long-time adverse ones.

UyC municipalities initially delivered stronger support to the PRI compared to PP systems,<sup>68</sup> helping Oaxaca's state autocrats survive another ten years beyond 2000 national democratization – in what scholars of Latin American politics have identified as a subnational electoral authoritarian regime,<sup>69</sup> also known to exist outside Latin America as well<sup>70</sup> – demonstrating their approach was fairly effective. However, as noted, the 1995 formal UyC assignment meant that the authority over electoral manipulation that came with it could not be recentralized without formal legislation. As long as state autocrats retained discretion over fiscal transfers to municipal governments, their goals carried considerable sway, both prior to and immediately after the 1995 UyC reform.

However, national fiscal reforms in 1997 reduced the capacity of state autocrats to withhold resources from municipal governments, reducing the capacity of state autocrats to pressure UyC leaders to use these systems on behalf of the PRI. As a result, many began to deliver votes to PRI defectors, electing one state governor in 2010.

## **Conclusion**

One of the original aims of this study was to focus attention on the empirical validity of two extreme assumptions sometimes made about the structure of electoral manipulation in electoral authoritarian regimes. Some scholars assume that autocrats take all decisions about electoral manipulation and local regime agents carry them out. In contrast, some scholars assume that autocrats decentralize all decisions to local regime agents. Taking either of these views, scholars then argue that variation in local political conditions explain variation in either autocrats' or regime agents' strategies for electoral manipulation across localities in these regimes. However, these two stylized characterizations represent two extreme ends of a centralized-decentralized decision-making continuum, with autocrats enjoying other options.

To support this possibility, I develop an argument for how autocrats configure the distribution of authority over electoral manipulation across local regime agents. I argue that autocrats transfer authority over electoral manipulation to regime agents in core regime districts – out of concern for aggregate regime support – and to regime agents in recently marginal districts – out of concern for territorial regime control. Autocrats determine strategies themselves in long-time marginal and adverse districts. The argument implies that autocrats would only wholly centralize or wholly decentralize

decisions from/to regime agents under very particular political conditions, and that most situations would call for an asymmetric approach.

In making this argument, I seek to show that scholars taking extreme views about the decision-making structure of electoral manipulation should justify them empirically. Otherwise, the evidence provided to support their arguments about the impact of local political conditions on autocrats' top-down or regime agents' bottom-up strategies for electoral manipulation, said to be taken for all districts in the regime, may be capturing the alternative logic outlined here: that local political conditions affect strategies for electoral manipulation by affecting autocrats' choices about where to centralize and where to decentralize decision-making about it in the first place. As such, any observed variation in strategies for electoral manipulation would in fact reflect variation in whether these decisions were retained by autocrats from the top down or delegated to regime agents from the bottom up in an asymmetric way.

I provide preliminary support for the argument – and the electoral manipulation decision-making continuum – using an unusual reform in electoral authoritarian Mexico. Only examination of other regimes can confirm whether autocrats vary the configuration of decision-making about electoral manipulation in the way argued here. Yet, there are reasons to think this may be the case. Authoritarian,<sup>71</sup> electoral authoritarian,<sup>72</sup> and dominant party<sup>73</sup> leaders are known to distribute other (economic) resources asymmetrically among regime agents based on regime support, so they may distribute authority over electoral manipulation asymmetrically as well. Autocrats in Africa,<sup>74</sup> Central Asia,<sup>75</sup> and the Middle East<sup>76</sup> are known to rely on unelected traditional leaders (chieftains, warlords, strongmen, notables, or priests) to manage local politics, with this

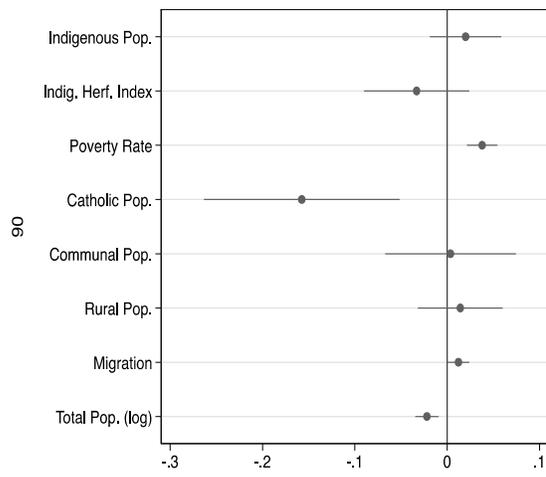
reliance asymmetrical as well.<sup>77</sup> I offer an argument for why and how this asymmetry might occur.

**Table 1: Indigenous Population and UyC Assignment**

<i>Indigenous Population Share</i>	<i>UyC Systems</i>	<i>PP Systems</i>
0.75 to 1.0	157	30
0.50 to 0.74	47	11
0.25 - 0.49	36	28
0 to 0.24	172	89
<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>412</i>	<i>158</i>

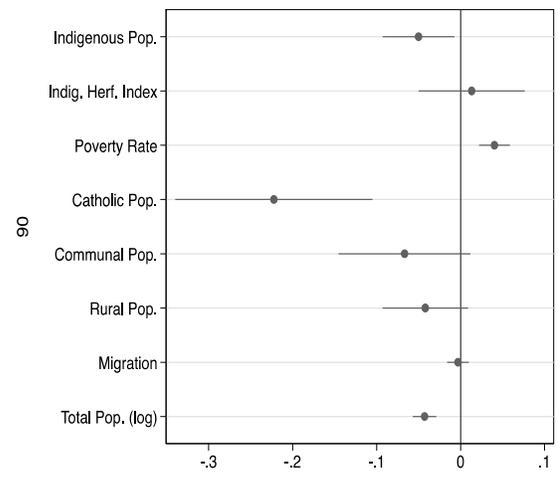
## Figure 1: Dismissing Socio-Demographic Predictors of State PRI Support

Figure 1a: 1992 State Elections



Note: Ordinary least squares regression coefficients. Dependent Variable: PRI support in 1992 state elections. 90% confidence intervals. Adjusted R2: 0.069, VIF (mean) 1.47. Obs: 569 (one missing municipality).

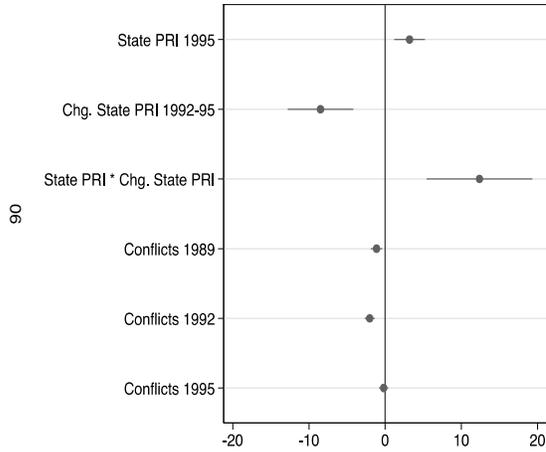
Figure 1b: 1995 State Elections



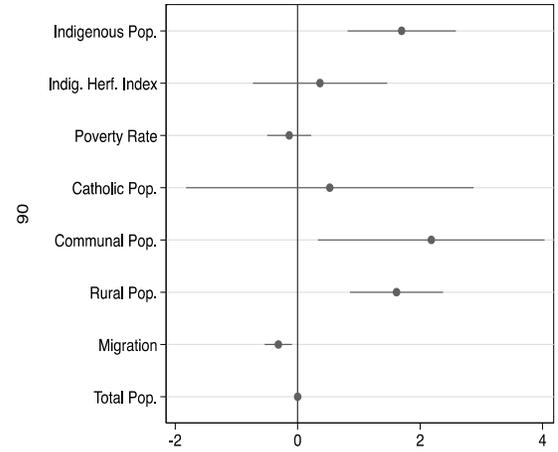
Note: Ordinary least squares regression coefficients. Dependent Variable: PRI support in 1995 state elections. 90% confidence intervals. Adjusted R2: 0.061, VIF (mean) 1.47. Obs: 569 (one missing municipality).

**Figure 2: State PRI Support, Conflict, and UyC Assignment in PRI Municipalities (Model 1)**

*Figure 2a: Main Explanatory Variables*



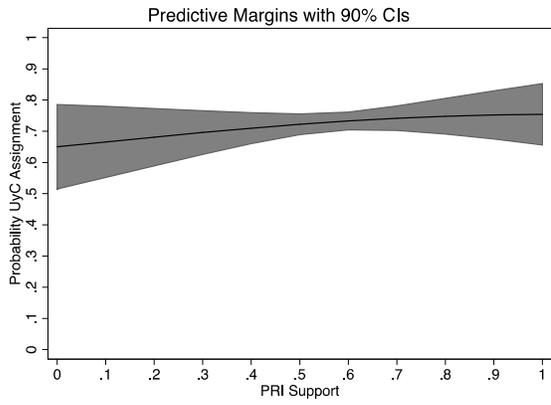
*Figure 2b: Control Variables*



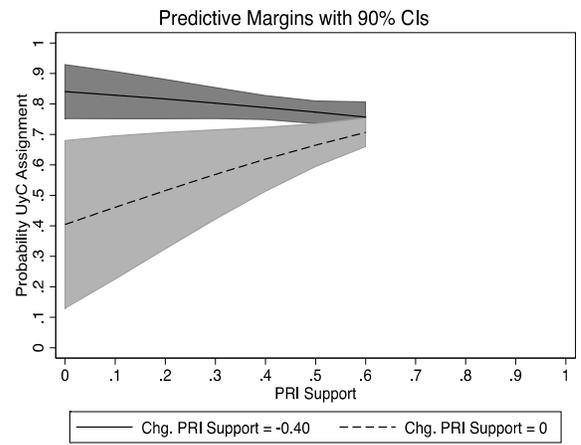
Note: Logistic regression coefficients. Dependent Variable: UyC Systems in 1995 (1=yes). 90% confidence intervals. Pseudo R2: 0.395, Log-Like: -181.4, Chi2: 122.3 (p<0.01), VIF (Mean) = 1.48. Obs: 535 (PRI-Run municipalities).

**Figure 3: State PRI Support and UyC Assignment in PRI Municipalities (Model 1)**

*Figure 3a: PRI Support and UyC Assignment*

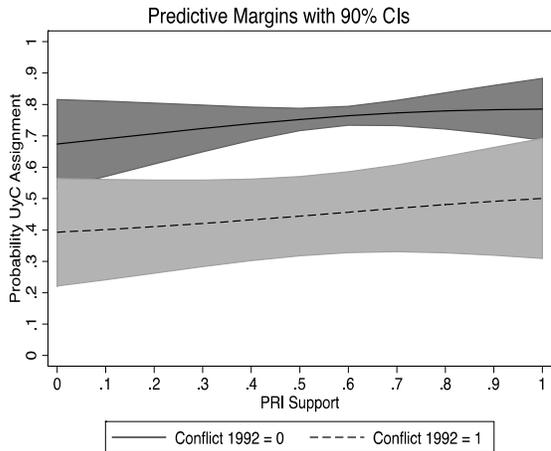


*Figure 3b: Level and Change in PRI Support and UyC Assignment*

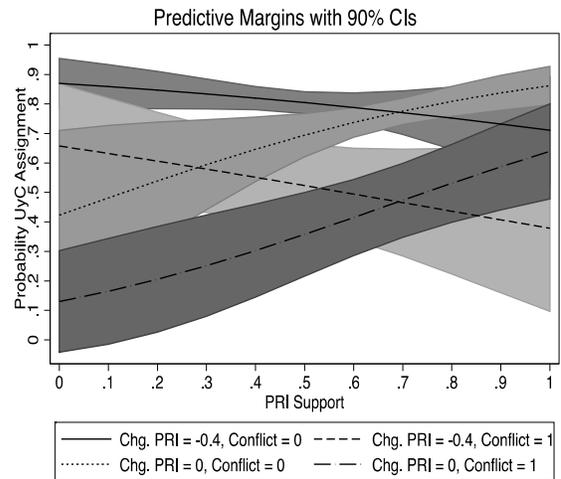


**Figure 4: Conflict and UyC Assignment in PRI Municipalities (Model 1)**

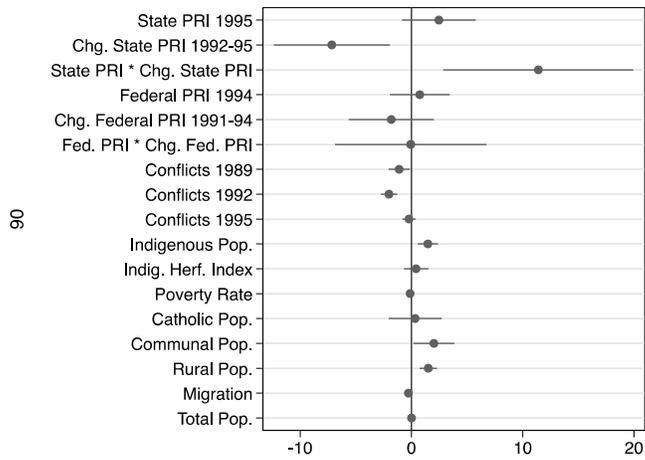
*Figure 4a: Level of State PRI Support*



*Figure 4b: Level of and Changes in State PRI Support*



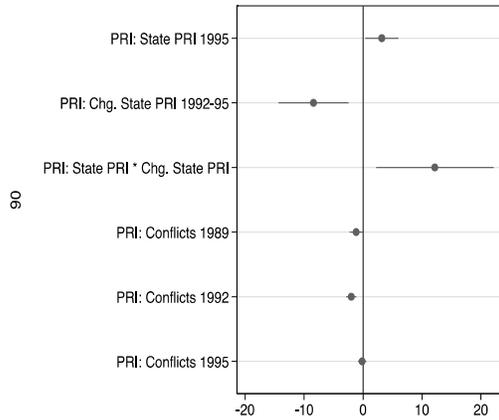
**Figure 5: National PRI Support and UyC Assignment in PRI Municipalities (Model 2)**



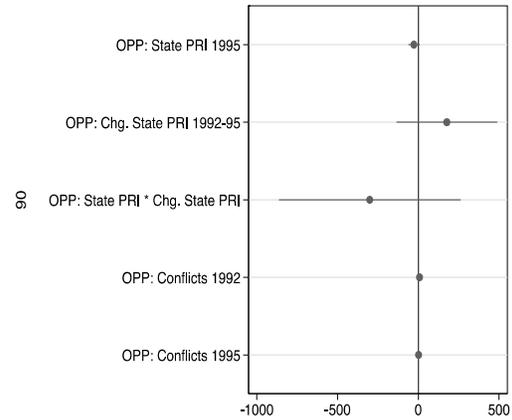
Note: Logistic regression coefficients. Dependent Variable: UyC Systems in 1995 (1=yes). 90% confidence intervals. Pseudo R2: 0.401, Log-Like: -179.6, Chi2: 126.4 (p<0.01), Obs: 535 (PRI-run municipalities).

**Figure 6: State PRI Support, Conflict, and UyC Systems in PRI-Run and Opposition-Run Municipalities (Model 3)**

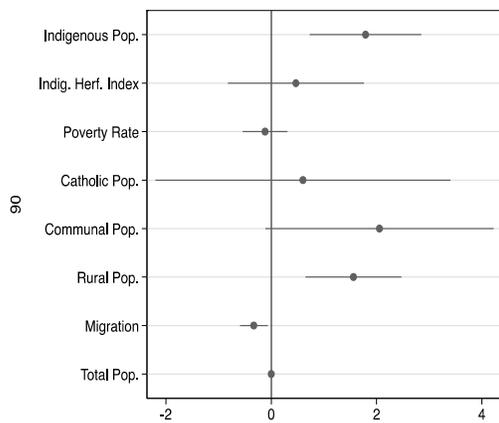
*Figure 6a: PRI-Run Municipalities, Main Explanatory Variables*



*Figure 6b: Opposition-Run Municipalities, Main Explanatory Variables*



*Figure 6c: Control Variables*



Note: Logistic regression coefficients. Dependent Variable: UyC Systems 1995 (1=yes). 90% confidence intervals. Pseudo R2: 0.420, Log-Like: -184.2, Chi2: 158.8 (p<0.01), VIF (mean) = 1.60. Obs: 552 (PRI-run and opposition-led municipalities, missing data for eight). Conflicts 1989 drop out of the opposition subsample.

### Figure 7: State PRI Support, Conflict, and UyC Assignment in Opposition Municipalities (Model 3)

Figure 7a: The Level of PRI Support and UyC in Long-time Marginal Districts

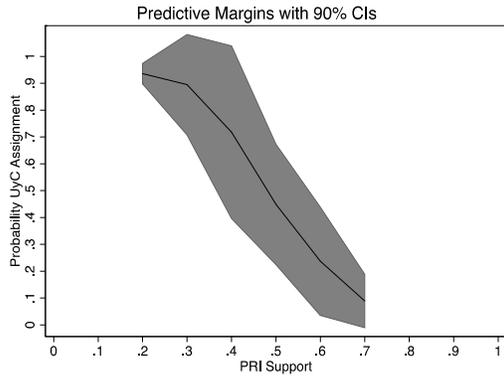
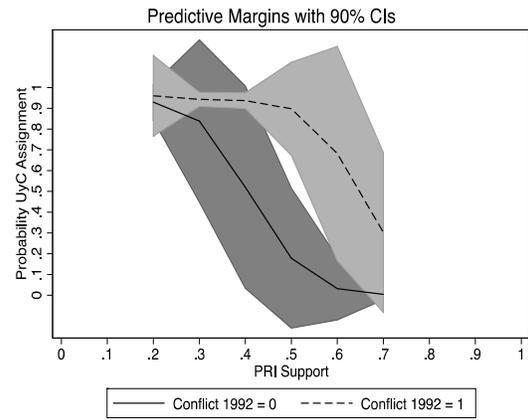
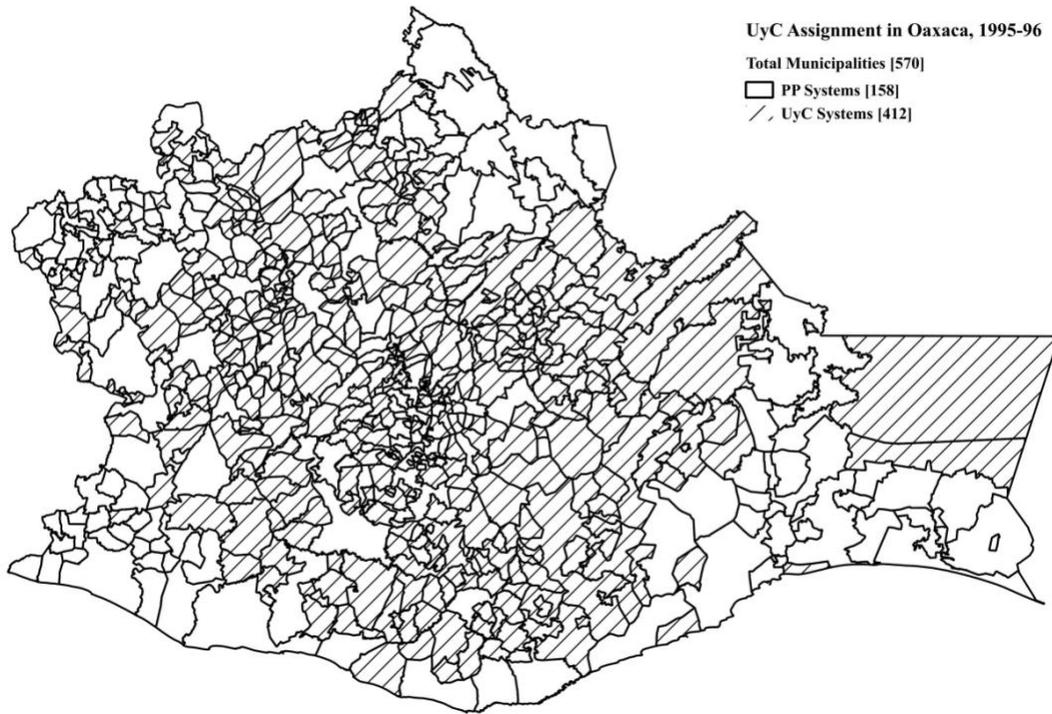


Figure 7b: Conflict and UyC in Long-time Marginal Districts



### Map 1: The Distribution of UyC and PP Systems in Oaxaca, Mexico



Note: Total municipalities in brackets.

**Appendix: Descriptive Statistics for PRI-Controlled and Opposition-Run Municipalities**

	<i>Obs.</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Std. Dev.</i>	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>
<b><i>PRI-Controlled Municipalities</i></b>	<b>536</b>				
UyC Systems	403				
PP Systems	133				
Conflicts 1989	37				
Conflicts 1992	64				
Conflicts 1995	95				
State PRI Support 1995	535	0.57	0.18	0.06	0.99
Change PRI Supp. 1992-95	535	-0.21	0.18	-0.88	0.53
Indigenous Population	536	0.44	0.40	0.00	1.00
Indigenous Concentration	536	0.78	0.25	0.00	1.00
Poverty Index	536	0.63	0.82	-1.73	2.64
Catholic Population	536	0.88	0.11	0.31	1.00
Communal Lands Population	536	0.20	0.17	0.00	1.00
Rural Population	536	0.87	0.29	0.00	1.00
Migration Index	536	-0.08	0.95	-0.88	6.40
Population	536	5027.13	11882.35	149.00	213985.00
<b><i>Opposition-Run Municipalities</i></b>	<b>26</b>				
UyC Systems	5				
PP Systems	21				
Conflicts 1989	9				
Conflicts 1992	9				
Conflicts 1995	9				
State PRI Support 1995	26	0.47	0.14	0.21	0.87
Change PRI Supp. 1992-95	26	-0.08	0.15	-0.49	0.23
Indigenous Population	26	0.39	0.38	0.00	0.98
Indigenous Concentration	26	0.77	0.26	0.25	1.00
Poverty Index	26	0.40	0.97	-1.66	1.97
Catholic Population	26	0.89	0.08	0.71	0.99
Communal Lands Population	26	0.12	0.09	0.00	0.28
Rural Population	26	0.59	0.45	0.00	1.00
Migration Index	26	-0.14	0.92	-0.88	2.48
Population	26	10958.62	18116.36	1076.00	66414.00
<b><i>Municipalities with Missing Election Data</i></b>	<b>8</b>				
UyC Systems	4				
PP Systems	4				
<b><i>Total Municipalities</i></b>	<b>570</b>				
UyC Systems	412				
PP Systems	158				

## Endnotes

Alley, April Longley, "The Rules of the Game: Unpacking Patronage Politics in Yemen." *The Middle East Journal* 64, no. 3 (2010): 385-409.

Almén, Oscar, "Local Participatory Innovations and Experts as Political Entrepreneurs: The Case of China's Democracy Consultants." *Democratization* 23, no. 3 (2016): 478-97.

Anaya Muñoz, Alejandro. *Autonomía Indígena, Gobernabilidad y Legitimidad en México* [Indigenous Autonomy, Governability, and Legitimacy in Mexico]. Distrito Federal: Universidad Iberoamericana and Plaza y Valdés, 2006.

Baldwin, Kate, "When Politicians Cede Control of Resources: Land, Chiefs, and Coalition-Building in Africa." *Comparative Politics* 46, no. 3 (2014): 253-71.

Barber, Benjamin R. *Strong Democracy: Participatory Politics for a New Age*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984.

Benton, Allyson Lucinda, "Bottom-Up Challenges to National Democracy: Mexico's (Legal) Subnational Authoritarian Enclaves." *Comparative Politics* 44, no. 3 (2012): 253-71.

---, "How 'Participatory Governance' Strengthens Authoritarian Regimes: Evidence from Electoral Authoritarian Oaxaca, Mexico." *Journal of Politics in Latin America* (forthcoming).

Bernstein, Tao Neil, "Fifty Years of State Governors in Mexico: Middle Elites and Political Stability," PhD. Dissertation, University of Virginia, 1993.

Birch, Sarah. *Electoral Malpractice*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.

Blaydes, Lisa. *Elections and Distributive Politics in Mubarak's Egypt*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

Cantú, Francisco, "The Geographical Menu of Manipulation: Bolivia's 2008 Recall Referendum," University of Houston, 2015.

---, "Identifying Irregularities in Mexican Local Elections." *American Journal of Political Science* 58, no. 4 (2014): 936-51.

Cleary, Matthew R., "Indigenous Autonomy in Southern Mexico," Presented at the Midwestern Political Science Association, Chicago, Illinois, April 7 - 9, 2005.

Consejo Nacional de Población (CONAPO). <<http://www.conapo.org.mx/>>.

Cornelius, Wayne, "Mobilized Voting in the 2000 Elections: The Changing Efficacy of Vote Buying and Coercion in Mexican Electoral Politics," In *Mexico's Pivotal Democratic Election: Campaign Effects and the Presidential Race of 2000*, edited by

Domínguez, Jorge I. and Chappell Lawson, 47-66. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004.

Cox, Gary W., "Swing Voters, Core Voters, and Distributive Politics," In *Political Representation*, edited by Shapiro, Ian, Susan C. Stokes, Elizabeth Jean Wood and Alexander S. Kirshner. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Crisp, Brian F. and Scott W. Desposato, "Constituency Building in Multimember Districts: Collusion or Conflict?." *The Journal of Politics* 66, no. 1 (2004): 136-56.

Danielson, Michael S. and Todd A. Eisenstadt, "Walking Together, but in Which Direction? Gender Discrimination and Multicultural Practices in Oaxaca, Mexico." *Politics & Gender* 5 (2009): 153-84.

de León Pasquel, Lourdes, ed., *Costumbres, Leyes y Movimiento Indio en Oaxaca y Chiapas [Customs, Laws and Indian Movement in Oaxaca and Chiapas]* (Mexico: Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social and Miguel Ángel Porrúa, 2001).

Díaz Montes, Fausto, "Elecciones Locales en Oaxaca (1995) [Local Elections in Oaxaca]," In *Elecciones Municipales en Oaxaca [Municipal Elections in Oaxaca]*, edited by Martínez Vásquez, Víctor Raúl and Fausto Díaz Montes. Oaxaca, Mexico: IEEO and UABJO, 2001.

Díaz-Cayeros, Alberto. *Federalism, Fiscal Authority, and Centralization in Latin America*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

Díaz-Cayeros, Alberto and Beatriz Magaloni, "Party Dominance and the Logic of Electoral Design in Mexico's Transition to Democracy." *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 13, no. 3 (2001): 271-93.

Eisenstadt, Todd. *Politics, Identity, and Mexico's Indigenous Rights Movements*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

Eisenstadt, Todd and Viridiana Ríos, "Multicultural Institutions, Distributional Politics, and Postelectoral Mobilization in Indigenous Mexico." *Latin American Politics and Society* 56, no. 2 (2014): 70-92.

Fox, Jonathan. *Accountability Politics: Power and Voice in Rural Mexico*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Gandhi, Jennifer and Ellen Lust-Okar, "Elections Under Authoritarianism." *Annual Review of Political Science* 12 (2009): 403-22.

Gans-Morse, Jordan, Sebastián Mazzuca, and Simeon Nichter, "Varieties of Clientelism: Machine Politics during Elections." *American Journal of Political Science* 58, no. 2 (2014): 415-32.

- Gibson, Edward L., "Boundary Control: Subnational Authoritarianism in Democratic Countries." *World Politics* 58, no. 1 (2005): 101-32.
- Giraudy, Agustina. *Democrats and Autocrats: Pathways of Subnational Undemocratic Regime Continuity Within Democratic Countries*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.
- Goodman, Gary L. and Johathan T. Hiskey, "Exit without Leaving: Political Disengagement in High Migration Municipalities in Mexico." *Comparative Politics* (2008).
- Guccio, Calogero and Isidoro Mazza, "On the Political Determinants of the Allocation of Funds to Heritage Authorities." *European Journal of Political Economy* 34, no. 0 (2014): 18-38.
- Hawkins, Kirk A., "Who Mobilizes? Participatory Democracy in Chávez's Bolivarian Revolution." *Latin American Politics and Society* 52, no. 3 (2010): 31-66.
- Hernández Díaz, Jorge, ed., *Ciudadanías Diferenciadas en un Estado Multicultural: Los Usos y Costumbres en Oaxaca [Differentiated Citizenship in a Multicultural State: Customary Law in Oaxaca]* (Mexico, DF: Siglo XXI, 2007).
- Hernández Rodríguez, Rogelio. *El centro dividido. La nueva autonomía de los gobernadores [The Center Divided: The Governors' New Autonomy]*. México, Distrito Federal: El Colegio de México, 2008.
- Hiskey, Johathan T. and Gary L. Goodman, "The Participation Paradox of Indigenous Autonomy in Mexico." *Latin American Politics and Society* 53, no. 2 (2011): 61-86.
- Ichino, Nahomi and Matthias Schündeln, "Deterring or Displacing Electoral Irregularities? Spillover Effects of Observers in a Randomized Field Experiment in Ghana." *The Journal of Politics* 74, no. 1 (2012): 292-307.
- Instituto Nacional de Estadística Geografía e Informática (INEGI), "Sistema Municipal de Base de Datos (SIMBAD)." <<http://www.inegi.gob.mx/>>.
- Instituto Nacional Electoral (INE). <<http://www.ine.mx/>>.
- Jayasuriya, Kanishka and Garry Rodan, "Beyond Hybrid Regimes: More Participation, Less Contestation in Southeast Asia." *Democratization* 14, no. 5 (2007): 773-94.
- Jin, Hehui, Yingyi Qian, and Barry R. Weingast, "Regional Decentralization and Fiscal Incentives: Federalism, Chinese Style." *Journal of Public Economics* 89, no. 9-10 (2005): 1719-42.
- Jones Luong, Pauline, ed., *The Transformation of Central Asia: States and Societies from Soviet Rule to Independence* (Ithica: Cornell University Press, 2003).

Karp, Jeffrey A., Susan A. Banducci, and Shaun Bowler, "Getting out the Vote: Party Mobilization in a Comparative Perspective." *British Journal of Political Science* 38, no. 1 (2008): 91-112.

Khemani, Stuti, *Partisan Politics and Intergovernmental Transfers in India*. Policy Research Working Papers, The World Bank, 2003.

Klesner, Joseph L. and Chappell Lawson, "Adiós to the PRI? Changing Voter Turnout in Mexico's Political Transition." *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos* 17, no. 1 (2001): 17-39.

Koter, Dominika, "King Makers: Local Leaders and Ethnic Politics in Africa." *World Politics* 65, no. 2 (2013): 187-232.

Kuntz, Philipp and Mark R. Thompson, "More than Just the Final Straw: Stolen Elections as Revolutionary Triggers." *Comparative Politics* 41, no. 3 (2009): 2253-272.

Landry, Pierre F. *Decentralized Authoritarianism in China: The Communist Party's Control of Local Elites in Post-Mao Era*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Langston, Joy. *Democratization and Authoritarian Party Survival: Mexico's PRI*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming.

---, "Why Rules Matter: Changes in Candidate Selection in Mexico's PRI, 1988–2000." *Journal of Latin American Studies* 33, no. 3 (2001): 485-511.

Langston, Joy and Scott Morgenstern, "Campaigning in an Electoral Authoritarian Regime: The Case of Mexico." *Comparative Politics* 41, no. 2 (2009): 165-81.

Larreguy, Horacio, John Marshall, and Pablo Querúbin, "Parties, Brokers and Voter Mobilization: How Turnout Buying Depends Upon the Party's Capacity to Monitor Brokers.." *American Political Science Review* 110, no. 1 (2016): 160-79.

Levitsky, Steven and Lucan A. Way. *Competitive Authoritarianism: Hybrid Regimes After the Cold War*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Lyon, Aisling, "Political Decentralization and the Strengthening of Consensual, Participatory Local Democracy in the Republic of Macedonia." *Democratization* 22, no. 1 (2015): 157-78.

Magaloni, Beatriz. *Voting for Autocracy: Hegemonic Party Survival and Its Demise in Mexico*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

Malesky, Edmund, "Gerrymandering–Vietnamese Style: Escaping the Partial Reform Equilibrium in a Nondemocratic Regime." *The Journal of Politics* 71, no. 1 (2009): 132-59.

Malesky, Edmund and Paul Schuler, "The Single-Party Dictator's Dilemma: Information in Elections without Opposition." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 36, no. 4 (2011): 491-530.

Martínez Vásquez, Víctor Raúl, "Elecciones Municipales en Oaxaca (1992) [Elecciones Municipales en Oaxaca]," In *Elecciones Municipales en Oaxaca [Elecciones Municipales en Oaxaca]*, edited by Martínez Vásquez, Víctor Raúl and Fausto Díaz Montes. Oaxaca, México: IEEO and UABJO, 2001.

McGillivray, Fiona. *Privileging Industry: The Comparative Politics of Trade and Industrial Policy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004.

Molinar, Juan. *El Tiempo de la Legitimidad. Elecciones, Autoritarianismo y Democracia en México* [The Time of Legitimacy: Elections, Authoritarianism, and Democracy in Mexico]. México, Distrito Federal: Cal y Arena, 1991.

Montinola, Gabriella, Yingyi Qian, and Barry Weingast, "Federalism, Chinese Style: The Political Basis for Economic Success." *World Politics* 48, no. 1 (1996): 50-81.

Myagkov, Mikhail, Peter C. Ordeshook, and Dmitri Shakin. *The Forensics of Election Fraud: Russia and Ukraine*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

Nichter, Simeon, "Vote Buying or Turnout Buying? Machine Politics and the Secret Ballot." *American Political Science Review* 102, no. 1 (2008): 19-31.

Recondo, David. *La Política del Gatopardo. Multiculturalismo y Democracia en Oaxaca* [The Politics of the Ocelot: Multiculturalism and Democracy in Oaxaca]. México, Distrito Federal: CIESAS and DEMC, 2007.

Riedl, Rachel Beatty. *Authoritarian Origins of Democratic Party Systems in Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014.

Rundlett, Ashlea and Milan W. Svobik, "Deliver the Vote! Micromotives and Macrobhavior in Electoral Fraud." *American Political Science Review* 110, no. 1 (2016): 180-97.

Saikkonen, Inga A. L., "Variation in Subnational Electoral Authoritarianism: Evidence from the Russian Federation." *Democratization* 23, no. 3 (2016): 437-58.

Schedler, Andreas. *Electoral Authoritarianism: The Dynamics of Unfree Competition*. Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2006.

---, "The Menu of Manipulation." *Journal of Democracy* 13, no. 2 (2002): 36-50.

Scheiner, Ethan. *Democracy without Competition in Japan: Opposition Failure in a One-Party Dominant State*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

Schilling-Vacaflor, Almut, "Bolivia's New Constitution: Towards Participatory Democracy and Political Pluralism?." *European Review of Latin American and Caribbean Studies*, no. 90 (2011): 3-22.

Simpser, Alberto. *Why Governments and Parties Manipulate Elections: Theory, Practice, and Implications*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013.

Sjoberg, Frederik M., "Political Parties and Election Fraud," New York University, 2013.

Sjoberg, Frederik M. and Erik Herron, "Manipulating the Vote or the Voter?:The Influence of Electoral Rules on the Tactics of Fraud," New York University and University of Kansas, 2015.

Stacher, Joshua. *Adaptable Autocrats: Regime Power in Egypt and Syria*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012.

Truex, Rory, "Consultative Authoritarianism and Its Limits." *Comparative Political Studies* (forthcoming).

Tucker, Joshua, "Enough! Electoral Fraud, Collective Action Problems, and Post-Communist Colored Revolutions." *Perspectives on Politics* 5, no. 3 (2007): 535-51.

Wampler, Brian. *Participatory Budgeting in Brazil: Contestation, Cooperation, and Accountability*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Schedler, "The Menu of Manipulation."

<sup>2</sup> Birch, *Electoral Malpractice*.

<sup>3</sup> Schedler, "The Menu of Manipulation"; Birch, *Electoral Malpractice*.

<sup>4</sup> E.g., Rundlett and Svolik, "Deliver the Vote!"; Simpser, *Why Governments*; Ichino and Schündeln, "Deterring or Displacing."

<sup>5</sup> Birch, *Electoral Malpractice*.

<sup>6</sup> E.g., *ibid.*; Cantú, "The Geographical Menu"; Sjoberg and Herron, "Manipulating the Vote"; Tucker, "Enough!"

<sup>7</sup> E.g., Cantú, "Identifying Irregularities"; Ichino and Schündeln, "Deterring or Displacing"; Rundlett and Svolik, "Deliver the Vote!"

<sup>8</sup> Birch, *Electoral Malpractice*; Kuntz and Thompson, "More than Just"; Schedler, *Electoral Authoritarianism*; Tucker, "Enough!"

<sup>9</sup> Rundlett and Svolik, "Deliver the Vote!"

<sup>10</sup> Schedler, *Electoral Authoritarianism*; Levitsky and Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism*.

<sup>11</sup> Malesky, "Gerrymandering"; Malesky and Schuler, "The Single-Party Dictator's."

<sup>12</sup> Bernstein, *Fifty Years*; Díaz-Cayeros, *Federalism*; Hernández Rodríguez, *El Centro Dividido*; Langston and Morgenstern, "Campaigning"; Langston, *Democratization and Authoritarian Party Survival*.

<sup>13</sup> Birch, *Electoral Malpractice*; Schedler, "The Menu of Manipulation."

<sup>14</sup> Levitsky and Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism*; Schedler, *Electoral Authoritarianism*.

- <sup>15</sup> Malesky, "Gerrymandering"; Malesky and Schuler, "The Single-Party Dictator's."
- <sup>16</sup> Crisp and Desposato, "Constituency Building"; McGillivray, *Privileging Industry*.
- <sup>17</sup> Gans-Morse et al., "Varieties of Clientelism"; Nichter, "Vote Buying"; Larreguy et al., "Parties, Brokers."
- <sup>18</sup> Guccio and Mazza, "On the Political Determinants"; McGillivray, *Privileging Industry*; Khemani, *Partisan Politics*.
- <sup>19</sup> McGillivray, *Privileging Industry*.
- <sup>20</sup> Montinola et al., "Federalism, Chinese Style"; Jin et al., "Regional Decentralization"; Landry, *Decentralized Authoritarianism in China*.
- <sup>21</sup> Cox, "Swing voters"; Karp et al., "Getting out the Vote"; McGillivray, *Privileging Industry*.
- <sup>22</sup> Gans-Morse et al., "Varieties of Clientelism."
- <sup>23</sup> Ichino and Schündeln, "Deterring or Displacing."
- <sup>24</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>25</sup> Cantú, "The Geographical Menu"; Myagkov et al., *The Forensics of Election*.
- <sup>26</sup> ---, *The Forensics of Election*.
- <sup>27</sup> Ichino and Schündeln, "Deterring or Displacing."
- <sup>28</sup> Cantú, "Identifying Irregularities"; Sjoberg, "Political Parties."
- <sup>29</sup> Díaz-Cayeros and Magaloni, "Party Dominance."
- <sup>30</sup> Langston, "Why Rules Matter"; Langston and Morgenstern, "Campaigning"; Molinar, *El Tiempo*.
- <sup>31</sup> Simpser, *Why Governments*.

- <sup>32</sup> Bernstein, *Fifty Years*; Hernández Rodríguez, *El Centro Dividido*; Langston, *Democratization and Authoritarian Party Survival*.
- <sup>33</sup> Díaz-Cayeros, *Federalism*; Magaloni, *Voting for Autocracy*.
- <sup>34</sup> Díaz-Cayeros and Magaloni, "Party Dominance."
- <sup>35</sup> Bernstein, *Fifty Years*; Hernández Rodríguez, *El Centro Dividido*; Langston, *Democratization and Authoritarian Party Survival*.
- <sup>36</sup> ---, *Democratization and Authoritarian Party Survival*.
- <sup>37</sup> Díaz-Cayeros, *Federalism*; Magaloni, *Voting for Autocracy*.
- <sup>38</sup> Díaz-Cayeros, *Federalism*; Magaloni, *Voting for Autocracy*.
- <sup>39</sup> Anaya Muñoz, *Autonomía Indígena*; Bernstein, *Fifty Years*; Hernández Rodríguez, *El Centro Dividido*.
- <sup>40</sup> Anaya Muñoz, *Autonomía Indígena*.
- <sup>41</sup> Birch, *Electoral Malpractice*; Schedler, "The Menu of Manipulation."
- <sup>42</sup> Benton, "How 'Participatory Governance'"; Eisenstadt and Ríos, "Multicultural Institutions"; Fox, *Accountability Politics*.
- <sup>43</sup> Barber, *Strong Democracy*; Wampler, *Participatory Budgeting in Brazil*.
- <sup>44</sup> Benton, "How 'Participatory Governance'"; Hawkins, "Who Mobilizes? "; Lyon, "Political Decentralization"; Schilling-Vacaflor, "Bolivia's New Constitution."
- <sup>45</sup> See Almén, "Local Participatory"; Jayasuriya and Rodan, "Beyond Hybrid"; Truex, "Consultative Authoritarianism" for examples.
- <sup>46</sup> Anaya Muñoz, *Autonomía Indígena*; Recondo, *La Política del Gatopardo*.
- <sup>47</sup> ---, *La Política del Gatopardo*.

- <sup>48</sup> Díaz Montes, "Elecciones Locales en Oaxaca (1995)."
- <sup>49</sup> Anaya Muñoz, *Autonomía Indígena*; Cornelius, "Mobilized Voting"; de León Pasquel, *Costumbres, Leyes*; Fox, *Accountability Politics*.
- <sup>50</sup> Recondo, *La Política del Gatopardo*.
- <sup>51</sup> Hernández Díaz, *Ciudadanías Diferenciadas*.
- <sup>52</sup> Anaya Muñoz, *Autonomía Indígena*; Cleary, *Indigenous Autonomy*; Eisenstadt and Ríos, "Multicultural Institutions"; Recondo, *La Política del Gatopardo*.
- <sup>53</sup> Anaya Muñoz, *Autonomía Indígena*; Cleary, *Indigenous Autonomy*; Eisenstadt, *Politics, Identity*; Eisenstadt and Ríos, "Multicultural Institutions"; Recondo, *La Política del Gatopardo*.
- <sup>54</sup> Explained in Cleary, *Indigenous Autonomy*; Eisenstadt, *Politics, Identity*; Eisenstadt and Ríos, "Multicultural Institutions."
- <sup>55</sup> Anaya Muñoz, *Autonomía Indígena*; Eisenstadt, *Politics, Identity*.
- <sup>56</sup> Benton, "Bottom-Up Challenges"; Danielson and Eisenstadt, "Walking Together"; Hiskey and Goodman, "The Participation Paradox."
- <sup>57</sup> Benton, "Bottom-Up Challenges."
- <sup>58</sup> Anaya Muñoz, *Autonomía Indígena*.
- <sup>59</sup> Data from the state electoral institute.
- <sup>60</sup> Anaya Muñoz, *Autonomía Indígena*.
- <sup>61</sup> Data collection is described in Eisenstadt and Ríos, "Multicultural Institutions" I am grateful to Todd Eisenstadt for sharing it.

<sup>62</sup> This index is calculated across indigenous language groups and ranges from 0 (no groups) to 1 (unified group).

<sup>63</sup> Recondo, *La Política del Gatopardo*.

<sup>64</sup> Goodman and Hiskey, "Exit without Leaving."

<sup>65</sup> Data is from INEGI and CONAPO.

<sup>66</sup> Fox, *Accountability Politics*; Klesner and Lawson, "Adiós to the Pri?"

<sup>67</sup> Data from INE.

<sup>68</sup> Benton, "Bottom-Up Challenges."

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.; Gibson, "Boundary Control"; Giraudy, *Democrats and Autocrats*.

<sup>70</sup> See Gibson, "Boundary Control"; Saikkonen, "Variation."

<sup>71</sup> Blaydes, *Elections and Distributive Politics*; Gandhi and Lust-Okar, "Elections under Authoritarianism."

<sup>72</sup> Díaz-Cayeros, *Federalism*; Magaloni, *Voting for Autocracy*.

<sup>73</sup> Khemani, *Partisan Politics*; Scheiner, *Democracy without Competition*.

<sup>74</sup> Baldwin, "When Politicians Cede Control"; Koter, "King Makers"; Riedl, *Authoritarian Origins*.

<sup>75</sup> Jones Luong, *The Transformation*.

<sup>76</sup> Alley, "The Rules of the Game"; Stacher, *Adaptable Autocrats*.

<sup>77</sup> Baldwin, "When Politicians Cede Control."