The cycling of oligarchic and anti-system electoral coalitions

Juan Pablo Luna
PUC-Chile
jp_luna@me.com
Plan

• Six stylized facts
• Three possible outcomes
  – 1. Territorial fragmentation
  – 2. Parallel socioeconomic universes
  – 2. Time compression
• One implication: Meltdown/Cycling/”Careeing” b/t oligarchy & anty-system spasms
• Extensions
Six stylized facts

• 1. Longest stretch of democratic politics *
   recent redistributive impact/social incorporation
   – Consumption, inter-generational social mobility aspirations
• 2. Yet, still very high levels of inequality
• → civil oligarquies (rich pursue income defense via legal/institutional claims to property rights) → structural * instrumental power (→merging interests b/t oligarchs and political elites, while escaping authoritarian redistribution)
  – Restricted policy making scope
Six stylized facts...

• 3. Organized crime gaining unprecedented financial edge to either displace or buy (conditional) state coercion at the local level → grey zones &/or violence spirals

– Impossible to reduce illegality, violence, and corruption at the same time in numerous localities. In grey zones, illegality becomes fundamental for financing politics * consolidates as legitimate upward mobility mechanism for youngsters
Six stylized facts...

• 4. Golden and marginality ghettos increasingly segregated due to “fear of crime” / + #5
Six stylized facts...

• 5. Segmented provision of public goods due to exit by upper-middle classes under privatization / quality of public provision and state’s arbitration of social conflict still regressively biased (quality more than presence) / \rightarrow \text{structural entrapment even if more access to consumption and "fixed" upward mobility}

• 6. Horizontal accountability relative strengthening * mechanisms of societal accountability (e.g. media) \rightarrow \text{scandals exposing linkages b/t oligarchs/organized crime/politicians as mechanisms that reproduce social inequality}
Three outcomes

• 1. Fragmentation (territorial and functional) of conflict + emergence of single-issue citizens → negative political mobilization and discrediting
  – One cause radicals or politically alienated
De 11 o más Conflictos Sociales
De 6 a 10 Conflictos Sociales
De 1 a 5 Conflictos Sociales

Fuente y Elaboración: Adjuntía para la Prevención de Conflictos Sociales y la Gobernanabilidad
Defensoría del Pueblo

(1) Esta cifra da cuenta de los conflictos que se presentan por una misma causa en 3 departamentos o más.
Social conflict

Source: COES
Three outcomes

• 2. Social and territorial segmentation of experience with democratic citizenship (reinforced by decentralization)
Perceived Access to Citizenship Rights

13.4% Full citizenship

10.6% Lack of civil citizenship

5.7% Only political citizenship

11.5% Only social citizenship

12.6% Empty citizenship

32% Only civil citizenship

14.1% Lack of political citizenship

Civil citizenship →

Social citizenship →

Political citizenship →
## Sub-national variation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Civil</th>
<th>Social</th>
<th>Political</th>
<th>Average regional unevenness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamaica</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicaragua</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uruguay</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panama</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rep. Dom.</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraguay</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guyana</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honduras</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bolivia</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venezuela</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haiti</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brasil</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average unevenness by citizenship type</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Three outcomes

3. Time compression: legitimacy is structuring time, yet...

How long does presidential popularity take to decline by 10%? (first 3 presidents after transition vs. last 3 presidents)
Parallel universes* time compression: Overarching implication

• Political elites at national and sub-national level (e.g. Revocatorias) increasingly unable to:
  – Structure representation (much easier to win elections than to govern) and sustain legitimacy
  – Then → Either Populism or Oligarchy
Electoral coalition-making

- Easier to compile than to align for governing
- Low intensity vs. anti-system in every system, pendulum/polarization
  – Subjective evaluations regarding social mobility trajectories/expectations and blame attribution
- Elections in which nothing or everything is at play, tension with liberal democracy
Conventional wisdom

• Careening between:
  – Populism:
    • OK, but even populist leaders suffer from time-compression/complex social preference structures/single-issue citizens
  – Oligarchy:
    – OK, but if markets are socially/institutionally embedded → threat to oligarchs / Oligarchy by default (yet, contested/exposed)

• In LATAM: “WC, left-turn, right turn”

• OK, but disolution of political power at national and sub-national levels has been probably overlooked.
2 NESTED TRILEMMAS

GLOBALIZATION

STATE

SOCIETY

DEMOCRACY

ILEGALITY

CORRUPTION

BACKLASH
4 historical factors + 2 emerging ones

• High levels of inequality (top-incomes)
• Functionally and territorially uneven states
• Weak cross-class coalitions for public goods
• Pervasiveness of illegality
• + Relationally weaker states (captured, challenged)
• + Horizontal accountability
Many thanks!

Juan Pablo Luna
PUC-Chile
jp_luna@me.com