

The Origins of Paraguayan Post-Authoritarian Electoral Institutions and Their Effects on Internal Party Organization

By

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Abstract

The Colorado Party (ANR) dominated Paraguay's political landscape for over four decades (1954-1989). This makes it the second longest surviving political party in Latin America, surpassed only by Mexico's *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* (PRI) which sustained its political hegemony for over seven decades. Even though the ANR has lost its hegemonic position in Paraguayan politics, it ensured its survival by influencing the process of democratic transition and the design of the country's post-authoritarian electoral institutions. To my knowledge, it is the only surviving formerly hegemonic political party, which successfully imposed its own rules of post-authoritarian internal party organization on all other political parties in the Paraguayan system. The article offers the following insights. First, as the case of the Colorado Party demonstrates, political parties whose leaders relished uncontested control in an authoritarian setting continue to exert political influence after the demise of authoritarianism and the introduction of competitive elections. According to my most recent count, there are more than forty formerly hegemonic political parties around the world, which maintained a privileged status and political position following the break-down of their authoritarian regimes. Second, this political influence is noticeable in a country's electoral institutions since, if given the opportunity, outgoing political parties will push for 'power preserving or augmenting' (Jones Luong, 2002: 3) electoral laws which will guarantee them legislative seats and executive control (Geddes, 1995; Birch et al., 2002; Benoit, 2005). Moreover, outgoing political parties are not necessarily monolithic entities where peace and calm reign. In many cases, there are vicious power struggles not only between the outgoing party and the opposition, but within the outgoing party as well. It is likely then that certain groups within the outgoing party will seek to form alliances with the opposition in order to establish institutions that would guarantee them internal party control. I trace the inter-party and intra-party power struggles in the formulation of the 1990 Paraguayan Electoral Code. Third, electoral institutions restructure relations both among and within political parties. The 1990 Electoral Code, with the introduction of mandatory party primaries, posed a challenge to the 'granite unity' (*unidad granítica*) of the Colorado Party and has led to the dispersion of decision-making authority among numerous internal party movements. The survival and electoral performance of the Colorado Party demonstrates that hegemonic parties are capable of surviving transitions and winning free elections. Thus, we are likely to see the imprints of ex-hegemonic parties not only on the process of democratic transition but also on the post-authoritarian institutions.

The Origins of Paraguayan Post-Authoritarian Electoral Institutions

Back to ‘Oligarchy’?

The purpose of this article is to explore the origins of Paraguayan electoral institutions and their effects on the internal organization of Paraguayan political parties. The article demonstrates the following points: (1) political parties whose leaders relished uncontested control in an authoritarian setting continue to exert political influence after the demise of authoritarianism and the institution of a democratic system; (2) in many cases, this political influence is noticeable in a country’s electoral institutions since, if given the opportunity, outgoing political parties push for electoral laws which would guarantee them at least some legislative seats (in many cases electoral institutions guarantee them a legislative majority or plurality) and control over the executive (Geddes, 1995; Birch et al., 2002; Benoit, 2005); (3) in turn, electoral institutions structure relations inside the outgoing political party and lead to dispersion or concentration of decision-making authority inside the party. The third point is a direct challenge to Michels’ assertion that “organization implies the tendency to oligarchy,” and thus political parties are naturally dominated by narrow political elites (Michels, 1962: p 70). Paraguayan parties do not corroborate his argument, and as I will demonstrate, the dispersion of authority noticeable inside their ranks is a direct result of the electoral institutions the outgoing political behemoth – the Colorado Party – helped put in place. What I have observed while examining numerous formerly hegemonic political parties is that there is not necessarily a tendency toward centralization, particularly not in the immediate aftermath of democratization. It might well be the case that the external shock that occurs with the transition from a non-competitive to a fully competitive political environment is so great that it initially pushes political parties to decentralize in the short run. Perhaps the long-run organizational equilibrium within political parties is oligarchy. Perhaps there are multiple equilibria dependent upon the electoral conditions that the external environment presents.

Single-party Authoritarianism

Many of the authoritarian regimes of the 20th century were controlled by single political parties. Let us recall the communist regimes of Eastern and Central Europe and the Soviet Union, Mexico’s septuagenarian regime controlled by the *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* (PRI), El Salvador’s regime dominated by the *Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front*, and Paraguay’s regime controlled by the Colorado Party. Many of Africa’s post-colonial regimes were also controlled by single parties which patterned their political systems on Soviet totalitarianism.

Unlike most of these single party regimes, which are now defunct, most of the single parties that sustained them are alive, and some of them are even thriving in competitive electoral politics. The death of a single-party authoritarian regime does not necessarily imply the death of the party that kept it in place. On the contrary, quite a few ex-hegemonic parties have been able to win seats in democratic elections and form governments. These parties, however, cannot hope to survive in a democracy unless they

make changes in their internal organization and develop a competitive edge vis-à-vis other political parties. Under authoritarianism, many of these parties participated in elections where the results were known ahead of time and elections were merely a way of gauging the amount of popular support for the dictatorship.¹ Democratic elections introduce competitors in the political system and make it imperative that ex-hegemonic parties adapt to the new political conditions in order to survive.

Ex-hegemonic parties can choose several avenues of adaptation to democracy. First, they may re-structure their internal organization to enhance their decision-making capacity in a competitive environment. Second, they may be able to participate in the process of democratic institutional design, and thus create institutions that enhance their chances of electoral success. Third, ex-hegemonic parties may choose to formulate meaningful, or at the very least appealing, political programs that will help them attract voter support. Certainly, some ex-hegemonic parties may have sufficient financial resources accumulated under authoritarianism that will allow them to win democratic elections without having to make significant changes. Ex-hegemonic parties' leaders, however, cannot assume that these resources will last in the long-run. Sooner or later, ex-hegemonic parties will have to stop relying on their authoritarian resources and develop new strategies to improve their competitive edge. Those formerly hegemonic parties that adapt earlier will have a comparative advantage as legitimate participants in competitive elections vis-à-vis those parties that do it later on after the transition.

How does the study of Paraguayan electoral institutions enrich our understanding of ex-hegemonic party adaptation to democratic competition? I argue that Paraguay's ex-hegemonic party – the Colorado Party – has been able to affect the process of electoral institutional design so as to improve the political fortunes of its candidates for elected office. But the Colorado Party accomplished more than influencing the post-authoritarian electoral institutions of Paraguay. It also set the rules of internal party organization for all political parties by incorporating them into the Constitution with some help from opposition party legislators. The approach I take in this article is party-based. I focus on the role of political parties in the process of institutional design. I would like to emphasize, though, that we can hardly treat hegemonic political parties as coherent entities. Thus, I pay particular attention to the interests of elite groups within the political parties because in many cases the interests of competing elite groups are at odds. Paraguay's Colorado Party is a case in point. Numerous elite groups were in competition for the party presidency and control over the party government (*Junta de Gobierno*) during the democratic transition. In addition, the *seccionales* (local party branches) were vying with the central leadership to increase their role in the party management. Thus, I identify two main axes of conflict over the developmental trajectory of the Colorado Party – (a) conflict among elites in the central leadership and (b) conflict between local and central party leaders. The approach I take in the article is in line with the approach taken by the contributors to Birch et al. (2002) in their analysis of post-communist electoral institutions. Birch et al. focus on the role of internal party groups in shaping political institutions. Other approaches – such as the seat-maximizing model of Kenneth

¹ See for example, Beatriz Magaloni's *Voting for Autocracy: Hegemonic Party Survival and Its Demise in Mexico*, paper presented to the UCLA Comparative Politics Workshop, October 2005

Benoit - focus strictly on the party as the main unit of analysis (Benoit, 2000; Benoit & Schiemann, 2001; Benoit & Hayden, 2001). Although I do not discount the importance political parties attach to policy goals, my analysis is based on the assumption that at the time of transition to democracy outgoing political parties are mostly driven by their survival instincts. Thus, office-seeking is likely to be of primary importance to hegemonic parties.

The Granite Unity (Unidad Granítica) of the Colorado Party – Internal Organization of the Party under Authoritarianism

Problems of factionalism surged inside the Colorado Party long before 1988 when the rift between two main sectors – the traditional (*tradicionalista*) and militant (*militante*) – gave momentum to the process of democratization. In the middle of the 1980s the leading organs of the Colorado Party became the locus of internal competition among several groups – the *tradicionalista* sector, *Ynsfranismo*, the Ethical and Doctrinal sector (sector *ético y doctrinario*), *Generación Intermedia*, *Seifarismo*, *Riquelmismo*, and the *militante* sector. Most of these sectors bore the name of their leaders, which is symptomatic of the factionalism characterizing the party both before and after democratization. The ideological distinctions among these various sectors were not well-defined either during the authoritarian regime or after democratization. Some of the sectors were conservative, while others were more progressive, but the main distinction among them was their support for a certain political leader. The *tradicionalista* sector was led primarily by lawyers, businessmen, and ranchers, who came from wealthy Paraguayan families. The sector abided by republican and conservative principles.² The *militante* sector was General Stroessner's right hand and his staunchest base of support inside the party.³ Milda Rivarola describes the existential condition of the Colorado Party as follows: "The colorados are almost a party-country. They nest both governing and opposing elements; exploiters and exploited; liberals, conservatives, and fascists; persecutors and persecuted; rich and poor" (Rivarola, 1998: 151).

In 1990, at the proposal of President Andrés Rodríguez, and by a very close vote on the assembly floor⁴, Paraguayan legislators approved a new electoral law. The law stipulated that party primaries would be the only legitimate way for parties to select their candidates for elected office. Thus, legislative candidates, presidential candidates, candidates for municipal councils, governorships, and mayoralties are to be selected in internal party elections. Similarly, party leaders are to be elected in internal party elections. The introduction of party primaries gave the Colorado Party electoral competitive edge by helping it accomplish two things: (1) primaries helped the Colorado Party manage competition among its leaders within the party ranks, without giving them an incentive to break away from the party and forming their own parties, and (2) party primaries

² Benjamin Arditti, "Las corrientes internas del Partido Colorado paraguayo" Centro de Documentación y Estudios (C.D.E.) Asunción, Paraguay, March 1991 (unpublished manuscript) p. 1

³ Carmen Colazo, *Los partidos políticos en el Paraguay: estructura interna*. Asunción: CIDSEP, 1994. p. 93

⁴ The Electoral Law was finally approved on February 28, 1990 by the lower legislative chamber. See Adriano Abab López Benítez, *Historia Política del Paraguay 1940 a 2005*. Asunción: EMASA, S.R.L. 2005, 56.

increased the cost of running new political parties, which gave the Colorado Party, a keeper of vast financial resources, electoral advantage.

Paraguayan electoral institutions have led to the decentralization of internal party organization across all parties in Paraguay's political landscape. This effect is particularly salient in the two traditional parties – the *Partido Colorado* and the *Partido Liberal Radical Auténtico* (PLRA) – which happen to be the two largest and best organized political parties in the country. Decentralization is also patent in the smaller newly formed parties such as *Partido País Solidario* (PPS), *Partido Encuentro Nacional* (PEN), and *Partido Patria Querida* (PPQ).

The Political Debate over Paraguay's 1990 Electoral Law: Direct Vote vs. Party Conventions

Hypothesis 1: Political elites whose leaders anticipate that their influence inside the party will wane (grow) as a result of proposed institutional reform will oppose (support) it.

There are a few questions at hand. First, why did General Rodríguez propose a reform which might have brought about the decline of his sector's influence? Second, which sectors opposed and which supported reform and why?

It is possible that General Rodríguez proposed the introduction of reform as an attempt to prevent future succession crises inside the Colorado Party. The Colorado Party held an important series of internal negotiations during the first half of the March of 1989. The main goal of the meetings was to establish a rule that would allocate control over the internal party apparatus among the factions. The very fact that General Rodríguez and most other *tradicionalistas* did not make an appearance at the “Casa de los Colorados” to attend the speech of the *Junta de Gobierno* is quite telling that there were bitter fights inside the party at the beginning of the 1990s (Paredes, 2001: 48). At its convention, the outgoing hegemonic party – the Asociación Nacional Republicana (ANR) – approved President Rodríguez's proposal to introduce a direct vote for the selection of legislative and presidential candidates and party leaders.⁵

Faction leaders were not interested in pursuing internal party unity. They were interested in securing hegemony for their faction within the party. “Neither Rodríguez, nor Chávez, or Argaña, Ynsfrán, Lovera, and Riera presented a political platform that sought to satisfy the interests of all sectors,” claims Paredes (2001: 36). Party unity was not on the agenda of any of the Colorado Party factions. Securing control over the party apparatus was.

Thus, my expectation is that sectors of the Colorado Party that feared a potential decline in their influence after the introduction of the direct vote opposed it, whereas sectors who anticipated an increase in their influence, or at least had a fair shot at increasing their political influence, supported the direct vote. Which sectors inside the Colorado Party felt threatened by the direct vote? Which sectors projected that their influence inside the party would be bolstered as a result of the direct vote? During the military regime, most of the

⁵ “La ANR aprobó el Código Electoral del Ejecutivo” *ABC Color*, February 1, 1990.

decision-making authority was in Stroessner's hands. On paper, decisions had to be made by the party convention. In practice, however, Colorado Party conventions, just like party conventions in communist Europe, served as mere rubber stamps of the decisions General Stroessner had already made. Colorado Party sectors that were in control of the party at the time the direct vote was being discussed opposed the direct vote because they saw it as a way for competing sectors to seize control of the party. These sectors' leaders probably assumed that it would be easy to manipulate the party convention. Underdog Colorado Party sectors, on the other hand, supported the direct vote because they saw it as a mechanism of challenging the ruling party sectors.

Hypothesis 2: The Colorado Party pushed for the direct vote because it was a mechanism to gain competitive edge vis-à-vis opposition parties. By the time the opposition parties get ready for general elections, they have spent the majority of their resources on organizing their internal elections. The direct vote could be conceived of as an additional barrier to entry/survival challenge for new political parties.

Hypothesis 3: Factionalized ex-hegemonic political parties that still have large assets are less likely to splinter into smaller parties than ex-hegemonic parties that do not have large assets. Internal party factions will not have the incentive to leave a well-endowed party. (The factions are more or less parties to a marriage of convenience.)

Thus, I argue that the Colorado Party has not split into numerous parties because it still commands vast organizational and financial resources. No single internal party movement has the unilateral incentive to secede from the party. On the contrary, the exiled leaders of numerous Colorado Party factions returned to Paraguay and merged with the Colorado Party rather than forming separate political parties. [co-ordination game]

The original proposal for Paraguay's post-authoritarian electoral institutions was created by General Andrés Rodríguez, the President of the Republic during the period of democratic transition (1989-1993). According to the proposal, all political parties were to hold internal elections for the selection of candidates for elected office and the election of party leaders.

Some sectors of the Colorado Party and the main opposition party – PLRA – were rankled by the President's proposal, for they considered the imposition of direct elections on all political parties an encroachment on parties' decision-making autonomy. Representative Juan Manuel Benítez Florentín (PLRA) argued that the method of candidate selection ought to be discussed by each party before the President's proposal would be voted on the floor.⁶ *Betismo* and *Movilización Popular para el Cambio* (MPC) – both Colorado sectors – approved of the idea of candidate selection through direct vote. MPC leaders argued that the state should be allowed to intervene in the internal affairs of political parties unless it did so to sew internal discord. One of the PLRA sectors – *Apertura e Integración Democrática* – also pronounced itself in favor of the direct vote. Another PLRA sector – *Cambio para la Liberación* – disapproved of the idea of the

⁶ "Proponen consultas sobre voto directo" *ABC Color*, February 1, 1990, p. 2

direct vote because it saw it “as an encroachment on behalf of the executive on the autonomy of political parties.”⁷

The leader of one of the Colorado Party sectors – Ynsfrán – tabled an alternative proposal for candidate selection mechanism. He suggested that party conventions be charged with the task of selecting candidates for elected office.⁸ Later, however, Ynsfrán joined other Colorado sectors in support of direct elections.

While some Colorado Party sectors approved the direct vote with alacrity and others were opposed, the local party structures (*seccionales*) saw internal elections as a challenge to their opportunity to exercise decision-making authority over candidate selection decisions.⁹ According to the plan, decision-making power would rest in the hands of the party members themselves rather than local party leaders or party conventions. Thus, along the second axis of conflict, local party branches were opposed to the introduction of party primaries.

Debates on the Direct Vote in Congress

Lower Chamber Debates

The direct vote was the apple of discord both inside political parties and on the legislative floor. Liberal representatives opposed the introduction of mandatory internal party elections because they saw it as an encroachment on parties’ sovereignty. They also expressed doubts concerning the proposal of a Colorado Party faction to introduce direct elections for party conventions, which would in turn elect candidates for elected office. Liberal representatives accused the Colorado Party of using the electoral law to solve its internal conflicts.¹⁰

There were two crucial votes on the floor of the lower legislative chamber in Paraguay in February 1990. The first vote on the introduction of the direct vote was a tie. Thirty-five representatives, including 3 Liberals, 2 Febreristas, and 1 Radical voted in favor of the direct vote (party primaries).¹¹ The Vice President of the *Partido Revolucionario Febrerista* (PRF) provided the following rationale for the position of the Febreristas: “It is the party leaders who compile the party lists, so the direct vote will not have the profound effects many of its supporters hope to achieve.”¹²

Seventeen Colorados voted against the introduction of the direct vote. The orthodox Colorados (*los ortodoxos*) were displeased by the decision of another Colorado sector – the *Ynsfranistas* (supporters of Edgar Ynsfrán) – which had promised to introduce an alternative proposal. That proposal would have called for direct election of party

⁷ “Betismo apoya elección a través del voto directo” *ABC Color*, February 1, 1990, p. 2

⁸ “Voto directo es inaplicable aún” *ABC Color*, February 10, 1990, p. 7

⁹ “Seccionales rechazan el voto directo” *ABC Color*, February 9, 1990, p. 4

¹⁰ “El voto directo se aprobó en Diputados” *ABC Color*, February 14, 1990, p. 2

¹¹ “Cronología de una sesión sin precedentes” *ABC Color*, February 14, 1990, p. 4

¹² “Voto directo modificará régimen interno de partidos” *ABC Color*, February 14, 1990, p. 6

conventions, rather than party primaries. The *Ynsfranista* sector justified its vote as follows. Ynsfrán's hope was that the Colorado Party would approve a project that would allow party affiliates to vote for members of a party convention.¹³ The party convention, in turn, would make all decisions regarding the selection of candidates for elected positions and the election of party officials. The orthodox sector, on the other hand, suggested that while party leaders should be responsible for the selection of candidates for elected positions and the order in which individual candidates are placed on a list, convention delegates should be allowed to disturb the list order only in a limited way, by changing the list order of up to three names.¹⁴ The suggestions of the orthodox sector, however, were not satisfactory in the eyes of the Ynsfranistas. The latter decided to switch their position by supporting the direct vote rather than the proposal of the orthodox sector.¹⁵ [Provide spatial diagram of the positions of the Ynsfranistas and the orthodox sector.]

Immediately after the vote, Liberals began exerting pressure on Reinaldo Valenzuela, a Liberal representative, to switch his vote from a vote in favor to a vote against party primaries.¹⁶ The second vote also resulted in a tie – thirty-five representatives voted in favor and thirty-five voted against the introduction of party primaries. In order to break the tie, the speaker of the lower chamber – Miguel Ángel Aquino - cast a vote in favor of party primaries. His vote increased support for party primaries from thirty-five to thirty-six votes and led to the successful approval of party primaries in the lower chamber.

Upper Chamber Debates

After the lower chamber approved the proposal to introduce party primaries, the law was sent to the Senate. Even though there were sharp divisions between supporters and opponents of the proposal, the vote was not as evenly split between the two camps as in the lower chamber.¹⁷ The Colorado Senator Abraham Esteche expressed skepticism about the benefits of the direct vote. “Party lists will still be compiled among four walls and if in the past they were imposed on the convention delegates, now they will be imposed on the electorate,”¹⁸ he claimed. Twenty senators, mostly from the Colorado Party, voted in favor of the party primaries, whereas fifteen senators voted against. All of the senators from PLRA opposed the party primaries and so did 4 senators belonging to the ‘orthodox’ Colorado Party sector. PLRA senators opposed the introduction of mandatory party primaries for all political parties because they saw it as a grave impingement on party autonomy.¹⁹

The Cost of Internal Party Elections

¹³ The preference order of the Ynsfranistas was P1 (elect convention delegates) > P2 (party primaries) > P3 (allow convention delegates limited power to disturb the party list)

¹⁴ “Disgusto ortodoxo con Edgar Ynsfrán” *ABC Color*, February 15, 1990, p. 5

¹⁵ “Por qué “ynsfranistas” apoyaron el voto directo” *ABC Color*, February 16, 1990, p. 6

¹⁶ “Diputado del PLRA denunció presiones de sus compañeros” *ABC Color*, February 14, 1990, p. 4

¹⁷ “Senadores colorados no se ponen de acuerdo sobre voto directo” *ABC Color*, February 17, 1990, p. 4

¹⁸ “Nada variará con el voto directo” *ABC Color*, February 15, 1990, p. 5

¹⁹ “Voto directo consiguió su ratificación final ayer” *ABC Color*, February 24, 1990, p. 6

Internal party elections are a costly endeavor. According to official party estimates, the Colorado Party primaries in 1996 cost approximately one million dollars (Paredes, 2001: 104). Let me present an example from the state of San Pedro,²⁰ which is nestled in the very heart of Paraguay. There is only one road which passes through the state of San Pedro. When it rains, many parts of the state are impassable and people have to wait for a few days for the rain waters to subside so that they can make it to their destination. Needless to say, inclement weather could be a real challenge when the residents of San Pedro have to cast their vote in internal party elections. The road conditions add to the overall organizational cost of the internal party elections and having adequate transportation could mean the difference between winning and losing an internal election.²¹ Political parties have dealt with the rising cost of election campaigning by running only a limited number of party lists or by transferring the cost of the election from the central party to the internal party movements/sectors.

To be able to participate in internal party elections, one has to be a registered party affiliate. Unregistered affiliates are not allowed to vote. Party registers are updated before each internal election. There are no limits on electoral campaign financing for the party primaries. Thus, much of the electoral success of a party movement depends on the amount of money it spends on its electoral campaign and the amount of patronage it can provide to its supporters.²²

It is possible that party loyalty in Paraguay is not as stable as scholars have assumed it is. In the 1998 general elections, for example, in the department of Central, voters elected a liberal governor while the Colorado Party carried most of the legislative seats in the department as well as most of the votes in the presidential elections (Frutos & Vera, 1998: 46). One could certainly attribute these results to strategic voting.

The D'Hondt system of closed lists vs. a System of Electoral Quotients

One of the discussions inside the legislature centered on which system of proportional representation would be used for the selection of legislative candidates and the election of legislators. Legislators advanced two proposals – the system of electoral quotients and the D'Hondt system of closed lists. The system of electoral quotients is slightly more proportional, and thus better for smaller parties. In it, the votes obtained by a political party are simply divided by the total number of seats to determine how many seats each party will be awarded. The D'Hondt system is better for larger parties and was thus supported by Colorado Party legislators.

Party Primaries and their Effects on Internal Party Organization

In accordance with Paraguayan electoral law, political parties have to select their candidates for elected positions by holding party primaries. Elections are a part of life for

²⁰ Paraguay is divided into 18 states (*departamentos*). All parts of the country outside the capital region are commonly referred to as *el interior* (the interior).

²¹ Interview with Senator Emilio Camacho, November 2005.

²² Personal communication with Senator Emilio Camacho, 1/25/06

every politician and party affiliate. Party affiliates (*correligionarios/adherentes*) have to vote every other year, two months, and fifteen days. Party affiliates have to vote in national elections, municipal elections, and elections for party leaders. How are Paraguayan parties organized to deal with the likelihood that their electoral fortunes will worsen?

Movements inside each political party nominate their own complete party list (*sistema de listas completas*) of candidates.²³ The rules of movement formation vary from party to party. The Colorado Party requires that all movements that run in the internal party elections pre-register with the party electoral tribunal by a certain date.²⁴ Otherwise they are not allowed to participate. Smaller parties do not require that lists be pre-registered. Some political players, such as *Alianza Encuentro Nacional* (AEN)²⁵ “decided to welcome members of other parties into the movement without requiring them to give up their party affiliation.”²⁶ Movements are also allowed to run joint lists. Many movements coalesce and present joint lists to increase their chances of electoral success. Other movements fall apart and form their own lists. Party factions do not have to run candidates for all elected positions. Some factions choose to run only pre-candidates for legislative positions without running presidential candidates. As a matter of fact, there are always more lists competing for legislative nominations than for the presidential nomination. In the 1992 PLRA primaries, for example, five movements ran lists for upper and lower chamber legislators, but only two lists ran candidates for the presidency of the Republic.²⁷ Do the leaders of internal movements cultivate the vote of their supporters? Do party affiliates develop loyalty to individual leaders or to internal party movements? Unless the movements are of a more permanent character (like brand names) and persist from internal election to internal election, movement leaders will not have the incentive to develop the reputation of the internal movement. They will most likely work on developing their personal reputation. Miranda suggests that internal movements are the party units that incur the highest financial expense because they provide regular service to their supporters and do most of the organizational work prior to and during elections (Miranda, 2002: 68). Given the structure of electoral system, it does make sense for internal party movements to cultivate the vote of their affiliates.

Party Faction Electoral Strategies in Gubernatorial Elections

There is nothing preventing party movements from running multiple candidates in the same electoral district. Competition among candidates is very personalized and ideological differences are unclear. Rather than expressing loyalty to a given party list,

²³ If there are 10 elected positions to be filled, then each internal party movement/faction has to nominate 10 candidates and determine the order of the list.

²⁴ The Colorado Party statutes require that lists be pre-registered a few months before the date of the party election. Opponents of Paraguay’s current President – Nicanor Duarte Frutos – raised hue and cry over the fact that he registered his list a few minutes after the official deadline had closed.

²⁵ Currently, AEN is known as *Partido Encuentro Nacional* (PEN).

²⁶ Riquelme, Marcial (principal author). *Negotiating Democratic Corridors in Paraguay: The Report of the Latin American Studies Association Delegation to Observe the 1993 Paraguayan National Elections*. Pittsburgh, PA: LASA, 1994.

²⁷ “Un menor ausentismo en las internas del PLRA” *ABC Color*, November 17, 1992, p. 22

party affiliates express loyalty to a given candidate. Parties may run multiple candidates in elections for governorship. In the 1992 governorship elections, for example, the *argañista* faction ran multiple candidates for governor in nine electoral districts.²⁸ It was able to win the governorship nomination in five of the nine districts where it ran multiple candidates.²⁹ Why would a political faction have the incentive to run multiple candidates for governorship in the same district? After all, it is possible that two candidates from the same faction split the faction vote, thus enabling the victory of a candidate from an opposing faction. Although I do not have systematic district-level evidence showing that the strategy has helped or hindered factions that run multiple candidates for the governorship, the limited evidence I do have suggests that it does not necessarily reduce the faction's chances of electoral success. The competition for the governorship nomination is very personalized. Because factions are generally fluid and do not persist from election to election, party affiliates do not develop loyalty to a specific faction. They usually develop loyalty to an individual. Due to the lack of constant faction loyalties it makes perfect sense for a faction to run multiple candidates. The strategic calculus of the party factions would be different in case factions were of more permanent nature and party affiliates had developed loyalty for a given party faction.

Party List Order

The order of the final party list is determined by applying the D'Hondt system of closed lists. Thus, the higher the number of votes earned by a list, the higher the number of candidates included in the final list and the better the ranking of the candidates on the list. Here I present a schematic description of the way candidate order is determined for each party list.

Let us assume that there are three party lists, five seats to be filled, and the following distribution of votes – List A (16,000), List B (5,000), and List C (3,000).

	1	2	3
List A	16,000	8,000	5,333
List B	5,000	2,500	1,666
List C	3,000	1,500	1,000

To determine the order of candidates on the final party list we have to compare the numbers we obtain for each list after dividing by 1, 2, and 3. Given these results, here is the distribution of seats by list.

- #1 List A
- #2 List A
- #3 List A

²⁸ Department boundaries coincide with electoral district boundaries in governorship elections.
²⁹ The *argañistas* won the governorships of the departments of Concepción, Alto Paraná, Canindeyú, Ñeembucú, Amambay and Presidente Hayes, where they ran multiple candidates. “Para las gobernaciones, la supremacía fue wasmosista” *ABC Color*, December 29, 1992, p. 8

- #4 List B
- #5 List C

Movement List Order

In this example, the final list is represented by the top three pre-candidates of list A and the top pre-candidates of list B and list C. Thus, the final list order is determined by the votes each movement has been able to garner at the internal party elections. Therefore, pre-candidates have to compete hard so that they can be placed high enough on the faction list and so that

Though there appear to be no written rules, typically the order of each faction list is determined by the person heading the list. Movements are formed on the basis on personal friendship rather than on the basis of ideological preferences. The personalism is reflected in the electoral campaign tactics of the politicians. Rather than distinguishing themselves based on party ideology, they do so by engaging in personal attacks.

Ideological distinctions are slightly more noticeable among candidates during the competition to win the party's presidential nomination. Presidential candidates have to outline their economic and social programs. Here are a few examples from the party primaries for the presidential nomination for the 1993 elections. There were four Colorado Party candidates – Juan Carlos Wasmosy, Luís María Argaña, Díaz de Vivar, and Fretes Dávalos. In their electoral campaign for the nomination, they emphasized their positions on various social and economic issues. The four pillars of Wasmosy's program (the winner of the nomination) were education, improving teachers' salaries, public health, and a socially just tax policy. Argaña argued for state involvement in economic development, economic policy based on Keynesian principles, and opposition to the privatization of key strategic industries. Díaz de Vivar advocated diversification of agricultural production, education, enhancing citizens' participation in government, and industrial development. Fretes Dávalos campaigned on progressive policies that would allow more political participation of women, young people, and peasants and the promotion of honest and capable candidates for political office.³⁰

Election Day Shenanigans: How to Weed Out Your Competition

Political opponents and competing movements use every trick in the trade to improve their chances of winning in internal elections. During the 1992 primaries the *argañistas* complained that their affiliates were not allowed to buy gasoline. That prevented many of the affiliates from being able to vote, especially in the places where people had to be transported to the polls. The prohibition gave certain sectors an unfair electoral advantage.³¹ The competition between Argaña y Wasmosy in the 1992 primaries was so bitter. The two candidates for the presidential nomination accused each other of having

³⁰ "Programas de los candidatos por la presidencia de la República" *ABC Color*, December 27, 1992, p. 5;
"Hay diferencias en lo económico y en proyectos integracionistas" *ABC Color*, December 26, 1992, p. 13

³¹ "Estarían negando venta de combustible a los argañistas" *ABC Color*, November 12, 1992, p. 5

plagiarized a major electoral campaign speech. Similarities between the two candidates' speeches could be noticed in whole ideas and paragraphs.³²

Why Did the Colorado Party Not Splinter?

If we were to examine the formal rules of entrance into the Paraguayan political game, we would probably conclude that the Paraguayan electoral system makes it relatively easy for new parties to form. At the time the exiled Colorado faction leaders returned home, the requirements to register a new party were to obtain signatures from ? supporters. After its most recent revision, the Electoral Code (Ley N 834/96) stipulates that a group of 100 Paraguayan citizens may form a political party by attracting a significant number of registered affiliates. According to article 21 (f) of the Electoral Code, the number of affiliates is set at 0.50% of all valid votes cast in the most recent election for the Senate. Thus, if 1,500,000 votes were cast in the most recent senatorial election, the party needs to recruit at least 75,000 affiliates so that it can be officially registered.³³ Numerous politicians who participated in the formation of new political parties in the past five years commented that the barriers to entry are quite high in a small country where most people tend to vote for one of the two traditional parties.

³² "Wasmosy y Argaña se acusan mutuamente de plagio" *ABC Color*, November 14, 1992, pp. 4-5

³³ This is approximately the number of valid votes cast in the last Senatorial elections. Thus, currently any new party has to meet this registration requirement until the 2008 elections.

1987 (prior to transition)	1992 (prior to party primaries)	1998 (prior to party primaries)	2003 (prior to party primaries)	2006 (prior to party primaries)
*Militantes combatientes stonistas *Tradicionalistas *Movimiento de Integración Colorada *Movimiento Etico Doctrinario *Movimiento Nacional Patriótico *Neo-Contestatarios Independientes	*Tradicionalismo unido *Tradicionalismo autónomo *Coordinadora Colorada Campesina (CCC) *Tradicionalismo renovador *Coloradismo democrático *Movimiento Popular Colorado (MOPOCO) *Generación Intermedia *Frente Histórico y Popular	*Tradicionalismo renovador *Tradicionalismo democrático *Unidad y Concordia *Reconciliacion Colorada *Coordinadora Campesina Colorada (Ybanez faction) *Coordinadora Campesina Colorada (Melgarejo faction) *Frente Historico y Popular	*Reconciliación Colorada *Coloradismo Democrático *Frente de Unidad *Acción Democrática Republicana *Reconstrucción Nacional Republicana *Dignidad Republicana *Unidad Colorada *Poder de la Gente *Coordinadora Colorada Campesina *Unión Democrática Republicana *Comunitario Colorado *Frente Republicano de Unidad Nacional *Unace Pytaite *Fuerza Patriótica *Reacción Colorada *Fuerza Solidaria Colorada *Colorado Moralizador *Frente Amplio Colorado	

			*Nacional y Popular *Institucionalista Colorado *Reivindicación Republicana	
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Table X. Map of internal movements (factions) inside the Colorado Party (1987-2006)
Sources: Roberto Paredes, *Los colorados y la transición*. Asunción, Paraguay: ETIGRAF, 2001; Anibal Miranda, *Partido Colorado: La máxima organización mafiosa*. Asunción, Paraguay: Miranda & Asociados, 2002.