

# Colombia Internacional

## CALL FOR PAPERS

---

### Colombia Internacional

#### Special Issue

### New Developments in Political Linkage Mechanisms in Latin America

#### Guest Editors:

Jennifer Cyr – Universidad Torcuato Di Tella – [jmcyr@utdt.edu](mailto:jmcyr@utdt.edu)

Diego Luján – Universidad de la República de Uruguay – [diego.lujan@cienciassociales.edu.uy](mailto:diego.lujan@cienciassociales.edu.uy)

**Reception of articles:** August 1<sup>st</sup> – August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024

#### Presentation

In recent years, Latin American politics has witnessed profound changes in how politicians seek to engage with voters and the citizenry at large. At times, these changes have followed global trends, such as the decline of partisan channels of linkage or the rise of the extreme right. In other cases, these changes have taken on forms and dynamics specific to our region (Rennó 2020; Castro Cornejo 2023). The rise and subsequent fall of left-wing parties and leaders in government, the emergence of phenomena of massive social protest, and the transformation and realignment of party systems have led to significant changes in the way politicians seek to connect with citizens in general and with voters in particular. In this context, it is relevant to investigate the causes and consequences of these changes and, above all, what we can learn from them and how best to approach them theoretically and empirically. How have linkage mechanisms evolved in Latin America in recent years? How have politicians used these mechanisms to carry out their actions and maximize their objectives? What implications have these changes had for democratic representation?

Political science has made considerable progress in recent decades in identifying, conceptualizing, and measuring the different linkage mechanisms between politicians and voters (Kitschelt 2000; Kitschelt *et al.* 2010; Stokes *et al.* 2013). However, beyond the existence of ideal types (Kitschelt 2000),

# Colombia Internacional

## CALL FOR PAPERS

---

diverse possible combinations, and even the segmentation that politicians can make of the different linkage types (Luna 2014), little is known about how these have evolved in recent years in Latin American democracies. There are some indications about how politicians have leveraged particular events to innovate how they connect with the public (Luna *et al.* 2021). The health crisis caused by COVID-19 has opened the opportunity for unmediated connections between politicians and citizens (Blofield, Hoffman, and Llanos 2020). In addition, innovations in linkage mechanisms have been driven by the expansion of social networks and mobile applications as increasingly common modes of access to information and political exchanges, leading to the rise of personalistic linkage mechanisms and charismatic leadership (Andrews-Lee 2021).

At the same time, the health crisis has highlighted the limits of state action to assist large social groups. The provision of social assistance based on universalist foundations, typical of the programmatic modality, has shown its limits in many cases due to the deficit in state capacities necessary for such provision. Instead, provision modalities based on discretionary use by national, subnational, and local governments have become evident, which has once again brought to the table the validity of clientelistic links (Calvo and Murillo 2014).

Amid this panorama, sometimes partisan ties refuse to disappear and even increase their validity. Despite all the difficulties it faces in our region, the (re)creation of party identities has shown to be resistant to the emergence of new modalities of linkage between politicians and voters (Cyr 2017). In some cases, these identities survive on the basis of the parties' ability to engage with the public based on consistent programmatic and ideological positionings, as observed, for example, in Uruguay. In other cases, the permanence of party identities is based on adherence to a series of laxer principles, coexisting with appeals with personalistic elements as in Argentina, Colombia, or El Salvador, or clientelistic as in the case of Paraguay (Dosek 2023).

Finally, cases of mass social protest have forced traditional parties and politicians to incorporate a series of demands not yet present in their appeals to citizens. To this end, they have sought to establish

# Colombia Internacional

## CALL FOR PAPERS

---

contacts with social movements and other more or less organized forms of social mobilization, giving rise to significant innovations not foreseen by the specialized literature on linkage mechanisms.

In this context, this special issue seeks to update the discussion on recent transformations in linkage mechanisms between politicians and voters. To this end, we take as an initial reference the classic distinction originally proposed by Kitschelt (2000), expanding, at the same time, the set of alternatives present in the original formulation and subsequent literature. Based on the study of new forms of linkage, this issue aims to update, expand, and complement the knowledge available in this field.

### Topics covered by the thematic issue:

- Major innovations in linkage mechanisms between politicians and voters, including case and comparative studies;
- Personalism, electoral mobilization, and new political identities in Latin America;
- Particularism, clientelism, and political parties, including case studies, small and large-number comparative studies, and theoretical studies;
- Modalities of linkages between political parties, social movements, and civil society organizations;
- Programmatic linkages, ideology, and electoral mobilization;
- Studies on mixed, hybrid, and segmented linkages, in particular those that empirically address such mixed linkage strategies.

### References

- Andrews-Lee, Caitlin. 2021. *The Emergence and Revival of Charismatic Movements: Argentine Peronism and Venezuelan Chavismo*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Blofield, Merike, Bert Hoffmann, and Mariana Llanos. 2020. "Assessing the Political and Social Impact of the COVID-19 Crisis in Latin America." German Institute of Global and Area Studies (GIGA). <http://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep24815>
- Calvo, Ernesto, and María Victoria Murillo. 2014. "Partisan Linkages and Social Policy Delivery in Argentina and Chile." In *Clientelism, Social Policy, and the Quality of Democracy*, edited by Diego Abente Brun and Larry Diamond, 17-38. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

# Colombia Internacional

## CALL FOR PAPERS

---

Castro Cornejo, Rodrigo. 2023. "The AMLO Voter: Affective Polarization and the Rise of the Left in Mexico." *Journal of Politics in Latin America* 15 (1): 96-112. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1866802X221147067>

Cyr, Jennifer. 2017. *The Fates of Political Parties: Institutional Crisis, Continuity, and Change in Latin America*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dosek, Tomas. 2023. "El clientelismo en Paraguay ¿Compra de votos o compra de participación electoral?" *Latin American Research Review* 58 (3): 612-630. <https://doi.org/10.1017/lar.2023.8>

Kitschelt, Herbert. 2000. "Linkages Between Citizens and Politicians in Democratic Polities." *Comparative Political Studies* 33 (6-7): 845-879. <https://doi.org/10.1177/001041400003300607>

Kitschelt, Herbert, Kirk Hawkins, Juan Pablo Luna, Guillermo Rosas, and Elizabeth Zechmeister. 2010. *Latin American Party Systems*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Luna, Juan Pablo. 2014. *Segmented Representation: Political Party Strategies in Unequal Democracies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Luna, Juan Pablo, Rafael Piñeiro, Fernando Rosenblatt, and Gabriel Vommaro. 2021. "Political Parties, Diminished Subtypes, and Democracy." *Party Politics* 27 (2): 294-307. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354068820923723>

Rennó, Lucio. 2020. "The Bolsonaro Voter: Issue Positions and Vote Choice in the 2018 Brazilian Presidential Elections." *Latin American Politics and Society* 62 (4): 1-23. <https://doi.org/10.1017/lap.2020.13>

Stokes, Susan, Thad Dunning, Marcelo Nazareno, and Valeria Brusco. 2013. *Brokers, Voters, and Clientelism: The Puzzle of Distributive Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

**Jennifer Cyr** holds a PhD in Political Science from Northwestern University (United States). She is a professor and research associate at the Department of Political Science and International Studies (CPEI) of the Universidad Torcuato Di Tella (Argentina) and director of the graduate programs in Political Science at the same university. She specializes in political parties and political identities in Latin America. On these topics, she has published the book *The Fates of Political Parties: Institutional Crisis, Continuity, and Change in Latin America*, with Cambridge University Press (2017), articles in journals such as *Comparative Politics*, *Comparative Political Studies*, and *Revista de Ciencia Política*, as well as chapters in edited books.

# Colombia Internacional

## CALL FOR PAPERS

---

**Diego Luján** holds a PhD in Political Science from Universidad Nacional de San Martín (Argentina). He is an adjunct professor at the Department of Political Science (Faculty of Social Sciences) of the Universidad de la República de Uruguay, a Level I researcher of the National System of Researchers of Uruguay, and president of the Uruguayan Association of Political Science (2020-2022). He specializes in political parties and party systems, electoral behavior, and political institutions, with emphasis on Latin America. On these topics, he has published articles in journals such as *Colombia Internacional*, *Revista Mexicana de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales*, *Latin American Politics and Society*, *Latin American Research Review*, and *Revista de Ciencia Política*, as well as chapters in edited books.