Do Institutions Matter? Electoral Institutions, Party Systems, and Ethnic Conflict

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GOV 20

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Some questions

- What are the components of an electoral system?
- What are the effects of electoral systems?
- How do electoral systems interact with social cleavages?
- Is democracy possible in plural societies? If so, how?
- How do institutions administer ethnic conflict?
The menu
The German electoral system
The only law in political science

- **Duverger’s Law**: single-member district plurality systems → 2 party systems

- **Duverger’s Hypothesis**: PR electoral system → multiparty systems
Duverger’s mechanisms

- Mechanical effect: in restrictive (less than proportional) system there aren’t just enough seats!
- Strategic effect: voters don’t wanna waste their vote, politicians don’t want to join parties without a chance
The whole story in one slide

Latent social cleavages

Electoral institutions

Politicized social cleavages

Strategic effect of electoral laws

Duverger's theory

Electoral parties

Mechanical effect of electoral laws

Legislative parties
Objections to Duverger’s law

- It’s politicians who chose electoral systems!
- party system $\rightarrow$ electoral system
The ghost of endogeneity

HOW COULD YOU

FORGET "ENDOGENEITY"

AGAIN
We have all four types

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plurality Elections</th>
<th>United States</th>
<th>United Kingdom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>Old Commonwealth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jamaica</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proportional Representation</th>
<th>Latin America</th>
<th>Western Europe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
We have all four types

Table 8
Legislative electoral systems by regime type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Electoral system</th>
<th>Regime type</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parliamentary</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>Presidential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Majoritarian</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportional</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>503</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>261</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
This is not how you do science (or write an essay)

### Table 2 — Economic Growth, Inflation, and Unemployment (in percent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pres.-Plurality (N=1)</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parl.-Plurality (N=4)</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parl.-PR (N=9)</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: *OECD Economic Outlook*, No. 26 (December 1979), 131; No. 30 (December 1981), 131, 140, 142; No. 46 (December 1989), 166, 176, 182.
Consociational democracy
Remember Dahl

“Polyarchy is a system of mutual security”
Consociational democracy

- Grand coalition
- Mutual veto
- Proportionality
- Segmental autonomy
Group excercise

Group excercise!
Recap

- Condorcet’s paradox
- Electoral systems
- Duverger’s law
- Consociational democracy