**Abstract:**

The consolidated literature about Brazil's political history frequently states that the evolution of democracy, in this country, seems to reflect some signs of imperfection or unfulfillment and is branded as a peculiar and exceptional case of trajectory. The present research arises from the questioning of the above assumptions stated by the specialized literature. I believe that the idea of an unstable democracy in countries like Brazil requires a better explanation. Thus, the main goal is to understand the evolution of Brazilian political institutions within a framework that is marked by the tensions inherent to the establishment and practice of representative government and its development towards a democratic government. In this paper I focus on the legislative elections that were held between the first Republican period in Brazil and the period known as the country's first democratic experience (1889-1945), that is, elections that were held before the emergence of democracy in the country. Using a new data set I was able to challenge the established literature, by showing that the electoral practices of this pre-democratic period were not innocuous and mere façade for a purely formalistic representative system. Rather, I specifically find that the First Republican Congress was a deliberative organ, capable of addressing national issues and transcending regional conflicts and oligarchic influences. My findings thus cast doubt on deterministic social and economic arguments, establishing the preeminence of political and institutional variables as the roots of early competitive elections.

“Bernardo Pereira de Vasconcellos [Member of the Legislature of the Brazilian Empire in 1824] reminded us that the representative system did not mean the popular will, but the government of the best, the most enlightened, the most virtuous. Between the real country and the legal country, only the second would be able to distill the elite, the power able to modernize, civilize and uplift the people”. (Raymundo Faoro, 1973:371)

1. Introduction

There is a consensus in the Brazilian academic literature that the political regime, started by the presidential election of 1945, is the first democratic experience in Brazil. However, we found no systematic studies that are dedicated to explain why such an experiment began, and could begin in 1945 and not before. What could have changed in order to democracy to be feasible at that time and not before? What have changed in the country? Such questions are not made directly by the researchers of the political development in Brazil.

In general, the analyzes of the political regime, inaugurated with the election of 1945, are more concerned with offering explanations for its demise with the Military Coup in 1964. Therefore, there’s a gap in the history of Brazil that corresponds to the period before the political regime of 1945. Why, since then and not before, elections began to ensure the representation of minorities? To put these questions into a historically more accurate perspective, why governors failed to fully control the formation of the states’ governments? Why elections have become competitive? And, more importantly, why governors began to loose elections? These questions remain, even today, not explained by the Brazilian political science.

Going a little backward in history, we see that the consolidated interpretations of the Brazilian experience with a representative government in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, after the end of the Imperial period in 1889, are marked by a disjunction between the legal and the real Brazil. The realistic descriptions of the electoral practices of the country's post-independence period show this imbalance. According to
these descriptions, the ill-fated electoral practices have experienced, in essence, little variation during the first century of the independent life of the country. And this happens despite the numerous reforms of the electoral law that took place both in the Empire period and in the first republican era. The fundamental problem, suggested by the scholars, lie in the absence of an electorate that could have the conditions required for the operation of a representative government in this country. It is said that during this period there was not a voter able to make effective the functioning of representative government. Being dependent of a landowner, the voter would not have an autonomous will to express; so he voted under an order, expressing the will of his superiors. This is the ultimate reason for the notorious disjunction between the legal and the real country that is present in the quote that opens this paper. Thus, the representative government in Brazil would be nothing but a farce, a sad spectacle in which its basic precepts were overturned due to the absence of social and economical conditions.

If we accept this premise, we would be compelled to conclude in favor of the rejection of such a research project focused on reconstructing the historical and institutional experience of Brazil. More specifically, with this assumption there would be no reason to study the experience of representative government in this country once it would be marked by mismatches, between the real and the formal, between practice and theory, and other conflicts used by the specialized literature. There would be nothing to learn, both from the point of view of Brazilian political history as from the point of view of understanding the nature of representative government in this country and its evolution. The many reforms would only be a proof of the unreality of representative institutions in that country. They do not reveal anything other than the attempt to copy foreign models, and their inadequacy to the reality prevailing in the country. The institutional debate would be empty and without much interest because detached from reality, and for not exploring the fundamental problem, namely the social reality behind the voter dependent on landowners and vote buying.

Following this line of argument, the consolidated literature tends to affirm the anomalous character of the Brazilian political development, its divergence from the classical Western model represented, for example, by the known scheme proposed by T. H. Marshal (1964) to account for the evolution of citizenship in England. In this type of analysis, the
emphasis is on the supposed specificity of the Brazilian political experience which ultimate result would be a stunted and fragile democracy. Thus, the evolution of democracy in Brazil seems to reflect some signs of imperfection or unfulfillment and is branded as a peculiar and exceptional case of trajectory; a view that persists in some comparative studies even today. However, these analyzes, in general, are not substantiated by a clear explanatory model for the emergence of democratic rule. In most cases, the reference remains a fuzzy model, ultimately anchored in the theory of modernization. According to those analyses, since the image consolidated in the literature is the one that the problem of the political delay of Brazil is ultimately due to the peasant voters, which are unable to sustain a true representative government (Kinzo 1980; Victor Nunes Leal 1975; Souza 1974), the disjunctive would only be resolved with the transformation of the social structure, specifically the transformation of the agrarian structure of the country. Therefore, changes were needed to stop the forces that prevented the evolution of representative institutions. Only with those changes, the social structure and advanced forms of representative government would set up accordingly.

This research arises from the questioning of the above stated assumptions. We believe that the idea of an unstable democracy in countries like in Brazil – the spectre of a not fully consolidated democracy with big gaps that make it impossible to compare them to consolidated democracies in developed countries – requires some explanation. And we also believe that a very interesting starting point for this research could be to clear the differentiation between representative government and democracy. In Brazil, when we had consolidated the first type of government, we started to treat it as being a democratic government. But the recent literature (Manin 1997; Przeworski 2010) shows us that some mistakes, in the analysis of the evolution of representative institutions, may derive from the confusion of those two different moments of the political history of this country.

Representative governments and democratic governments are, in fact, based on elections as their method to select their leaders, but this doesn’t make them identical regimes, and to focus only on the popular character of the voting method can disguise the important distinctions between the two expressions. We can see, in spite of the association to ideal values which are based on the idea of a democratic self government, that the original representative institutions were not equal. Self government meant, for the founding
fathers of this system, the government of the ones who had reason and virtue – reserved to those who were remarkable unequal in social and economical position. This government should be, and in fact was, selected through elections, which is apparently a democratic mechanism. But since Manin (1997), who is the main reference in the literature, we have learned that a representative government and its elective mechanism although may be seen as a type of government which has a popular basis, it’s also capable of ratifying a kind of natural aristocracy\(^1\) – what Manin (1997:94) refers to as the “principle of distinction”, inherent in the election method of selecting political leaders.

In this sense, part of this research is justified as a revisit to institutional debates starting from the First Republic of Brazil to the period considered by the academic literature as the country’s first democratic experience (1889-1945), from the perspective inaugurated by Bernard Manin, and explored by other authors. The basic goal is to understand the political developments in Brazil, from a comparative point of view, starting from the characteristics of the nature of Representative Government. Accordingly, the proposal necessarily involves comparison with other cases, not only the best known (England, France and the United States), as well as other less studied from this point of view, such as Germany and Spain. More recent studies have shown that transformation of Representative Government in Democracies was not linear and was marked by violent conflict and political upheaval (Berman 2007; Campbell 2005; Keyssar 2000; Przeworski 2010). For a long time, non-competitive elections were the norm in most countries of the world. On the perspective of other democratic experiences it may be possible to reveal that the trajectory of the representative governments is not so different and that the development of the Brazilian democracy is not so negatively peculiar.

But that’s not all. It’s also an objective of this research learn precisely when and where lies the birth of the first Brazilian democratic experience. We found evidence to indicate that it starts in 1934 rather than 1945, thus changing the historical moment that the academic literature points as the first Brazilian democratic experience. In summary, our main goal in this research is to understand the evolution of Brazilian political institutions within this framework, that is, as marked by the tensions inherent to the establishment and practice of representative government and its development towards a democratic

\(^1\) Natural aristocracy (based on the qualities of the representative derived from his wealth, talent or social position) meaning it is different from the legal and hereditary aristocracy.
government – when elections became really competitive and there is a real possibility of power alternation (Przeworski, 2010, p. 117).

This paper is structured as follows: in section 2, we will discuss the nature of representative government and will mark the distinction of this kind of government to what we now call modern democracies. Also in this section, based on some case studies, drawn from secondary sources, we will clarify the similarity in the evolution of representative governments; in section 3, we will discuss the evolution of Brazilian political institutions within a framework that is marked by the tensions inherent to the establishment and practice of representative government and its development towards a democratic government; finally, in section 4 we present our conclusions.

2. The idea of a Representative Government

Nowadays, in order to a country to be considered as being a democracy its governments must accept the results of the elections, the political life must be organized by political parties, elections must be fairly competitive, and the freedom and participation of the opposition must be guaranteed, therefore granting it a veritable chance of occupying governmental offices. Under such definition, democracy is a pretty recent phenomenon resembling nothing like the model built by its founding fathers.

Our institutions are representative, meaning that the citizens do not govern, but are governed by others (Przeworski, 2010:15). The main difference, between the direct democracies (from Athens) to the current representative democracy, is that the latter put the executive functions in the hand of a few and not in the people as a whole. This difference is based on the way how this executive body is selected: in modern democracies it is its peculiar method – the election – and in the Athens’ democracy the selection occurs by a random method – the lottery. The transition from a selection by lottery to the election process is a critical milestone from the direct to the indirect method of governing – therefore being born the representative government. Intuitively, one could suggest the disappearance of the selection by lottery is due to the enhancing of the political unit (State-nation) and due to the increasing population (due to a problem of scale). Manin (1997:82),
nevertheless, argues that this method is not entirely unfeasible in large scale communities and that its disappearance cannot be explained through functional arguments, but by rational interests and desires and deliberated by the founder fathers of the representative government, based on the image of the election as being a method superior to lottery, given the aristocratic nature of the elective method. Therefore, contrary to the statement from Shapiro e Hacker-Cordón (1999:3) that the representative government must be seen as the second-best or as an instrumental substitute in view of the unfeasibility of the direct democracy in big heterogeneous populations, in Manin’s rerouting this kind of government correspond to an original form of government, deliberately designed by its founders.

As he deeps further into the analysis of the methods to select the leaders in modern representative governments, Bernard Manin (1997) historically shows the inequality resulting (and not noted by the literature) from the election process as a selection of individuals that are “socially superior” (either by means of wealthy, talent, virtue or status). The author states that this kind of government was instituted with the idea that the elected representatives are distinguishable citizens – socially different from the ones who elected them– to what the author refers as “the principle of distinction” (Ibid., p. 94).

Different arrangements ensured this principle of distinction in the XVII e XVIII centuries. For instance, in England some of the arrangements included legal provisions, limitations to voting based on property and income, cultural rules and practical issues; in France those arrangements included purely legal issues, and in the USA there were more complex hidden reasons that were more visible in the debate between federalists and anti-federalist about the ratification of the American Constitution (Ibid, p. 95). Even through different arrangements, in all the afore mentioned cases of incipient representative governments, it is evident the aristocratic nature of the results of the elective method.

It is interesting that even, by means of its own nature, elections result in the selection of representatives that are not equal to the represented ones, due to its aristocratic nature, elections also have a democratic character, that is, the possibility that the electorate has to select and to substitute their government. The important point here is that the focus on the elections may overwhelm the popular element of the elective method as the foundation of a democratic regime (Posada-Carbo 1996:12; Valenzuela 1996). This interpretation, though, can wrongly focus only on the democratic character of the elections and leave aside, as
Manin shows, its inherent aristocratic dimension. What we are saying is that representative governments and democracy are not all the same. The founding fathers of the representative governments could not even realize what democracy would come to be (Przeworski, 2010, p. 18). In this regard, it is important to mark the difference, the current democracies, even though imagined under values such as self government, equality and liberty, are not like the representative government that the founding fathers had in mind (Przeworski 2009b:72, 2010:161). It is an anachronism to think those two concepts as being synonymous. Even though the founding fathers of the representative government, in their lectures, used the values of self government, they have established very restrictionary institutions, excluding many layers of population – either related to the right to vote or be elected- and protecting the status quo from the popular will.

The perspective of Manin, without any exaggeration, has revolutionized our understanding of the origins of representative government and its evolution. According to this perspective, electoral practices that today we identify with corruption, and the pursuit of illegal activities, were seen as constitutive and appropriate for the proper functioning of representative government. The model was therefore very different from that practiced today. The justifications and/or ideological principles to base the whole process were also different. Elections were informal processes, long term, without prior release of candidatures, in which choices were made by acclamation. The role of voters was less than that of exercising a choice among many options, but to identify those qualified as superior to rule. In this sense, obviously, the goal of electoral reform was not to eliminate any influence of the electoral process. The problem was - and, somehow, remains - to distinguish the good from the bad influence. In the case of elections of the nineteenth century, for example, the open vote was intended precisely to guarantee the exercise of pressure seen as positive on the voter, an assurance that their votes would be used responsibly. With the secret ballot, it was believed, voters might behave irresponsibly, yielding to unwarranted pressures.

A more adequate understanding of the role played by elections in the birth of representative regimes justify a return to historical studies of the evolution of democracy in different countries. We believe, and we have good reasons for this, that the nature of representative government in Brazil, and its evolution to modern democracy, was not so different from that experienced by other countries, even those considered advanced, full
democracies. When countries like England, France and the United States were building their existing democracies, electoral corruption in its various facets has always been present in the electoral process. The academic literature takes as an anomaly in the Brazilian case that has long been the norm in many countries. Governments controlled elections and produced results in various forms throughout much of the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Some of these cases even tolerate the presence and activity of opposition forces, but denied them the chance to come to power through elections. Certainly, political developments in these countries are not the same. The problem to be investigated in future research is to explain both what is similar and what is deviant in these experiments. In this work we limit ourselves to present some examples of this scenario and then more carefully analyze the Brazilian case.

2.1. Elections before democracy: electoral fraud and political upheaval

A study about how the evolution from the representative government in Brazil to what we then call democracy, in view of the historical-political experiences of other democratic countries (like USA, England, France, Germany and Spain) could reveal us that the trajectory of the representative governments are not that much different from the development of the Brazilian democracy, and is not so peculiar as, some times, the literature insists to emphasize. The problems Brazil faced in the period of the First Republic (1889-1930) are not that different from the problems faced by many countries in the development of their own democracies. In the middle of the XVIII century, only a few people voted and the public power was regularly granted by indication (Przeworski 2010:53). In France, and in the majority of other countries, the restriction to vote was justified by the dependence of the voter. The history of the vote (even male vote) is branded by restrictions about property, income, education and tax payments (Przeworski 2009a). Those restrictions were very gradually abandoned, even so, sometimes facing tribulations and, in general, when the vote of the masses was not seen as a threat. Another restrain, less explored by the literature, was related to who could be elected (Manin, 1997). Other than the legal provisions – on behalf of the capability, the autonomy or the detachment needed to one dedicated to the public affairs – the expenses related to an electoral campaign and the costs to maintain the
electoral basis are very high, and therefore restricted the access of the citizens to a representative office.

When the poor were given the right to vote, in countries nowadays considered as democratic, the institutional agreements ruled their participation as well as the results of the elections. Many examples are commonly found in the history of all representative governments: roll of official candidates, indirect elections (in two levels), open ballot, qualifying and enrollment fraudulent practices, crossed electoral systems and electoral fraud (Lehoucq and Acevedo 2007; Przeworski 2010:46). Therefore, the history of fraud, corruption and fabrication of election results in favor of the government is not a peculiarity of the Brazilian history. This scenario is present in the history of the political evolution either in the USA (Campbell 2005; Hofstadter 1969; Keyssar 2000), Europe (Berman 2007:31-36; Conacher 1971:59) or in Latin America (Lehoucq 2011; Przeworski 2009c, 2010). In general, we could say that the before said is present in all countries that came to be called democratic. It is anachronistic to insist that in all ages the electoral process allowed the voters could freely choose their representatives (Przeworski 2009a).

To have the right to vote is not the same as to have the right to elect (Przeworski 2009a:23), just like the simple event of an election is not enough to a competition to be present. It is an anachronism to regard the electoral process as being a dispute between government and opposition, in all the historical ages. As Hofstadter (1969. p.8), states on the North American case:

The Idea of a legitimate opposition – recognized opposition, organized and free enough in its activities to be able to displace an existing government by peaceful means – is an immensely sophisticated Idea, and it was not an Idea that the Father found fully developed and ready to hand when they began their enterprise in republican constitutionalism in 1788. We will misunderstand their politics badly if we read them so anachronistically as to imagine that they had a matured conception of a legitimate organized opposition or of a party system.

As the above passage suggests, the founding fathers of the representative institutions were also very ambiguous on what was the role and what was the place of the opposition in a representative regime (Morgan 1989; Przeworski 2010:113-114), as well as on what kind of opposition was legitimated and what was subversive. Their main concern was to know how to keep the national harmony and unity – to build and strong and stable
Union – rather than how to rule the divisions of opinions and interests in a pacific way. Both in England and in the USA, as Hofstadter (1969), the political discussion in the XVII century was clearly anti-parties.

And in this anti-parties scenario the election of 1800 were held, in the USA, and it was considered the first power shift by the power of election. This fact made the parties no longer being seen as just factions that could lead the country to a chaos and disharmony, as per Hofstadter (Ibid, p. 35-36; 152-156), the adherence of those actors to the rules of the game, more precisely to build their image as the leaders and builders of the common goods and order. This description may suggest a pacific deal between the democratic actors, but as Hofstadter shows, once more, this route was built by calculations on what was more or less costly to suppress the opposition. This way was not pacific and one in one line. Neither federalists nor republicans thought about a bi partisan system in which they could alternate themselves to be in power. Each other desire was to eliminate the adversary in the political game. Both sides displayed a partisan behavior against the parties. Once in power, the party no longer saw itself as a party, but as a government. Nevertheless, the opposition was seen by the government as subversive, anarchist and unloyal (Hofstadter 1969:87). The event that the system became bi partisan is result of the experiences done and it was not an expected result. There is no “relentless march” or a “nation destiny” in this route, but there are many other routes that could have been taken.²

Moreover, the evolution from the representative government to what we call democracy doesn’t reflect, in any way, a linear history, but does reflect the history as marked by violent conflicts and shakings. If we take the case of the USA again, we can see that the evolution of the right to vote and the acceptance of a legitimated opposition, like Keyssar (2000) and Hofstadter (1969) analyzed, are marked by violent conflicts and twist and turns, presenting a high degree of tension between groups and classes. Far from being singular and pacific, the experience of the USA has been less exceptional (and perhaps not an unique example of democratic idealism) than the literature insists in affirming (Keyssar, 

² Likewise, Przeworski (2010, p. 60) shows that the presidential regime in the U.S.A. was adopted like a bet, or more precisely, it was the result of an experimental accident rather than a deliberate political construction with a foreseen outcome.
The route to democracy in the USA seems to reveal a history more similar to the history of Europe and Latin America than we could realize

In the case of European countries, within a decade that corresponds to the period of the French Revolution, from 1789 to 1799, France, sometimes considered the country of origin of modern European democracy, went through a hereditary dictatorship in the Old Regime, underwent a Republic - declared in 1793 by King Louis XVI -, went through war and chaos in domestic politics in the period known as the Reign of Terror from 1793 to 1794 and then returned to a dictatorship, through the coup of the young Napoleon Bonaparte (Berman 2007:31). From 1875 onwards, in less than 100 years, France has changed its election rules eleven times (Przeworski 2010:119).

In the history of Germany, although the former German parliament to be considered democratic refers to the year 1848, which issued a Declaration of Fundamental Rights (using values such as freedom of speech and religion, equality before the law and representative government), one year later in 1849, when Parliament offered the crown to Frederick William IV to build a new country, united and liberal, he then closed parliament and ended violently riots that emerged from his actions (Berman 2007, p 33.)

Spain also experienced transitions and instability. After deposing the Queen in 1868, the country did not come to an agreement about who or what would replace the Crown. The result was a brief republican period between 1873 and 1874 with the establishment of a new constitution in 1876 (with restricted suffrage and ministers responsible for the legislative branch). Then, failing to satisfy many interests at stake and ignoring demands of the lower classes, the country once again experiencing a period of great political instability and violence (ibid., 2007, p. 36).

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3 A clear example of what we believe is an incorrect description of the history of democracy in England and in the United States can be seen in Rose and Shin (2001). The interpretation of history in that study reflects a sequential process of democratization, unfortunately common interpretation in the field of comparative evolution of democracies around the world. According to those who advocate this line sequential evolution, there is a right way or ideal by which a system will become fully democratic. And the reversal of this sequence, as allegedly occurred in the third wave of democratic countries, including Brazil, have heritage such countries, as cases of incomplete democracy (ibid.: 333). Gonzáles and King (2004:205), although reveal the persistence of political and civil constraints during the democratization process in the U.S., persist in comparisons between first-wave democracies and third wave (Huntington 1994), to the detriment of so-called third wave democracies.
Even regard to an example advertised as ideal type closer to a stable and linear democratic development - the most cited example is the case of Britan’s democratic evolution - a closer look at the history of this case reveals violent conflicts and upheavals. As stated by Berman (2007, p. 36),

Contrary to popular belief, the development of democracy in England had a very turbulent backstory—once you take into account the intensely violent period of the English Civil War (with intermittent fighting from 1642 to 1651), followed by Oliver Cromwell’s republican but dictatorial Commonwealth (1649–53) and then Protectorate (1653–59), a period of overt one-man rule first by Cromwell and then by his son Richard, whose May 1659 resignation set the stage for the restoration of the Stuart monarchy in 1660.

In line with the above quotation, the seventeenth-century England, the House of Lords was abolished, a republic was proclaimed, the king was expelled, and the deputies were prevented from exercising their parliamentary activities with the forfeiture of seats in the House of Commons. The holding of regular elections, free and universal suffrage would only occur in England in 1929 (Dos Santos 1998:5). Prior to this country, other cases with elections in these terms, are only found in 1893 in New Zealand, in 1902 in Australia, in 1913 in Norway, in 1915 in Denmark, the Netherlands in 1919, and 1921 in Canada and Sweden. Therefore, democracy under regular, fair and free elections, with universal suffrage, legitimate opposition, and the possibility of alternation in power, is a very recent phenomenon. Which begins, New Zealand as the only exception, only in the twentieth century.

Nor is it true that the electoral reforms that came to England during the nineteenth century match or has been leveraged for the conversion of its elites to democratic ideals. The themes, around which the debates on electoral reform in Britain occurred, in reality are not very different from those that take place in Brazil. Above all, in both countries, discussions on the expansion of citizenship and the elimination of spurious influences in the electoral process, whether coming from the government or private agents, are closely associated. In general, the fundamental problem relates to the qualifications of the voter to the right of suffrage. That the voter is likely to be subject to spurious influences, from the sale of his vote or give in to undue pressure, is alleged as evidence of their inability to
exercise the right. Only the voter who has the ability and means to maintain their autonomy should be admitted to the electoral process.

Thus, we agree with Berman (2007, p. 38) when he stated that,

The idea that a gradual, liberal path to democracy exists and that it makes sense to discourage countries that do not follow it from democratizing is a chimera based on a misreading or misinterpretation of history. Although such a path is certainly attractive in theory, there are in fact very few cases of stable and well-functioning democracies that have developed in this manner. Indeed, the political backstory of most democracies is one of struggle, conflict, and even violence. Problems and even failures did not preclude the success of democracy; in retrospect, problems and failures can even be seen as integral parts of the long-term processes through which nondemocratic institutions, elites, and cultures are delegitimized and eventually eliminated, and their democratic successors forged. Many contemporary analysts do not seem to realize this because of a lack of historical perspective: They often ignore or misread the frequently messy and unattractive manner in which the current crop of stable democracies actually developed.

Herein, definitely Brazil is not alone. But the political science literature abounds in characterizing the evolution of democracy in that country as a case of exceptional and peculiar trajectory. So that, the evolution of democracy, in Brazil, seems to reflect some signs of imperfection or unfulfillment, that persists even today in some comparative studies.

3. The vices of the Brazilian representative system and evidence for a historical rerouting

Between the periods known as democracies of the XVIII–XIX centuries and what we today call modern democracies the common point may be the method for selecting their leaders, that is, holding elections. However, it is argued that what distinguishes the elections practiced before the consolidation of modern democracies is that these processes are characterized as violent, with vote buying, candidates’ control on voters, use of the governmental structure (judges, delegates, saboteurs), and an infinity of possibilities to defraud the results of the elections.
Brazil’s political history, not very differently from the above said, specially in the studies about the periods known as the Old Republic or First Republic (1889-1930), reveals moments of high degree of dissatisfaction among the elites at that time with their representative institutions. The consolidated literature about Brazil’s political history (Kinzo 1980; Vitor Nunes Leal 1975; Souza 1974) frequently states that the economical and social underdevelopment that characterized the country in the XIX century would have condemned the country to a political underdevelopment even after its Independency from Portugal in 1822 and with the end of the Imperial period in 1889. This would become evident by the fraudulent practices in representative institutions, the constant electoral reforms and the lack of capacity of the electorate to practice a conscious vote. With this scenario benchmarking the studies of the Imperial Period (1822-1889) and the First Republic (1889-1930) it is common to find references to fraud and unfeasibility of the Brazilian representative system. Under this vision, the way to democracy to be implemented and to succeeded, in the way that the so called developed countries did, seems to show some degree of imperfection or unfulfillment, as well as an exceptional case (in the negative meaning).

According to Kinzo (1980:71), the basic problem of the Imperial Period and the First Republic in Brazil, at least regarding the electoral process, is linked to the institutionalization of fraud. Because there were three factors related to the lack of free votes in the country: 1. Laws were always in favor of the situation side; 2. the fraudulent mechanisms used by the situation to always stay in power, and; 3. structural aspects that kept the system prominently governmental (governismo) (Ibid., p. 69). If in the Imperial Period the results of the ballots could be determined by the Emperor, in the First Republic Period the result of the elections depended of the will of the central power that belonged to the President.

The reforms implemented in the Imperial Period and after that in the First Republic had two main declared goals, to guaranty the true results from the ballots (restraining the voters considered as unable and dependent), as well as the true representation (the search for a representation of the minority). The Empire of Brazil (1822-1889) is marked by a great number of electoral reforms. Among them we can mention the law of 1881, known as “Lei Saraiva”. This law eliminates the intermediary voter (at that time were held in two rounds, first round the voters were elected, and the latter could vote for the representatives of the
legislature) and established, for the first time, the system of direct elections. On behalf of the clear election process, and due to the dependence of voters, the defense of the direct elections came together with the right to vote based on census and educational qualification. As we can see, likewise in Western Europe history (Bendix, 1974:96), there was the fear that the universal right to vote, to the poor and disabled, could result in an electoral farce. On the other hand, and not so advertised, there also was the fear that the poor could confiscate the rich people’s wealth and properties (Przeworski, 2008:313-313, 2010:45).

As to the First Republic, one case that is considered as the example of the political delay of Brazil, and analyzed by Victor Nunes Leal (1975), is known as the coronelismo. According to the afore mentioned author (Ibid., p. 20) the phenomenon of the coronelismo is the result of the overlapping of formats that were developed from the representative regime over an economic and social structure that were not adequate. We have copied the representative systems from developed countries, but the social and economic basis continued to be not adequate. From this situation we could see an exchange of favors, between the government power, increasingly stronger, and the economic decadence of the local chiefs, mainly the land owners. The electoral power of the land owners, the so called coronéis, that commanded a part of the votos de cabresto (vote for sale), granted them a political prestige coming from the poor people, from the ignorance and from the dependence of the rural workers that survived from the land. The dependence of this major part of the electoral body, enhanced by the electoral expenses, originated the regular sale of the vote and the malfunction of the representative institutions in Brazil.

Due to the restrictions of the right to vote, to the lack of a rotation in power and to the rise of phenomena like the coronelismo (and all its related vices), the First Republic is branded in the current literature as a period of political degeneration in Brazil (Leal, 1975; Souza, 1974, p. 203; Kinzo, 1980).

Nunes Leal (Ibid., p. 235), as well as Kinzo (1980, p. 85), assume that the causes of the imperfect political representation in Brazil and it’s (irreparable) governismo should not be searched in the electoral legislation, that is, among strictly political factors, but should be searched among the general conditions of the political life in the country, as it was said, are intrinsically linked to the underdeveloped agricultural structure. On this perspective, the
defects of the Brazilian representative regime were linked to deep economical and social factors that, according to Leal (1978, p. 241) “were, and still are, greatly responsible for the governism and, therefore, by the distortion of our representation.”

In order to Brazil to be a true representative system, according to this reasoning, it was missing a conscious electorate. The solution to this problem would be to change the social and economical conditions in order to educate the voters and grant them the right to a free vote. As stated by Souza (1974, p. 218-219) “the growing transformation of the national political structure and the continuous differentiation of the state party groups, as a consequence of the growing urbanization and industrialization, will reflect on the organization of the local power, that is slowly disaggregating loosing its monolithic feature”.

Nevertheless, a problem in this line of reasoning is that the elections of 1934, as we will see, may reveal discontinuities of what is stated in the literature of political science, although not find profound changes in social conditions at that moment. Furthermore, as showed by Gláucio Soares (1973:99) the social and economical structure of Brazil did not undergo radical changes until the fifties of the twentieth century. Even though it has not remained immutable after the urbanization and industrialization of the 1930s and 1940s, this social and economical structure changed very slowly and the changes were geographically located until 1950s (see Table 1 and Figure 1).

### Table 1. Percentage of Urbanization Rate in Brazil (1940-2000)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>31.24</td>
<td>36.16</td>
<td>44.67</td>
<td>55.92</td>
<td>67.59</td>
<td>75.59</td>
<td>81.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>27.75</td>
<td>31.49</td>
<td>37.38</td>
<td>45.13</td>
<td>51.65</td>
<td>59.05</td>
<td>69.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northeast</td>
<td>23.42</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>33.89</td>
<td>41.81</td>
<td>50.46</td>
<td>60.65</td>
<td>69.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast</td>
<td>39.42</td>
<td>47.55</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>72.68</td>
<td>82.81</td>
<td>88.02</td>
<td>90.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>27.73</td>
<td>29.5</td>
<td>37.1</td>
<td>44.27</td>
<td>62.41</td>
<td>74.12</td>
<td>80.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwest</td>
<td>21.52</td>
<td>24.38</td>
<td>34.22</td>
<td>48.04</td>
<td>67.79</td>
<td>81.28</td>
<td>86.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: IBGE (2007)

Although there are no data for the period before 1940, we can see from Table 1 that large jumps in urbanization rate in Brazil has only happened so widespread in all five major regions of the country since 1950. Before this period, only the southeast region experienced an increase of close to eight percentage points. Between 1950 and 1960 all major regions of
the country achieved a growth close to this range, with the Southeast and Midwest with the highest urban growth (ten percentage points) and north with the lowest urban development (but still close to eight percentage points).

Figure 1 reveals that only in 1965 Brazil ceased to be an overwhelmingly rural country to become a country with most of its population in urban areas. In the 1940s sixty-nine percent of Brazil's population lived in rural areas, while only thirty-one percent lived in urban areas.

The point which we wish to draw attention is that even without deep and general changes in the social conditions in 1930s, the elections of 1934 may reveal discontinuities of what is stated in the literature of political science. The Brazilian political science literature abounds in asserting the lack of effective competition for power in elections practiced before 1945. Although there are no data for the elections before 1934, until recently we had no information for elections prior to 1945. From new data only recently available, we believe we can reveal some evidence to go against what that literature has managed to consolidate. We believe that the elections practiced since 1945 should not be considered the first elections characterized by an unprecedented degree of success of the opposition. It would be more correct to say that a competitive electoral game begins in Brazil in the 1930s (see Figure 2 and Figure 3).
Figure 2 and Figure 3 indicates a process of collapse of the monopolization of Brazilian politics. According to Figure 2, the 22 states of the federation with representation in the Federal Chamber of the country in 1934, only the states of Amazonas and Acre had a one-party scenario. The other states had representation with two or more parties. The state of Rio de Janeiro is the most multi-party, has the highest number of parties (four) in the
legislature. And the states of Maranhão, Pernambuco, Alagoas and Paraná, represented each by three parties.

Figure 3 in turn shows that political plurality is also present at the regional level. For the 21 states where elections were held for a constituent state - state representatives - only the state of Rio Grande do Norte had unanimous representation with a single party. All other states show party representations with two or more parties. The state of Maranhao and the state of Rio de Janeiro are the most plural state chambers (each with five parties.) Therefore, we can observe over the past two elections in the early 1930s that the Brazilian political system has become more pluralistic in terms of representation through political parties.

However, one could claim that the above data reveal no sign of collapse of the monopolization of politics in Brazil. This is because such data do not identify the presence of opposition parties. Thus, it may be possible to see an apparently multiparty scenario, as the case of Rio de Janeiro, where it is not allowed any representation for minorities. With that in mind, we compare these data with new information extracted from the Center for Research and Documentation on Contemporary History of Brazil (CPDOC-FGV). From these new data, we can identify, for the national and state legislatures in 1934, not only the number of parties in each state, but also identify which side belonged the legislative majority (government or opposition), as well as reveal the percentage of minority representation in national and state chambers (Table 2).

---

4 The state of Acre not held elections for a constituent assembly. For this reason the state is not present in Figure 3.
Table 2. Number of Parties, Legislative Majority, and Percentage of minority representation for the Federal Chamber (Federal C.) and State Chambers (State C.) in Brazil in 1934

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Number of Parties</th>
<th>Legislative majority (Government or Opposition)</th>
<th>Percentage of minority representation (Federal C.)</th>
<th>Percentage of minority representation (State C.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AC</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Opposition</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0^1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AL</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AM</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BA</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CE</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Opposition</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DF</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>No information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ES</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GO</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Opposition</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MT</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Opposition</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MG</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PA</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PB</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PR</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PI</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RJ</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Opposition</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RN</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>45%^2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RS</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Opposition</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SE</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. The state of Acre (AC) and the state of Sergipe (SE) are the only states consisting of chambers unanimously. In the case of Acre the opposition party controlled all representative seats. In the case of Sergipe, the opposite happens, all the chairs are in the hands of government parties.

2. The state of Rio Grande do Norte (RN) is the only state with a kind of Divided Government. The Government has 60% of the total representation in the Federal Chamber, but did not get a majority in the state representation (therefore, the percentage amount of 45 present in the cell corresponds to the representation of the party of governmental position and not the opposition party).


The first thing that draws attention from Figure 4, is that in only two states (Acre and Sergipe) the chambers are unanimous. And interestingly, in the case of Acre the control of legislation is in the hands of the opposition. In all other states we notice the presence of minority representation at both state and federal level. More than that, in six states (Acre, Ceará, Maranhão, Mato Grosso, Rio de Janeiro and Santa Catarina), the legislative majority is in the hands of the opposition. This means not only that the government lost that elections, but he accepted to leave political office peacefully. Although we find references in the literature regarding the opening of minority representation (Franco 1974; Souza 1974), the
study of Leal (1975:234), is the only study in which the alternation of power in some states are reported (yet he does not show the data, and does not indicate the states where the opposition came up victorious).

It is known and widespread, even by recent literature, that the elections from 1945 were marked by success of the opposition. But it was always taken for granted that it would not be possible before the 1950s (perhaps because only from that time, as shown in Table 1 and Figure 1, the country finally grew and became urbanized at a fast pace). By questioning this uniqueness moment, and through the use of new data, we come to evidence that more than ten years earlier, precisely in 1934, opposition in almost every state in the country have achieved representation, both in Congress and in State Chamber. And in some states they came out victorious at the polls and were placed in political office.

That being said, if, as the literature insists, in 1930 it was possible to have a unanimity to the government, but, as we saw, in 1934 it wasn’t, we can assume that the delayed and underdeveloped social economical structure of the country alone could not explain the problem. But the problem persists: if so far not been possible to carry out competitive elections, and allow minority representation, what then changed the country for this to become possible? Although it has not been the subject of specific and systematic treatment, the examination of the literature allows us to advance two alternative possible explanations. The first, which we discussed earlier, turns to the changes in social structure and the increasing loss of importance of the rural electorate. The second is more inclined to emphasize the contribution of institutional innovations adopted in Brazil with the adoption of the Electoral Code of 1932.

Even though he shares the vision that the agrarian and cultural structure was the cause of the political delay in Brazil, to Viana (1949) a possible solution of this problem, which was not analyzed by the author, could be done through a institutional change, more precisely by establishing an independent and federalized Judiciary Power. This suggestion led us to rethink the approach to representative government, starting with the institutional and political changes. According to Franco (1974:66) the novelty brought by the Constituent Assembly of 1934 was that keeping the changes in the 1932 Code – universal vote, secret vote, and Federal Justice- it made it possible to have a dispute in better conditions against the official character of the parties, what resulted in more members of the opposition being
elected. Even considering that the Brazilian electorate was mainly scattered in rural and semi-rural areas, despite the low educational level of the masses, and their direct social and economical dependency upon the higher classes, Franco (Ibid.:84-85) affirms:

The secret vote, the Electoral Justice, and the proportional vote, no doubt, brought a great progress to our electoral process. We can even consider the impressive transformation that the liberal revolutionary process brought into the Brazilian political customs. [...] violence and electoral frauds are still present, for sure, here and there. But today they are exceptional, while back in the day they were the general rule.

As noted by the above quotation, the Electoral Code, created in 1932 and based in previous electoral reforms, is considered as a great moment in the evolution of Brazilian political institutions, when the power to decide the result of the election was taken out of the governmental boards. From that moment on, all the deeds related to the electoral process, such as enlistment, ballot counting and declaration of the results, were under the responsibility of the Electoral Justice. If one side the Electoral Justice didn’t totally abolish the frauds, mostly due to the dependence of the members of the Magistrate from the government and to the connivance of the judges with such manipulations, in the elections held in 1934, under the new Code of 1932, on the other side, as we noted earlier, “the situation in some states was defeated and several opposition candidates, latter on increased by the dispute for the presidential succession, took a chair in the Federal Chamber” (Leal, 1978, p. 234).

In this instance, the change granted the non official parties the possibility to conquer the Power and pointed out to innovation in politics. Under this reading, the new factor that would grant competitive elections suggested that the responsibility to organize the election and count the ballots changed hands, from the government to an independent judiciary body (Lehoucq, 2002). Let us remind, as Souza (1974, p. 182) says:

[...] the legislative power, and not the judiciary, was the office that verified the powers granted to the representatives, the senators, the president and vice-president. To dominate the elections automatically meant to dominate the commission that validated the diplomas, this is where the central point of the decisions resided.

Franco states that, even though several local leaders had been defeated, they had not been defeated by the organized people but by other leaders, in a “fight where the rural
or semi rural voters perhaps freely choose, but always between two personal influences, two chiefs, two patriarchs”. (Franco, 1974:85). This statement reveals the possibility that there is a competition between elites, as suggested by Leal (1975:258), but this possibility has not yet been analysed by the literature. In Leal’s words:

The rural electorate’s dependency may, at first, benefit both the government and the opposition, and everywhere we can find opposition coronéis. Although, the coronelismo, as a political system, has a notably governmental face. To reach such a result, the state government had to strongly secure its position on that political compromise.

Statements such as the above quoted indicate that there were opposition factions in the municipality, as well as the possibility of political dispute. But we don’t know, because the literature has not yet explored this subject, in what level of aggregation the political dispute emerges (municipal, state or federal) and what is the weight of institutional changes, more precisely the creation of the Electoral Justice in 1932, on the opening of the political dispute and the development of a democratic regime in Brazil.

This second alternative, mentioned by Franco (1974) and in some ways also by Leal (1975), but not yet systematically studied in the literature, claims that the passage of representative government to a democratic regime - where elections are free, periodic, and there is a credible chance of alternation in power - is not a byproduct of the social and economical modernization of the country, or is not reached by the accomplishment of a one way route of citizenship, but is the result of institutional changes (specially the creation of the Electoral Justice in 1932). So, other different routes were also feasible.

As we already saw earlier in this work, to the consolidated literature (Leal, 1975; Souza, 1974, Kinzo, 1980), in Brazil there was an overlapping of the representative system on an inadequate economical and social structure. Being so, the causes of the imperfect political representation of the insipient representative system in that country should not be searched among exclusively political factors, but in the social and economical underdevelopment that prevented the manifestation of a conscious vote. Thus, the solution to this problem would be to change those social and economical conditions with the objective to educate the electors and grant them the right of a free vote. Another line of the literature about the Brazilian politics (Carvalho 2003; Viana 1949) states that the hurdles to the consolidation of a stable democracy in Brazil, as well as the causes of several problems
of the representative system in this country are in the inversion of the logical evolution of rights that happened in the country, having England as a reference. In England the sequence had a logical sequence that reinforced the democratic conviction, while in Brazil the inversion cut off this conviction, giving excessive power to the State, conditioning further democratic development (on the expenditure of other rights, such as civil rights) (Souza 1976) and building an inferior image of the Brazilian representative regime in comparison to other countries which are considered as developed ones.

The alternative hypothesis that we advocate in this paper has as an interesting starting point the precise difference between representative government and democracy. In view of the political experiences in other countries one can show that the trajectories of representative governments are not quite different and that the Brazilian experience is not that peculiar. The history of frauds, corruption and governismo is a reality that is present in the history of all representative governments (not exclusive to poor countries). In Brazil, the transition of this kind of government to what today we call democracy, we believe, seems to be better explained with the institutional political changes.

If the political and electoral process, before democracy, was flawed from registering to counting to benefit privileged elite – the governors -, therefore we can argue the reason why, in given moments of history, governments accept being defeated in the elections. And before that, why do they accept a legitimated opposition. When the advantages of certain groups, as far as the representation is concerned, is written on the legislation, that is, requires changes in the rules done by the people benefitted and elected by this same law. Therefore, the end of this continuity is the same just like an elite to be ended by itself, from its own approval and consent (Manin, 1997,p.127-128). Put another way, the political actors who were in power, before the regime became democratic, held the control over the public apparatus and could benefit from the arrangements and institutions in force, in order to remain indefinitely in power. To understand the conditions why the governments in Brazil stopped to manufacture the results of the political and electoral games, and the political competition starts to occur in a legitimated way are some of main questions we want to analyze in future steps of this research.
4. Conclusions

When we investigated the political history of other countries, we are led to question whether the political history of Brazil can even be interpreted as singular or as deviant in relation to a route considered normal. The institutional debate and the attempted reforms undertaken, closely follow the changes taking place in considered advanced countries. The starting point is the same, the representative government. In this sense, the debates between the elites in Brazil, on the problems of representative institutions and the reforms needed to fix them, reveal tensions common to the evolution of this form of government and must be studied to the extent that expand our understanding of the transformation of representative government in the modern democratic government. This political development is usually unexpected and poorly theorized in any country.

In its origin therefore, as we saw in Manin (1997) and Przeworski (2010), the elections did not aspire to create a representative body that mirrored the social body. Rather the contrary. It was hoped that elections would lead to political office the most qualified, that is, the elite. This reference is enough to question a considerable amount of studies on the Brazilian political thought in the nineteenth century. The taint of elitist and anti-democratic is not enough to distinguish Brazil from other countries in developing their democracies. This is because the disjunctive between legal and real country of the Brazilian case, refers to the functioning of representative government and not to democracy. The distinction is essential as it is on this distinction that supports this proposal to revisit the history and the Brazilian institutional debates. The hypothesis that fuels this work is that the Brazilian experience with representative government does not differ significantly from that experienced by such countries taken as more advanced, such as England, the United States and France, to cite only the examples often cited.

The existing studies on the institutional history of Brazilian may be considered insufficient because based on a misunderstanding of the characteristics of representative government. This misunderstanding has led to comparisons idealized or markedly anachronistic. In the first case, a realistic description of the Brazilian experience was confronted with an idealized version of political practices in advanced countries (clear examples of this are found in Oliveira Vianna, 1949:154, and Carvalho, 2003). In the second,
the academic literature errs in comparing different things, that is, comparing the practices of nineteenth-century Brazil with those in use in the second half of the twentieth century in advanced democracies. Even in this second case, a dose of unreality does not disappear entirely from the analysis as they remain marked by misunderstanding of the ambiguities inherent to the use of elections in modern democracies.

The fact is that electoral practices of England, the United States and France in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were not very different from those observed in Brazil. Voter coercion and fraud in the counting of the results were frequent and common shares of the electoral process. The key point, however, is less to point out these similarities than refer them to the principles of representative government, that is, understand how elections were conceived and practiced within those systems. It is not the case, of course, to equate all the experiences of these countries. Manin’s study draws attention to the variation of the combination of “legal provisions, cultural norms, and practical factors” to explain specific political processes experienced by England, France and the United States (Manin, 1997:95). In a way, the broad study of the Brazilian institutional history from this perspective is justified just as an attempt to understand the unique combination of these factors taking place in Brazil and how this unique combination ensured that the adoption of representative mechanisms assure agreements under which the political parties would be able to compete in free and periodical elections and the offices would be taken according to the results of the elections themselves.

We believe that adopting this perspective represents a radical change in how institutional changes, especially the electoral reforms, experienced by Brazil have been analyzed so far. The literature is marked by the difficulty of understanding the motivations behind the reforms. Most often, the interpretations offered are mixed criticism, if not pure denouncing the conservative character of Brazilian elites. This conservatism reflects the elitism of the proposals, and its anti-democratic nature would be expressed by a lack of confidence in the will of the people. However, discussions in other countries show that, in this regard, there is nothing specific to the Brazilian elites, whether in terms of ideas, either of their proposals. The intention with this reorientation of how to study the trajectory of democracy in Brazil, is to support an effective treatment of comparative institutional debates that took place in this country, especially those that took place in the nineteenth
century, placing them and contextualizing them as integral parts of the tensions arising from the practice of representative government in other countries. Brazilian experience and reflections on how to organize elections are not anomalous. Or to put it another way, are worthy of analysis in its own terms and can be analyzed in order to broaden our understanding of the evolution and deployment of representative government.

Finally, our puzzling question for future steps in the development of this research is: why in a given moment in the history of the representative governments – in this paper we show evidence to situate this moment for Brazil in 1934 - those actors, who could remain in power indefinitely, started to accept the results of the elections showing the victory of their adversaries, opening the way to the minorities’ representatives and to a believable alternation of power.

References


