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TÍTULO: Los peligros del presidencialismo: argumentos políticos post-soviéticos para la hipótesis de Linz.

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RESUMEN: La hipótesis del conocido politólogo Juan Linz sobre las deficiencias del sistema presidencial de gobierno se confirma en la política postsoviética. Los estados con presidentes fuertes demuestran tendencias de desarrollo del régimen de personalidad y las crisis políticas en tales regímenes a menudo terminan con revoluciones; la sociedad está sujeta a profundas rupturas y los regímenes pierden flexibilidad temporal. La imposibilidad de un cambio rápido del presidente que perdió legitimidad lleva a la pérdida de la estabilidad del sistema completo. Se confirma la afirmación de Linz sobre la posibilidad de conflicto entre el presidente y el parlamento, así como el deseo del presidente de un gasto ineficiente. El análisis empírico de los procesos políticos en el espacio post-soviético demuestra la validez de la hipótesis de Linz.

PALABRAS CLAVES: parlamentarismo, presidencialismo, política post-soviética, revoluciones de color, hipótesis de Linz.

TITLE: The perils of presidentialism: Post-Soviet Politics Arguments for Linz's Hypothesis.

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ABSTRACT: The hypothesis of the well-known political scientist Juan Linz about the shortcomings of the presidential system of government is confirmed in post-Soviet politics. Here, the states with strong presidents demonstrate tendencies of personality regime development. The political crises in such regimes often end with revolutions, society is subject to deep breaks, and regimes lose temporary flexibility. The impossibility of a quick change of the president who lost legitimacy leads to the loss of the entire system stability. They confirmed Linz's assertion about the possibility of conflict between the president and the parliament, as well as the president's desire for an inefficient spending. The empirical analysis of political processes in the post-Soviet space proves the validity of the hypothesis by Linz.

KEY WORDS: parliamentarism, presidentialism, post-Soviet policy, color revolutions, Linz hypothesis.

INTRODUCTION.

Over the past twenty years, there has been the discussion in Western political science about the advantages and the disadvantages of various forms of government. Its beginning was laid by American political scientist Juan Linz, who made a speech at Georgetown University during the symposium on the comparison of presidential and parliamentary forms of government in 1989.

On the basis of this report, the Journal of Democracy published the article under the characteristic title “The dangers of presidentialism” in 1990 [J. Linz, 1990]. In the article, Linz makes a strong case for the parliamentary system, and accordingly, against the presidential system. The ideas of Linz caused a heated discussion in the academic environment.

What are the main points of the Linz hypothesis? First, the parliamentary system often leads to the establishment of a stable democracy, especially in those countries where political differences are deep and there are many political parties; secondly, the parliamentary system acts as the guarantor of democracy preservation [J. Linz, 1990; p.52]. Linz determines the following “dangers” of a presidential form of government: the lack of temporary flexibility, majoritarian tendencies, the dual democratic legitimacy of the president and parliament, the promotion of political outsiders, the absence of arbitration, the tendency to approve personal power, the system instability and inefficiency.

DEVELOPMENT.

Methods.

One way to test the Linz hypothesis is to turn to the cases from the countries with the presidential form of government. The post-Soviet space provides a wide empirical material. The overwhelming majority of countries in this region can be classified as presidential systems (except for the Baltic countries and Moldova) or the systems with strong presidential features (they are referred to as "presidentialized" in the literature).

The purpose of this article is to prove on the basis of concrete cases of the post-Soviet countries with the presidential system that the arguments of Linz against the presidential system are confirmed.

Results and Discussion.***The absence of temporal flexibility: Ukraine in 2013-2014.***

According to Linz, a serious disadvantage of the presidential system is the lack of flexibility - it is almost impossible to dismiss the president who lost his legitimacy [J. Linz, 1990; p.52]. In contrast to the presidential system, the parliamentary system demonstrates the flexibility so important in crisis situations.

In a parliamentary system, the dissolution of parliament, early elections, or intraparty change of leadership are the effective tools preventing the transformation of legitimacy crisis into a national political crisis. Linz notes that the prime minister dismissal does not mean the crisis of the entire regime. The prime minister can increase the legitimacy of his political course by initiating a voting procedure about the vote of parliament confidence to the government or through the procedure of early parliamentary elections.

Mass protests in the center of Kiev became violent, the conflict actually turned into armed confrontation, and radical-minded politicians began to dominate the opposition [I. Khmelko; Pereguda, Y., 2014]. The Ukrainian political crisis actually passed along the line of confrontation between the "president" and "opposition". The means of its solution actually did not have an institutional aspect in the conditions when opposition protests were led by radical politicians [H. Aliyev, 2016]. The irreconcilable contradictions of the radical opposition with the president, who has a large amount of powers, led to a severe political crisis and the actual collapse of the state.

Majority trends: Kyrgyzstan of 2005 and 2010.

Linz notes that the presidential system operates in accordance with the principle of "the winner gets everything": during the presidential election, there is a struggle for one place, and the winner gets 100%. The elected president forms the government independently, which he fully controls during the entire term of his office.

The majority principle makes politics a zero-sum game, and such games, according to H. Linz, are fraught with conflict [1, p.56]. H. Linz notes that the elections on the principle "the winner gets everything" raise the stakes too high during a president election, which inevitably leads to the exacerbation of relations in society and its further polarization.

The Constitution of Kyrgyzstan (1993) envisaged the creation of the system with a strong president who controls all branches of government and receives the mandate "from the hands of people". Later, the President A. Akayev, as the "winner who got everything", took steps to strengthen presidential power: the constitution was amended substantially to strengthen the personal power of the head of state. This led to an intra-elite and interregional conflict that arose on the basis of the traditional clan-rival split between north and south, which caused A. Akayev's resignation (the "tulip revolution" of 2005) and the redistribution of powers between the president and the parliament in favor of the latter [M. Beissinger, 2007]. The new president, K. Bakiyev, continued the "winner gets everything" policy, trying to consolidate the personal power of the president, which again led to a violent change in the political elite in the year 2010 and the establishment of the form of government with a weakened president.

The majoritarian tendencies of the presidential regime of Kyrgyzstan manifested themselves in the desire of the presidents to get the maximum benefit from the dominant position on the political scene, which led to the polarization of society, the dissatisfaction increase on the part of the opposition and the people, to serious political crises, and ultimately, to the forced retirement of presidents. In both cases, the public reaction to the majoritarian tendencies of the presidential regime was a significant weakening of presidential power and the drift towards the parliamentary system.

Dual democratic legitimacy of the President and the Parliament: Russia in 1991-1993.

According to Linz, the situation where both the president and parliament are elected by the people can be a source of conflict between the legislative and executive branches.

There are no democratic principles for dispute resolution in the presidential regime between the branches of government concerning the leadership provided by people, "a true bearer of democratic legitimacy". According to Linz, it is especially dangerous that the president can use purely ideological formulations to discredit his opponents, and the rivalry between the institutions of power can be turned into an explosive conflict. The presidential regime leaves less space to reach a consensus, tacitly shared by all, to change coalitions and to conclude compromises, which, however promising they may seem, are difficult to justify in the eyes of the public.

In Russia, dual democratic legitimacy (both the president and the parliament were elected nationally) was one of the factors of tensions between the President B. Yeltsin and the parliament in 1991-1993, which resulted in a serious political crisis, the dissolution of parliament and the shooting of the White House. An institutional basis has emerged in Russia for the conflict between the president and the parliament. Both subjects appealed to the people and referred to the fact that they are the spokesman of people interests, the representatives of the people, and, therefore, can make any decisions [A. Brown, 1993].

Dual democratic legitimacy, coupled with other factors (Yeltsin's desire to expand his power unlimitedly, ideological confrontation, intractability of the parliament, etc.) led to a large-scale political conflict in 1992-1993 between the president and parliament, which ended by Yeltsin's victory and the adoption of the pro-presidential constitution in 1993. The institutional vice of presidentialism resulted in a serious political crisis and, ultimately, in the establishment of the system with a superstrong president.

The promotion of political outsiders: Azerbaijan in 1992-1993.

Linz writes that the presidential system had no mechanism for the continuity of presidential power. A clearly defined term of presidential authority leads to the fact that the political process automatically breaks down into strictly demarcated periods, which leaves almost no room for “successive tactical adjustment policy”.

The legislative mechanisms of this system can bring a person upstairs in the event of an early interruption of presidential powers, who under the usual electoral procedure, would never have become the head of state; i.e., the power falls into the hands of political outsiders.

In the post-Soviet space, the cases of outsider entry into the elite are rarely met: only A. Elchibey in Azerbaijan (1992) and A. Lukashenko in Belarus (1994) were able to become the presidents without political experience and necessary elite ties.

A. Elchibey is the politician for whom more than 60% of people voted on the wave of popularity, a year later he has the total rejection of the people [S. Bolukbasi, 2013]. One of the reasons for this was the lack of experience in the conduct of public affairs: Elchibey did not occupy any posts in the Communist Party or in government bodies, remaining a dissident and an oppositionist, poorly prepared for political activities.

The non-elite coup of 1992 in Azerbaijan, connected with the coming to power of the oppositionist Elchibey, clearly demonstrates that the election of a political outsider by the people under the conditions of a presidential republic leads to a deep political crisis and the aggravation of the problems existing in the country.

Absence of arbitration.

On the one hand, the president in the presidential system is the head of state and the representative of the whole people, but on the other hand, he expresses a very specific political course. Linz concludes that this dual nature of the presidency is reflected on the style of his politics: “The most

disturbing consequence of the interaction between the president and his people is the emergence of false notions and the substitution of “people” as a whole by a group of supporters. At the same time, there is a danger that he will view his policy as the reflection of the popular will, and the policy of his opponents as the evil schemes aimed at narrow interest protection”. Thus, the president, by the virtue of his dual position, cannot act as a neutral arbiter in political disputes.

In Tajikistan, the presidency (the President of the Tajik SSR) with wide powers was established in the year 1990. In two years, from November 1990 to November 1992, 6 presidents changed in the country (K. Makhkamov, K. Aslonov, R. Nabiev, A. Iskandarov, R. Nabiev, A. Iskandarov).

The struggle for the presidency has become the struggle between different ethnoregional clans. In this situation, the institute of the president was not the way of public problem solution (as in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan) and not the way of combat between the representatives of the national movement and the alternative center of power in the form of the Communist Party Central Committee (as in Kyrgyzstan), but the means of various clan interest implementation and the elimination of opponents. At the same time, the president was under the tremendous pressure from the opposition, often making dependent decisions. This led to the crisis of the institute of the president and its liquidation in 1992 in the conditions of the started civil war (the institute of the president was restored in 1994 after the stabilization of the situation in Tajikistan).

Under the conditions of a divided Tajik society, the dual role of the president (on the one hand, the leader of the nation, embodying universal interests, and, on the other hand, the chief executive and the leader of a certain group implementing a certain political course) led to the fact that the president could not implement the interests of the whole society, could not rise above the interests of clans and political groups.

Propensity to personal power regime development.

According to Linz, the institutional features of the presidential system lead to the formation of a personalist regime, regardless of socio-economic and cultural factors. This is expressed by the refusal of the president to recognize the boundaries and the limitations of his power, which leads to a complete disrespect and disregard for the opinion of the opposition.

The restrictions of power have their own institutional limitation in the form of constitutional provisions on the limitation of presidential power terms. In world practice, the most common is the restriction when one person cannot hold the office of president for more than two terms. However, in the post-Soviet space, we observe the situation where the presidents are in power much longer than two terms; for example, the first president of Kazakhstan, Nursultan Nazarbayev has been ruling from 1991 to the present. The clause 5 of the Article 42 of the Constitution of Kazakhstan defines that one person cannot be elected as a president more than two times in a row, making an exception for the first president. In other words, the time limit applies to all presidents in the future, but it does not apply personally to Nursultan Nazarbayev - he can be elected as the president an unlimited number of times in a row. This provision was introduced into the Constitution of Kazakhstan in 2007. The greatest personalization of the policy occurred in Turkmenistan, where the President Saparmurat Niyazov virtually eliminated the institution of the presidential election, introduced the title Turkmenbashi - the Father of all Turkmen and established a strict regime of individual ruling with the elements of the personality cult.

The presidents in the post-Soviet space suppress the opposition, leaving only a small space for political competition. Many political analysts say about the imitation of competition in such cases - the opposition has no real chance to gain power [L. March, 2009].

System instability.

The mechanisms of leader change and power transfer are at the very center of politics in any state. Linz argues that the presidential system is not without flaws in the form of a penchant for instability. He writes that “the issue a president change who has lost the trust of his party or people is extremely complicated. Even when the polarization of forces leads to the acts of violence and illegal actions, an obstinate carrier of power can pretend that nothing has happened”.

The presidential system is weak during the moment of the highest polarization of political forces. We have already noted that the impossibility of a quick change of a president leads to serious political crises. But in the post-Soviet space, this institutional feature of the presidential systems led to sharp political crises in the form of “color” revolutions. The most serious political crises occurred in Georgia (2003), Ukraine (2013–2014) and Kyrgyzstan (2005) [E. Finkel; Y. Brudny, 2014]. Of course, the factors that led to such crises are numerous; however, the depth of the crisis is largely related to the form of government. High stakes in the “game” for the presidency, the lack of flexibility system, the confrontation between the president and the opposition coalition — these features of the presidential system create the additional conditions conducive to political instability.

System inefficiency.

Speaking about the inefficiency of the presidential system, Linz writes that "a president is prone to an unreasonable waste of money and risky actions that cause the polarization of forces in the country". A good illustration of this thesis is the holding of major sporting events in Russia on the post-Soviet space or moving the capital of Kazakhstan to Astana.

The main criticism of major sporting events, such as the Sochi Olympic Games of 2014 or the FIFA World Cup of 2018, is that the costs of these mega events often greatly exceed the originally planned ones. Many objects built for mega-events are used only partially then, have a small load and are expensive in operation [M. Müller, 2015]. However, from a policy point of view, these

events are important. They raise the image of the president and the prestige of the country; contribute to the formation and the strengthening of national identity [V. Gorokhov, 2015].

Political ambitions are often put above economic calculation; of course, such logic is inherent not only to presidential systems. The state should first of all have the means to conduct mega-events. Presidential systems are only a favorable environment for their implementation, since there is practically no discussion in society about the appropriateness and the effectiveness of mega-events, and the decision is left to the President and the government.

CONCLUSIONS.

Post-Soviet practice demonstrates that Linz's hypothesis about the evils of the presidential system is confirmed empirically. The presidential system in the post-Soviet space demonstrates an extreme degree of regime personalization.

In summary, the result of power concentration in the hands of the presidents and the suppression of the opposition resulted in numerous internal conflicts - color revolutions, the conflicts between the president and parliament and the splits within society. Linz's argument, based on the material from Latin America, turned out to be completely suitable for the processes taking place in the post-Soviet space. The impossibility of a quick change of the president who lost his legitimacy leads to the loss of the entire system stability. They confirmed Linz's assertion about the possibility of a conflict between the president and the parliament, as well as the president's desire for an inefficient spending. An empirical analysis of political processes on the post-Soviet space proves the validity of Linz hypothesis.

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