

## **The theory of political parties and its challenges at the turn of the century**

Víctor Alarcón Olguín

Political parties are experiencing a severe challenge concerning their means and capacities of performance as well as of representation. Moreover, such crisis also spreads over the theoretical models and typologies currently in use within the discipline of political science. That is why, the aim of this work is to present an overview of the "state of art" as well as of the proposals of conceptual renovation currently existing in the field.

*Key words:* political parties, political science, political institutions, methodology.

## **Competition and electoral competitiveness: two key concepts for democratic transition**

Irma Méndez de Hoyos

The paper analyzes the two essential assets of democratic elections: openly fair and free competition and competitiveness. The current meaning in regards to both concepts is reviewed from a comparative perspective; also, the role played by competitive elections in processes of democratic transition is discussed. This article is concluded by a reflection over the systemic impact produced by electoral competitiveness in other political situations such as the process of democratic consolidation, with special reference to emerging democracies.

*Key words:* competition, electoral competitiveness, political transition, democracy.

## **Old actors, new power. Local congressmen in Mexico**

Álvaro López Lara and Nicolás Loza Otero

The study of attitudes and opinions expressed by local congressmen has gained importance due to the fact that they constitute a segment with great influence over the states' institutional performance, particularly over those with divided government or multiparty assemblies. Based on surveys applied to 12 local Congresses, this paper analyzes the levels of partisan and loyalty identities, as well as their positions related to

the national agenda. Departing from the process of constitutional reforms on indigenous culture and rights passed in 2001, this paper explores the responses among local congressmen in regards to revealed preferences and vote behavior.

*Key words:* local congressmen, assemblies, Mexico.

## **Changes in political participation in postmodernity**

Alejandro Favela and Míriam Calvillo

By doing a comparison between the modernity and postmodernity ages, this paper establishes the institutional, organizational and subjective differences that articulate political participation in both historical periods. The concept of modular man—created by Ernest Gellner—is herein retrieved and extended to be matched to that of civil society as a concrete characterization of political participation within postmodernity times. The idea of postmodernity as a cultural and timely concept is also considered pertinent by asserting that individual and organizative forms of political participation are related to the societal frames of political culture.

*Key words:* modernity, postmodernity, political participation, civil society.

## **Anthropology of power and political transition in Mexico. The case of the National Action Party (PAN)**

Griselda Martínez Vázquez

The purpose of this article is to present an interpretation concerning politics by using theories of political anthropology as well as contemporary perspectives on political science. Particular emphasis is placed on power structures and the role played by family networks over political reproduction. This paper particularly focuses on studying the case of the National Action Party (PAN) in Mexican political transition.

*Key words:* political anthropology, power, family networks, political transition, Mexico. National Action Party (PAN).

## **Political correctness and social integration**

Miguel Ángel Vite Pérez

This essay analyzes the problem of modernity under the scope of political correctness, By carrying out universal values such as equality and prosperity regardless race, class

or sex, modernity also makes public the massification of patterns and demands for consumption coming from marginal groups. If upper classes consume products to help out lower classes, a good action to shorten those differences is considered as correct. However, social inequality is still present given the fact that economic structures do not change and that they grant privilege in favor of a reduced elite. More concretely, this situation is more acute in under-developed countries where modernization occurs without modernity.

*Key words:* political correctness, social integration, poverty, social policy, modernity.

## **Ideology, discourses, political culture and power**

Rafael Montesinos

The aim of this essay is to explore the role played by discourse in reproducing political patterns from different theoretical perspectives. It considers discourse as an ideological resource and a key to create political actors and individuals. The existence of discourse makes competition possible together with the access to power either in critical or stable conjunctures. The uses and abuses of discourse both generate a clear notion of its role in the transitional process to democracy as it happens in the Mexican case.

*Key words:* ideology, discourse, political culture, power, political transition, Mexico.