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## Oligarchy, internal disputes and municipal elections: the competition between situationists in Paranaguá (Paraná, 1908-1928)

### Oligarquia, disputas internas e eleições municipais: a competição entre situacionistas em Paranaguá (Paraná, 1908-1928)

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#### Abstract

This article analyzes the results of six elections for city councilor and district judge in the municipality of Paranaguá, Paraná, from 1908 to 1928. The purpose of this work is to advance our understanding of the forms of electoral competition in Brazilian cities during the First Republic. Within this context, this analysis supports three arguments. First, in the 1900s and 1910s, opposition parties did not compete for positions in the municipal administration of Paranaguá. However, there was electoral competition. This competition involved candidates belonging to the ruling party. Second, the political dynamics of this city had a routine aspect, as the predominance of candidates from the official governing party tickets was very stable. Third, in the early 1920s, the participation of an opposition party in the municipal elections did not reduce the political strength of the ruling parties. Such participation did not stimulate the consolidation of a permanently organized group to fight the ruling parties in that city.

**Keywords:** electoral competition; First Brazilian Republic; oligarchy; Paranaguá.

#### Resumo

Neste artigo é desenvolvido um estudo sobre os resultados de seis eleições para os cargos de vereador e juiz distrital do município paranaense de Paranaguá, entre os anos de 1908 e 1928. A finalidade deste trabalho consiste em avançar no entendimento das formas de competição eleitoral nas cidades brasileiras no contexto da Primeira República. Nesse âmbito, a presente análise sustenta

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três argumentos. Primeiro, demonstra-se que, nas décadas de 1900 e 1910, os partidos de oposição não disputaram cargos na administração municipal de Paranaguá. Contudo, havia competição eleitoral, a qual era travada entre candidatos pertencentes ao grupo governista. Segundo, cabe evidenciar que a dinâmica política dessa cidade possuía um aspecto rotineiro, visto que era muito estável o predomínio dos postulantes que pertenciam às chapas oficiais da agremiação situacionista. Em terceiro lugar, destaca-se que, no início dos anos 1920, a participação de um partido oposicionista nas eleições municipais não reduziu a força política dos situacionistas. Essa participação não estimulou a consolidação de um grupo permanentemente organizado para combater os governistas naquela cidade.

**Palavras-chave:** competição eleitoral; oligarquia; Paranaguá; Primeira República brasileira.

## Introduction

This article analyzes the results of six elections for city councilor and district judge positions in the municipality of Paranaguá, located on the coast of the state of Paraná. The elections took place between 1908 and 1928. While 1908 refers to the moment when, in that city, elections for these positions began to be contested only by members of the ruling party, 1928 was the year when the last municipal election occurred in that city during the First Republic. In this context, the objective of this study is to highlight the nature of electoral competition in a municipality where, for many years, there was no permanent presence of opposition parties. In a broader sense, this investigation seeks to produce knowledge about political disputes in Brazilian cities during the first decades of the republican regime.

Three arguments are presented in this article. First, it highlights that, in the 1900s and 1910s, the absence of opposition parties did not prevent electoral competition in Paranaguá. During that period, such competition involved only members of the ruling party. Second, it is important to emphasize that the existence of electoral contests did not threaten the control that local leaders of the ruling party exercised over positions in the municipal administration. The dominant party maintained a very stable hold on the municipality administration. Third, it is worth noting that the participation of an opposition party in the 1920 election was not accompanied by a change in the nature of the electoral competition in that city. In the final years of the First Republic, in Paranaguá, electoral disputes continued to involve only those in power.

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The topic of electoral competition in the First Brazilian Republic has received considerable emphasis in historical studies. To a large extent, the advancement in understanding the political life of that period stems from the analysis of elections for the position of federal deputy.<sup>1</sup> One common aspect of studies concerning these elections is the recognition that, in different regions of the country, there was effective electoral polarization. Opposition parties existed that challenged the dominant groups and, occasionally, gained seats in the legislative bodies.<sup>2</sup> Analyzing the dissensions that occurred within the governing parties also provides an understanding of the formation and electoral activity of regional opposition groups.<sup>3</sup>

However, historiography lacks analyses concerning disputes over local legislative bodies. Studies on competition for seats in state congresses and municipal chambers remain underdeveloped. The incipient nature of this analytical approach hinders comparisons between states regarding the competitiveness of their elections. Attention to disputes for state and municipal positions allows for a better understanding of topics such as the reach of opposition parties, the factors contributing to the growth of their electorate, and the forms of electoral contestation in contexts where minority parties operated episodically.

Indeed, there are new contributions to the investigation of the political life of Brazilian municipalities during the First Republic. One contribution lies in the study of the electoral activity of municipal parties, which emerged as antagonists to the pro-government groups of states such as Minas Gerais and São Paulo. However, for some time now, analyses of the political life of cities in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century have been dedicated to studying the

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<sup>1</sup> ZULINI, Jaqueline Porto. *Modos do bom governo na Primeira República brasileira: o papel do Parlamento no regime de 1889-1930*. Thesis (Political Science Doctorate Program) – University of São Paulo, São Paulo, 2016.

<sup>2</sup> FIGUEIREDO, Vítor Fonseca. *Voto e competição política na Primeira República: o caso de Minas Gerais (1889-1930)*. Thesis (History Doctorate Program) – Federal University of Minas Gerais, Belo Horizonte, 2016; RIBEIRO, Paula Vanessa Paz. *“A terceira estrela da federação”: a bancada gaúcha no contexto político-eleitoral dos anos 1920 a 1924*. Thesis (History Doctorate Program) – Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, Porto Alegre, 2019.

<sup>3</sup> ARRUDA, Larissa Vacari Rodrigues de. *Disputas oligárquicas: as práticas políticas das elites matogrossenses (1892-1906)*. São Carlos: Ed. UFSCar, 2015; MARTINY, Carina. *As diversas oposições no Rio Grande do Sul da Primeira República*. In: BATISTELLA, Alessandro [et. al.] (Org.). *Capítulos de História Política: problemas e estudos*. Vol. 2. Passo Fundo: Acervus, 2020, p. 291-313; SACCOL, Tassiana Maria Parcianello. *De líderes históricos a opositores: as dissidências republicanas e o jogo político regional (Rio Grande do Sul, 1890-1907)*. Thesis (History Doctorate Program) – Pontifical Catholic University of Rio Grande do Sul, Porto Alegre, 2018.

socio-professional profile of local elites and the nature of the political power exercised by members of these elites. Indeed, there are new contributions to the investigation of the political life of Brazilian municipalities during the First Republic. One contribution lies in the study of the electoral activity of municipal parties, which emerged as antagonists to the pro-government groups of states such as Minas Gerais and São Paulo.<sup>4</sup> However, for some time now, analyses of the political life of cities in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century have been dedicated to studying the socio-professional profile of local elites and the nature of the political power exercised by members of these elites.<sup>5</sup> The investigation of the electoral action of party leaders in small municipalities remains a fundamental element in studies regarding states such as Paraná.<sup>6</sup>

One contribution derived from analyzing the political activity of these leaders lies in understanding how figures in the electoral system of the former provinces were accommodated within the party structures of the First Republic.<sup>7</sup> At the same time, analyzing socio-professional profiles is decisive in the comparison of states when addressing the degree of renewal in the pool of political leaders since the establishment of the republican state. However, the study of the electoral performance of those leaders between the 1890s and 1920s remains underdeveloped. Thus, an advance in studies related to the First Republic lies in identifying the reasons for the increase and decrease in the electoral competitiveness of party leaders whose political activity was limited to the municipal sphere.

These leaders' socioeconomic condition analysis is critical for the knowledge of the composition of political groups formed in the Brazilian municipalities from 1889 onwards. In this article, this identification is carried out in conjunction with the study of fluctuations of the electoral performance of ruling groups which competed in municipal elections. Ultimately, this approach focuses on the political actions of an oligarchy whose members

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<sup>4</sup> FIGUEIREDO, Vítor Fonseca. *Voto e competição política...* Op. cit.; WOODARD, James P. *Um lugar da política: republicanismo e regionalismo em São Paulo*. São Paulo: Edusp, 2019.

<sup>5</sup> BILAC, Maria Beatriz Bianchini. *As elites políticas de Rio Claro: recrutamento e trajetória*. Campinas/Piracicaba: Ed. Unicamp/Ed. Unimep, 2001; MARTINY, Carina. "Os seus serviços públicos e políticos estão de certo modo ligados à prosperidade do município": constituindo redes e consolidando o poder: uma elite política local (São Sebastião do Caí, 1875-1900). Dissertation (History Master's Program) – University of Vale do Rio dos Sinos, São Leopoldo, 2010.

<sup>6</sup> GOULART, Mônica Helena Harrich Silva. *O poder local e o coronelismo no Paraná, 1880-1930*. Dissertation (Sociology Master's Program) – Federal University of Paraná, Curitiba, 2004.

<sup>7</sup> CARVALHO JÚNIOR, Álvaro Pinto Dantas de. *Cícero Dantas Martins – de Barão a Coronel: trajetória política de um líder conservador na Bahia (1838-1903)*. Dissertation (History Master's Program) – Federal University of Bahia, Salvador, 2000.

created a scenario of electoral polarization that has remained unchanged over the course of two decades.

This paper argues that, in Paranaguá, during the aforementioned time period, there was a *competitive oligarchy*.<sup>8</sup> In a scenario where the number of voters of that municipality almost did not change and there were no well-structured opposition parties, the electoral competition was fought between members of a small group, which was composed of the local exponents of the ruling order.

Finally, the sources used in this article include minutes of the vote-counting boards formed in Paranaguá during election periods. Local newspapers were also used. The minutes contain the results of the elections, while the newspapers contain information about the political and professional activities of the candidates for municipal administration positions.<sup>9</sup>

## **The municipality of Paranaguá in the context of the state of Paraná political life in the 1900s**

The analysis of results of municipal elections in Paranaguá demands the formulation of a panorama of the local political life. In such scenery, the effects of changes in the political system of that city are revealed. Such analysis is based on two arguments as follows: First, it seems relevant to emphasize that from 1891 to 1907, there was an opposition party integrated in the electoral system of Paraná state. That group was called Republican Party (PR, Brazilian acronym for Partido Republicano). Most of its members migrated from the Liberal Party. The PR president was the lawyer Generoso Marques dos Santos (1844-1928), and the party opposed the Federal Republican Party (PRF, Brazilian acronym for Partido Republicano Federal). Led by the lawyer Vicente Machado da Silva Lima (1860-1907), PRF operated within the ruling field and was composed mostly of former members of the Conservative Party.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Concernente ao emprego do conceito de *oligarquia competitiva* para a compreensão da vida política brasileira da época da Primeira República, ver COSTA, Luiz Domingos; MASSIMO, Lucas; PERISSINOTTO, Renato Monseff. Oligarquia competitiva e profissionalização política: o caso dos senadores brasileiros da Primeira República (1889-1934). Dados, Rio de Janeiro, v. 60, n. 1, 2017, p. 79-110.

<sup>9</sup> The minutes used in this article are guarded by the Municipal Council of Paranaguá (address: Rua João Estevão, 361, Ponta do Caju, Paranaguá, Paraná). The newspapers selected and surveyed in this study are available for consultation at the National Library Collection (Hemeroteca da Biblioteca Nacional) webpage: <memoria.bn.gov.br>

<sup>10</sup> About the formation of the political party framework in the state of Paraná in the First Republic, see SÊGA, Rafael Augustus. *Tempos belicosos: a Revolução Federalista no Paraná e a rearticulação da vida político-administrativa do Estado (1889-1907)*. Curitiba: Aos Quatro Ventos, 2005.

The competition between the two parties was unequal. PR gained space in the legal institutions in times when the PRF presented incomplete lists of candidates. However, there were few cities where its candidates managed to surpass those of the candidates launched by the dominant party. Victories in small municipalities were not enough to secure the election of PR candidates. In any case, they indicate that there were differences between the cities of Paraná regarding the consistency of the opposition's electoral activity.<sup>11</sup>

Paranaguá was not among the main electoral strongholds of the PR party. In that municipality, the government supporters had no difficulty in achieving a majority of the votes.<sup>12</sup> However, in 1891, Generoso Marques's political group managed the state government, and his political allies controlled the municipal administration of Paranaguá.<sup>13</sup>

Evidence suggests that in that municipality, PR was not permanently organized to dispute the municipal administration with PRF. In this regard, it seems relevant to emphasize that in 1900 the government-backed candidate for mayor of Paranaguá had no competitors.<sup>14</sup> In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the city did not have an electoral system characterized by permanent competition between the forces of the ruling party and the opposition. During that period, a factor that allowed the ruling party to easily gain control of Paraná's political institutions was the difficulty the opposition party had in remaining electorally active. In the early 1900s, PR did not participate in elections for positions such as state deputy, nor did it prevent a portion of its members from migrating to the PRF.<sup>15</sup>

In Paranaguá as well as in other municipalities in the state of Paraná, the first two decades of the Republic were marked by the intermittent participation of the opposition in electoral disputes. Throughout this analysis, we will see that in that municipality in the late 1900s, the merger between

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<sup>11</sup> The first plateau of Paraná was the region of the state where the PR main groups of supporters and voters were located. In 1906, in a contest for the Senate seat, the opposition candidate obtained 72.7% of the votes in São Mateus do Sul and 60.2% of the votes in São José dos Pinhais, a city close to Curitiba. *A República*, Curitiba, n. 30, Feb 6, 1906, p. 2.

<sup>12</sup> In 1906, a Senate seat, the incumbent candidate garnered 70.6% of the votes in Paranaguá. *A República*, Curitiba, n.30, Feb 6, 1906, p. 1.

<sup>13</sup> In 1891, the Municipal Intendency was in charge of administrating the municipality of Paranaguá, its president was the trader Mathias Böhn (1864-1907). *A República*, Curitiba, n. 479. Aug 22, 1891, p. 1.

<sup>14</sup> *A República*, Curitiba, n. 189, Aug 26, 1900, p. 2.

<sup>15</sup> In 1901 and 1903, PR did not field candidates in the elections for the 30 seats in the State Legislative Assembly. This only happened again in 1905, when the PRF ceded ten seats in that institution to the opposition. At that time, the members of the PR's directory in Antonina, on the Paraná coast, had already migrated to the ruling party. *A República*, Curitiba, n. 292, Dec 11, 1905, p 1.

PRF and PR ended a scenario in which the official candidates of the governing party had no competitors. After the disappearance of PR, electoral battles arose between the members of the majority party themselves.

It is therefore a matter of supporting the second argument of this section. Occurring in 1908, the merger between PRF and PR gave rise to the Republican Coalition (CR, Brazilian acronym for *Coligação Republicana*).<sup>16</sup> The union of former opponents weakened the opposition field. It also enabled part of the former PR members to have access to positions in the municipal administration of Paranaguá.<sup>17</sup> In such context, in that municipality, the government groups began to include individuals who had not yet held prominent positions in public administration. Thus, a gradual shift in the composition of the local political elite started.

In Paranaguá, the merger provoked the decline of political careers of individuals who were integrated into the municipal administration since the last period of the Second Reign. It is worth noting that, during the periods 1892-1900 and 1900-1908, the position of mayor of Paranaguá was held by Colonels João Guilherme Guimarães (1857-1927) and Teodorico Júlio dos Santos (1855-1925), respectively. They were linked to the Conservative Party in the 1880s, a time when they began serving terms in the local council.<sup>18</sup>

When the CR was created, João Guilherme Guimarães's political group consolidated its position as the local leader of the ruling party. However, in the early 1910s, this group was supplanted by another wing of the ruling party, which brought together novice politicians and former members of the state opposition.<sup>19</sup> The aforementioned party merger led to the ostracism of veteran politicians, while also electorally strengthening individuals from the opposition. As evidenced throughout this study, there were former members

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<sup>16</sup> Uma nova iniciativa para estruturar uma agremiação oposicionista no estado data de novembro de 1908, ocasião em que o Partido Republicano Federal foi reativado. *Diário da Tarde*, Curitiba, n. 2951, Nov 14, 1908, p. 2.

<sup>17</sup> Regarding times and motives for the foundation of political parties in Paraná in the First Republic, see GOULART, Mônica Helena Harrich Silva. *Classe dominante e jogo político na Assembleia Legislativa do Paraná (1889-1930)*. Thesis (Sociology Doctorate Program) – Federal University of Paraná, Curitiba, 2008.

<sup>18</sup> In 1886, João Guilherme Guimarães and Teodorico Júlio dos Santos were elected councilors in Paranaguá. In such context, the Conservative Party acted as a pro-government group. *Commercial*, Paranaguá, n. 19, Jul 3, 1886, p. 2.

<sup>19</sup> In 1911, João Guilherme Guimarães's political group was still the local leader of the pro-government party. *Almanak Laemmert*, Rio de Janeiro, n. 68, 1911, p. 3476. However, in the following year, an internal dispute resulted in the renovation of the group's leadership, which came to be headed by the medical doctor Caetano Munhoz da Rocha (1879-1944). *A República*, Curitiba, n. 61, Mar 14, 1912, p. 1.

of the defunct PR party who quickly rose to the position of government leaders in Paranaguá.

On the other hand, this information indicates that, in that municipality, the first few years of the republican regime were not marked by the appearance of a new ruling elite. Conversely, the fact that João Guilherme Guimarães occupied the position of mayor of the municipality in the 1890s indicates that politically active family groups, dating back to the time of the Empire, continued to wield considerable influence over the functioning of administrative institutions in the city.<sup>20</sup> The process of consolidating individuals from outside the monarchist parties within the electoral landscape of Paranaguá was slow. At the dawn of the First Republic, a typical family-based oligarchy still existed in that municipality, whose members held elected and appointed positions in various spheres of public administration.<sup>21</sup>

In this analysis, it is important to highlight that, from 1908 onwards, veterans of the local political scene were not entirely excluded from elections and municipal institutions. A portion of those veterans retained sufficient support to win council seats. On the other hand, the entry of new participants into the political arena and the change in the electoral competition format did not promote a transformation in the social profile of those holding elected office in the municipality. To a large extent, those positions continued to be held by businessmen, who belonged to the city's economic elite.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Throughout the monarchical regime, different members of the Guimarães family held positions in the Paranaguá city council. See ALVES, Alessandro Cavassin. A família de Manoel Antônio Guimarães na composição do poder local em Paranaguá (1856-1889). *Revista do NEP - Núcleo de Estudos Paranaenses*, Curitiba, v. 3, n. 1, 2017, p. 209-237.

<sup>21</sup> As regards the presence of families from the social elite of Paranaguá in the political scenario of Paraná between the 19th and 20th centuries, see OLIVEIRA, Ricardo Costa de. *O silêncio dos vencedores: genealogia, classe dominante e Estado do Paraná (1853-1930)*. Curitiba: Moinho do Verbo, 2001.

<sup>22</sup> The category *traders* employed in this article includes from retail merchants to owners of import and export firms. Between the late 19th century and the early 20th century, it was not unusual for members of the economic elite of Paranaguá to have their trajectories marked by some involvement in distinct branches of business life. Regarding the economic activity of the wealthier traders of the city, who engaged in activities such as ship consignment and the import and export of goods through the local port, see FIGUEIRA, Priscila Onório. *Às margens da baía, um ancoradouro: história do desenvolvimento do Porto D. Pedro II, na Baía de Paranaguá (séculos XVIII-XX)*. Thesis (History Doctorate Program) –Federal University of Paraná, Curitiba, 2022.

## **The 1908 municipal election: the political dominance of the traders and the clashes between members of the ruling party**

This section presents the analysis of the results of the election held in Paranaguá on June 24, 1908. This highlights that local political life was controlled by members of the merchant class. The governing party was managed locally by traders whose careers were marked by their constant presence in municipal institutions. In this context, the opponents of the official candidates also belonged to the merchant elite. Therefore, the electoral polarization in Paranaguá resulted from the numerous candidacies of traders who aspired to exercise permanent control over the local administration.

It seems important to highlight the existence of a scenario in which rivalries between party members did not prompt any intervention from the central leadership of the ruling party. This competition did not cause a local split within the party.<sup>23</sup> It was limited to a dispute between party members over the prerogative of holding office as the incumbent. This demonstrates the existence of a situation in which the incumbents and alternates of the positions of city councilor and district judge were members of the same political group. Such members, therefore, took turns managing the municipal institutions.

At that time, competition among government supporters for the position of mayor of Paranaguá was not common.<sup>24</sup> In most elections held between 1908 and 1928, the minority wing of the ruling party refrained from seeking control of the Municipal Executive. For a deeper understanding of the early stages of the competition between the ruling parties in Paranaguá, refer to the information in Table 1.

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<sup>23</sup>The central directory of the ruling party only needed to intervene in the activities of the party in Paranaguá on one occasion. This intervention dates back to March 1912. In that context, rival factions of the PRP separately elected executive boards to manage the party locally. The central directory, in turn, arbitrated this dispute with the intention of recognizing the legitimacy of only one of the boards. Thus, the clash between the rival groups of the majority party occurred both in municipal elections and in the dispute over the local management of the party. *A República*, Curitiba, n. 61, Mar 14, 1912, p. 1.

<sup>24</sup> In 1908, Caetano Munhoz da Rocha was elected mayor of Paranaguá with 545 votes. PARANAGUÁ. *Atas da Câmara Municipal de Paranaguá*. Ata da Junta Apuradora, Jun 21, 1908, p. 1.

**Table 1:** Result of the election for councilmen and district judge in Paranaguá (1908)

Name of the group of candidates for city councilor	Total number of candidates	Total number of elected candidates	Total number of votes for the specific group	Percentage of votes for the specific group	Total number of candidates to reelection	Total number of candidates belonging to trading activities and private companies	Total number of candidates working as civil servants	Total number of candidates with relatives in the National Guard
Republican Coalition group	8	8	2,374	68.4	2	7	1	7
Unofficial government group	8	0	1,085	31.3	0	7	1	8
Others	8	0	9	0.3	0	8	0	7
Name of the group of candidates for district judge	Total number of candidates	Total number of elected candidates	Total number of votes for the specific group	Percentage of votes for the specific group	Total number of candidates to reelection	Total number of candidates belonging to trading activities and private companies	Total number of candidates working as civil servants	Total number of candidates with relatives in the National Guard
Republican Coalition group	4	4	1.440	62,4	0	4	0	4
Unofficial government group	4	0	865	37,5	0	4	0	4
Others	3	0	3	0,1	0	3	0	3

**Sources:** *A República* (PR); *Almanak Laemmert* (RJ); *Atas da Câmara Municipal de Paranaguá* (1908); *Diário da Tarde* (PR); *Diário do Commercio* (PR).

Three conclusions can be drawn from this data (Table 1). First, the results of the 1908 election indicate that there was competition between the

factions of the ruling party in Paranaguá. However, such competition was merely a formality to define the incumbents and alternates for municipal positions. There were no other political groups or independent candidates competing for votes with those affiliated with the ruling party. The former state opposition had been co-opted by the ruling party, and the opposition members who did not approve of the merger between the PRF and the PR were politically demobilized. Thus, the “Others” category (Table 1) consists of individuals who received between 1 and 2 votes but had not presented themselves as candidates.<sup>25</sup>

In that year, the votes for the CR Unofficial candidates was not enough to threaten the election of candidates supported by leaders of that party. However, this vote was not insignificant. We observed that unofficial candidates for the city council managed to secure the support of slightly less than a third of the electorate in the election for council seats. In the race for district judge, the vote for opponents of the official candidates was even more significant (37.5% of the votes). That election included the participation of government supporters who, despite the lack of official support, had their candidacies accepted by a fraction of the electorate.

In that dispute, part of the elected candidates was already experienced in participating in electoral competitions. Among the CR official candidates, there were politicians whose trajectories were marked by continuous participation in elections. At that time, the newcomers to the ruling party competed with individuals who had been integrated into the party structure and municipal administration for decades. It is worth mentioning that major Manuel Francisco de Souza was among the district judges elected in 1908. He had begun his participation in electoral contests in 1886, the year in which he won a term as councilman for the Conservative Party.<sup>26</sup>

We observed that only two councilmen elected in 1904 ran for reelection in 1908 (Table 1). These officials were Domingos Soriano da Costa (1858-1940) and Policarpo José Pinheiro (1859-1934). Both political allies began serving in the City Council in the early 1890s.<sup>27</sup> This information shows that, at the time

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<sup>25</sup> In the First Republic, the state did not control the approval of candidacies. In the period before the creation of the Electoral Justice (1932), votes for individuals who had not been formally presented as candidates were considered valid. To know more about the history of different forms of election organization in Brazil, see NICOLAU, Jairo. *As eleições no Brasil: do Império aos nossos dias*. Rio de Janeiro: Zahar, 2012.

<sup>26</sup> *Commercial*, Paranaguá, n. 19, Jul 3, 1886, p. 2.

<sup>27</sup> *A República*, Curitiba, n. 66, Mar 25, 1893, p. 1.

of the said election, the political group managing the local administration had been in power for over a decade.

In such context, the rise of newcomers in the municipality's political scene stemmed from the support of the majority wing of the ruling party. It was this support that allowed for the political leadership gradual renewal. To confirm this statement, it is worth noting that one of the councilors elected in 1908 was Major José Gonçalves Lobo (1866-1937), originally from the opposition party that had merged with the PRF.<sup>28</sup>

The election result showed that the CR stronger wing was also formed by individuals linked to the ruling families who had been active in the local political life for decades. Among the members of the old local elite who won mandates that year was Lieutenant Colonel Aníbal Guimarães Carneiro (1872-1948). Nephew of former mayor João Guilherme Guimarães, Carneiro was elected to the position of councilman.<sup>29</sup>

It is therefore necessary to substantiate the second observation of this section. The unofficial candidates of the CR did not intend to create a dissenting faction and migrate to the opposition. The launching of a competing group by a faction of the ruling party was not an indicator of the exhaustion of those competitors' presence within the ruling party. Such launch did not mean that the unofficial candidates maintained a conflictual relationship with the leading figures of the ruling party.

In 1908, for example, one of the candidates running for district judge in the Unofficial group was colonel Luiz Victorino Picanço (1861-1931), former member of the opposition. The fact that he competed with the official candidates of the CR did not prevent him from being admitted to the leadership of the ruling party in Paranaguá in 1910.<sup>30</sup> This case also evidences that acting as an antagonist to official candidates did not preclude the participation of unofficial candidates in schemes for appointments to public office. Through his involvement in these schemes, Picanço obtained the position of Police Commissioner of Paranaguá at the end of the 1910s.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> The integration of PR members to the government group reveals the alliance between individuals who had been on opposing sides during the Federalist Revolution (1893-1895), a civil war in which the insurgents (federalists) were defeated by the loyalists, who supported President Floriano Peixoto. José Lobo was, therefore, one of the oppositionists who joined the federalist cause in the context of that war. VERNALHA, Milton Miró. *Maragatos X Pica-paus*. Curitiba: Lítero-Técnica, 1987, p. 275.

<sup>29</sup> PARANAGUÁ. *Atas da Câmara Municipal de Paranaguá*. Ata da Junta Apuradora, Jul 21, 1908, p. 1.

<sup>30</sup> *A República*, Curitiba, n. 36, Feb 14, 1910, p. 1.

<sup>31</sup> *Almanak Laemmert*, Rio de Janeiro, n. 76, 1919, p. 3336.

At that time, the composition of the unofficial groups of candidates was marked by the presence of figures whose connection with the CR leadership was not sufficiently solid. Those candidates remained linked to the ruling party, but never gained the necessary support to have their names included in the official lists. This was the situation of Aníbal Ribeiro (1880-1959). A candidate for city councilor in the unofficial CR group in 1908, he never obtained any elected office. For government supporters like Ribeiro, the limit of opportunities derived from their connection with the ruling party was securing appointments to public positions.<sup>32</sup>

On the other hand, a peculiar aspect of the composition of the official group competing in the 1908 election was the presence of members of the same family. The electoral competition in Paranaguá was marked by the presence of individuals from families whose members were linked to the government group that controlled the formation of official lists. The members of those families stood out for their ability to garner the endorsement of the local party leadership for their candidacies. In this regard, it is worth noting that, in 1908, the official CR list of candidates included the brothers Alberto Gomes Veiga (1858-1931), a candidate for city councilor, and Henrique Weimar Gomes Veiga, a candidate for a district judge position.<sup>33</sup>

It is therefore necessary to support the third finding of this section. There was no marked socioeconomic distinction between official and unofficial candidates in the 1908 municipal elections in Paranaguá. Most of the candidates belonged to an urban group whose members were dedicated to the commercial sector (Table 1). Those candidates were also similar in that they were integrated into the schemes for granting officer ranks in the National Guard. At that time, municipal elections in Paranaguá were characterized by a clash between traders who belonged to the elite of that corporation. It is therefore necessary to demonstrate that the aspects of electoral competition in that city did not change during the 1910s.

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<sup>32</sup> Aníbal Ribeiro was a federal civil servant. In that condition, in the 1910s, he served as a customs officer in Paranaguá. *Almanak Laemmert*, Rio de Janeiro, n. 72, 1916, p. 3353.

<sup>33</sup> PARANAGUÁ. *Atas da Câmara Municipal de Paranaguá*. Ata da Junta Apuradora, Jul 21, 1908, p. 1.

## Municipal elections in the 1910s: the political power of the merchant class and the perpetuation of disputes between government supporters

In 1912, in Paranaguá, the municipal election was held on June 20<sup>th</sup>. On that occasion, there was not an active opposition party in Paranaguá. The early 1910s was characterized by the political disarray of the state's opposition leaders. The opposition groups founded in the state during that decade were short-lived and showed no willingness to participate in municipal elections. The new groups depended on the government presenting incomplete lists of candidates in order to elect even a small number to the Chamber of Deputies and the State Legislative Assembly.<sup>34</sup>

During that period, no opposition group emerged capable of counterbalancing the electoral strength of the ruling party. The main initiatives aimed at challenging the majority party's candidates were carried out by unofficial government groups, as well as by ephemeral municipal groups. Such initiatives ensured competition in a political landscape where opposition parties did not operate continuously in the electoral system.

In Paranaguá, at the time of the 1912 municipal elections, local parties were created in Curitiba, Guarapuava and Palmas. The lack of a state opposition party did not prevent electoral competition in different municipalities. Such competition resulted from independent initiatives. These initiatives did not result in the formation of a new opposition group. They were isolated efforts to fight the official candidates, which resulted unsuccessful from the election standpoint.<sup>35</sup>

That year in Paranaguá, the electoral competition between the incumbent parties had not yet reached its peak, so Mayor Caetano Munhoz da Rocha was re-elected as the sole candidate.<sup>36</sup> There were clashes only in the elections for city councilor and district judge. On that occasion, the incumbent party, which had adopted the name Republican Party of Paranaguá (PRP, Brazilian acronym for Partido Republicano do Paranaguá), had no difficulty in electing its

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<sup>34</sup> In this regard, it seems relevant to highlight that, in 1912, in the election for the four federal deputy seats held in Paranaguá, the three opposition candidates ran independently. On that occasion, the election of the opposition candidate Manuel Correia de Freitas (1851-1932) to the Chamber of Deputies resulted from the fact that the ruling party presented only three candidates. BRASIL. *Annaes da Câmara dos Deputados*. Vol. 1. Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Nacional, 1912, p. 38.

<sup>35</sup> *A República*, Curitiba, issues of June 21, 24 and 28, 1912.

<sup>36</sup> Caetano Munhoz da Rocha was reelected mayor of Paranaguá with 606 votes. PARANAGUÁ. *Atas da Câmara Municipal de Paranaguá*. Ata da Junta Apuradora, Jul 5, 1908, p. 75.

candidates. From 1908 to 1912, there was no significant change in the level of competitiveness of the opposing groups or in the social profiles of the candidates. Atente-se, pois, aos dados da Tabela 2.

**Tabela 2:** Resultado das eleições para as vagas de vereador e juiz distrital de Paranaguá (1912-1916)

1912							
Name of the group of candidates for city councilor	Total number of candidates	Total number of elected candidates	Total number of votes for the specific group	Percentage of votes for the specific group	Total number of candidates to reelection	Total number of candidates belonging to trading activities and private companies	Total number of candidates with relatives in the National Guard
Republican Party of Paraná Group	8	8	2.611	72,6	2	8	8
Unofficial government group	8	0	986	27,4	0	8	4
Name of the group of candidates for district judge	Total number of candidates	Total number of elected candidates	Total number of votes for the specific group	Percentage of votes for the specific group	Total number of candidates to reelection	Total number of candidates belonging to trading activities and private companies	Total number of candidates with relatives in the National Guard
Republican Party of Paraná Group	4	4	1.484	61,3	2	4	3
Unofficial government group	4	0	938	38,7	0	4	1

*Continue*

## Conclusion

1916							
Name of the group of candidates for city councilor	Total number of candidates	Total number of elected candidates	Total number of votes for the specific group	Percentage of votes for the specific group	Total number of candidates to reelection	Total number of candidates belonging to trading activities and private companies	Total number of candidates with relatives in the National Guard
Republican Party of Paraná Group	8	8	2.145	69,5	1	8	6
Unofficial government group	8	0	942	30,5	0	8	0
Other	1	0	1	0	0	1	0
Name of the group of candidates for district judge	Total number of candidates	Total number of elected candidates	Total number of votes for the specific group	Percentage of votes for the specific group	Total number of candidates to reelection	Total number of candidates belonging to trading activities and private companies	Total number of candidates with relatives in the National Guard
Republican Party of Paraná Group	4	4	1.284	60,5	0	4	2
Unofficial government group	4	0	840	39,5	0	4	0

**Sources:** *A República* (PR); *Almanak Laemmert* (RJ); *Atas da Câmara Municipal de Paranaguá* (1912;1916); *Diário da Tarde* (PR); *Diário do Commercio* (PR).

The data above (Table 2) support two arguments. First, it seems relevant to highlight that, in 1912, the electoral dispute in Paranaguá still involved only individuals who belonged to the pro-government group and also to the traders' group. From the Second Reign to the First Republic, members of the merchant elite of the municipality alternated positions in central functions of the municipal administration.

In general, those traders limited their political careers to the local sphere. They were party leaders whose task was to guarantee votes for the candidates recommended by the PRP central directory.<sup>37</sup> The limit of the political influence of personalities such as colonel Joaquim Soares Rodrigues (1849-1924), whose first term as councilor was obtained in 1912, consisted in taking part in the PRP local management.<sup>38</sup>

In Paranaguá, government supporters vied with each other for the nomination to a vacancy on the official party lists. The lack of approval from party leaders encouraged the overlooked incumbent to present themselves as candidates on the unofficial list. However, such a candidate could later obtain the endorsement of the party leaders to hold office in the municipal administration. In short, antagonisms between candidates on the official and unofficial lists were not insurmountable. Thus, there were cases in which a candidacy on the unofficial list was a step prior to the inclusion of the candidate on the official PRP list.

Therefore, it seems relevant to mention Docilo Guimarães da Silva (1877-1944) as an example. In 1908, he ran for a city council seat on an unofficial ticket. In 1912, he was included in the official ticket and won a seat on the City Council. In short, the existence of electoral competition in that city did not mean that those excluded from the official tickets were willing to move to the opposition.

Docilo da Silva's election is also evidence of the existence of a select group of families whose members held decisive positions in public administration of Paranaguá. Part of those families belonged to the group of government supporters since the first decade of the republic. Docilo da Silva, for instance, was colonel João Estevão da Silva's (1850-1929) son. His father occupied seats in the Legislative Assembly of Paraná and in the Paranaguá Council from the late 1890s to the early 1900s.<sup>39</sup>

It is therefore necessary to support the second statement alluding to the 1912 election. On that occasion, the incumbents included in the unofficial list were divided into two categories. One category was that of newcomers who, by remaining affiliated with the majority party, won mandates in subsequent

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<sup>37</sup> About fundamental aspects of the First Republic colonels' political power and electoral action, see LEAL, Victor Nunes. *Coronelismo, enxada e voto: o município e o regime representativo no Brasil*. 7ª ed. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2012; PANG, Eul-Soo. *Coronelismo e oligarquias, 1889-1943: a Bahia na Primeira República brasileira*. Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 1979.

<sup>38</sup> *Almanak Laemmert*, Rio de Janeiro, 1918, v. 1, p. 2219.

<sup>39</sup> NEGRÃO, Francisco. *Genealogia paranaense*. Vol. 6. Curitiba: Imprensa Oficial do Paraná, 2004, p. 219.

elections. In this category was Juvenal Ferreira Arantes (1863-1944). Defeated in the election for district judge in 1912, he was elected councilman in 1916.<sup>40</sup> Arantes was a former opposition member who, after joining the ruling party, did not quickly get the opportunity to work in municipal institutions.<sup>41</sup> Aníbal Dias de Paiva (1878-1941) was in the same situation. Integrated to the ruling elite of Paranaguá in the early 1920s, in 1912 he was not elected councilor.<sup>42</sup> Thus, there were novice politicians who slowly gained the electoral support of the PRP.

Government supporters who ran for positions in municipal institutions but were never supported by the PRP leaders formed the second category of candidates. Agostinho Antônio Pereira Alves, who gained greater prominence in the local political scene after leaving the PRP, belonged to this category.<sup>43</sup> However, cases like this were not common, that is, most members of this category remained integrated to PRP after being unsuccessful in the elections.<sup>44</sup>

In 1916, in Paraná, there was an active opposition group. Such group was responsible for structuring locally the Conservative Republican Party (PRC, Brazilian acronym for Partido Republicano Conservador). It was a national group that in Paraná was headed by senator Manuel de Alencar Guimarães (1865-1940), who once belonged to PRP. At that time, the state opposition was not led by emerging figures in political life, but by veterans who had left the dominant party at the end of 1914.<sup>45</sup> In any case, the Paraná PRC did not participate in municipal elections and remained inactive during events such as the 1917 state election.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>40</sup> PARANAGUÁ. *Atas da Câmara Municipal de Paraná*. Ata da Junta Apuradora, Jul 6, 1916, p. 90.

<sup>41</sup> Similarly to José Gonçalves Lobo, Juvenal Ferreira Arantes was a supporter of the Federalist cause in the 1890s. In 1894, Arantes supported the seizure of Paranaguá by insurgents from Rio Grande do Sul. BORMANN, José Bernardino. *Dias fratricidas: memórias da Revolução Federalista no Paraná*. Vol. 1. Curitiba: Tip. da Livraria Econômica, 1901, p. 121.

<sup>42</sup> PARANAGUÁ. *Atas da Câmara Municipal de Paranaguá*. Ata da Junta Apuradora, Jul 5, 1912, p. 76.

<sup>43</sup> Agostinho Antônio Pereira Alves was a supporter of Getúlio Vargas's opposition candidacy for President of the Republic in 1930. In October of that year, this support secured his appointment as mayor of Paranaguá. This appointment was made by the interventor Mário Tourinho, who was one of the Paraná leaders of the Revolution of 1930. *O Dia*, Curitiba, n. 2673, Oct 9, 1930, p. 2.

<sup>44</sup> Out of the eight candidates for city council on the unofficial 1912 ticket, only Agostinho Alves switched to the opposition. Of that total, five ran again without the PRP official support.

<sup>45</sup> One of the factors contributing to this dissent was the loss of influence by Alencar Guimarães' political group in the negotiations for the nomination of candidates for the Chamber of Deputies by PRP. See GUIMARÃES, Manoel de Alencar. *Política do Paraná: discursos pronunciados pelo deputado Manoel de Alencar Guimarães no Congresso Legislativo do Paraná*. Curitiba: s/e, 1915.

<sup>46</sup> In 1917, the PRP presented a full ticket of candidates for the State Legislative Assembly. This presentation discouraged the opposition from participating in the election. *A República*, Curitiba, n. 245, Oct 16, 1917, p. 1.

In mid-1910s, The opposition lacked significant reach in the municipalities of Paraná. In this context, in Paranaguá, the electoral competition remained restricted to the clash between the official and unofficial PRP groups.<sup>47</sup> In this regard, it is necessary to support two assertions about the 1916 municipal election. First, it should be mentioned that at that time, most of the councilors elected in 1912 did not seek re-election, and the willingness to remain in an elected office was more common among district judges (Table 2). However, the high turnover in the City Council in 1916 did not result in the rise of politicians without ties to the local elite.

That election was marked by the participation of newcomers whose family members were affiliated with the PRP. Among the new council members was Ceciliano da Silva Correia (1873-1962), councilman Presciliano da Silva Correia's (1878-1965) brother. Also among the council members elected that year were Domingos Soriano da Costa, who returned to the Municipal Legislature after a four-year term, and Ildefonso Munhoz da Rocha (1881-1950), former mayor Caetano Munhoz da Rocha's brother.<sup>48</sup> It is also worth mentioning that among the district judges elected in 1916 was João Estevão da Silva Júnior (1876-1924), councilman Docilo da Silva's brother, who did not seek re-election.<sup>49</sup> Thus, the election that took place in that year was characterized by the continued presence of different families in central positions within the local administration.

In that period, intrinsic aspects of belonging to the city's political elite included membership in the City Council, the district judges' panel, and the PRP municipal directory. By the end of the 1910s, families like that of João Estevão da Silva Júnior were integrated into the elite.<sup>50</sup> However, most of the managers in the administration of Paranaguá was recognized by their limited institutional circulation.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> On that occasion, José Gonçalves Lobo had no competitors when running for mayor. He obtained 531 votes. PARANAGUÁ. *Atas da Câmara Municipal de Paraná*. Ata da Junta Apuradora, Jul 6, 1916, p. 90.

<sup>48</sup> The presence of the Correias in the Paranaguá council in the 1910s, reveals the ability of that family to guarantee their influence on the local political scenery. The family was rooted in that scenario since the monarchical regime, when its members were affiliated to the Conservative Party. See ALVES, Alessandro Cavassin. *A Província do Paraná (1853-1889): a classe política, a parentela no Governo*. Thesis (Sociology Doctorate Program) – Federal University of Paraná, Curitiba, 2014.

<sup>49</sup> On that occasion, José Gonçalves Lobo had no competitors when running for mayor. He obtained 531 votes. PARANAGUÁ. *Atas da Câmara Municipal de Paraná*. Ata da Junta Apuradora, Jul 6, 1916, p. 90.

<sup>50</sup> In 1919, while João Estevão da Silva Júnior occupied the position of district judge, his father was a member of the PRP leadership in Paranaguá. *Almanak Laemmert*, Rio de Janeiro, n. 1, 1919, p. 3334.

<sup>51</sup> Between the 1890s and 1920s, Antônio José de Sant'Anna, Domingos Soriano da Costa, Ildefonso Munhoz da Rocha, João Estevão da Silva, José Gonçalves Lobo and Teodorico Júlio dos Santos were the only

It is therefore necessary to substantiate the second observation of this section. In 1916, the unofficial PRP ticket was composed of individuals who lacked prior experience in holding office or key positions within that party. In that year, for example, Aníbal Dias de Paiva remained a government supporter who aspired to integrate into the city's ruling elite. Consequently, he ran for city council as a candidate on the unofficial ticket and experienced another defeat.<sup>52</sup>

This shows that the lack of support from the majority wing of the PRP in Paranaguá determined the electoral failure of a candidate. In the 1910s, the confrontation with the official PRP candidates was undertaken by individuals who held a less prominent position in that group and remained linked to it at a time when the state opposition field was beginning to reorganize. Most of the electorally weak incumbents remained connected to the local leaders of that party. There is evidence that this connection remained very strong after the end of the First Republic.<sup>53</sup>

### **Municipal elections in the 1920s: the brief action of an opposition party and the conservation of official candidates' predominance**

In 1920, Manuel de Alencar Guimarães remained in the leadership of the opposition in Paraná. At that time, he was the Autonomist Party president (PA, Brazilian acronym for Partido Autonomista), which presented tickets to run the municipal elections held on June 21st. According to records, PA fielded candidates in ten municipalities. However, none of the tickets presented by that party defeated the candidates supported by the PRP.<sup>54</sup>

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councilmen of Paranaguá elected for the State Legislative Congress. See GOULART, Mônica Helena Harrich Silva. *Classe dominante e jogo político...* Op. cit.

<sup>52</sup> PARANAGUÁ. *Atas da Câmara Municipal de Paraná*. Ata da Junta Apuradora, July 6, 1916, p. 90.

<sup>53</sup> To support this claim, it is worth highlighting the cases of Manuel Nunes Barranco (1875-1948) and Manuel Vieira dos Santos (1894-1951). In 1912, Barranco failed to be elected councilman on the unofficial PRP ticket. In 1916, Vieira dos Santos also failed in his attempt to be elected councilman as an unofficial candidate. Nevertheless, they remained allies of the party's leaders for many years. In 1935, the former PRP members were affiliated with the Paraná Republican Union (URP, Brazilian acronym for União Republicana Paranaense). In that year, Barranco and Vieira dos Santos were included on the ticket that this new party presented in the election for the Paranaguá City Council. They were not elected. However, Vieira dos Santos took office in 1937 due to the death of José Gonçalves Lobo, who in the 1930s locally led the political group formed by the PRP remnants. PARANAGUÁ. *Atas da Câmara Municipal de Paranaguá*. Session of October 14, 1937, p. 1.

<sup>54</sup> *A República*, Curitiba, n. 152, Jun 26, 1920, p. 1.

In Paranaguá, the 1920 election was a singular event, given that local opposition leaders decided to challenge the PRP candidates, despite the fact that that party did not present incomplete lists to ensure its opponents a small representation in the local council. Such dispute preceded the restoration of a scenario characterized by demobilization and low electoral activity of the opposition in Paranaguá.

The PA electoral activities in Paranaguá were coordinated by the former mayor João Guilherme Guimarães, Alencar Guimarães's uncle. In that municipality, the opposition gathered individuals who had left the PRP due to Alencar Guimarães's departure from the ruling party. One of the local leading figures of the PA was former councilman Alberto Gomes Veiga, who had been close to the Guimarães family since his time in the Conservative Party.<sup>55</sup>

This data indicates that in that municipality there were traders who were politically linked during both the time they belonged to the pro-government party and in the context of opposing the government. Part of the members of the economic elite of Paranaguá kept a long-lasting electoral alliance, which stretched from the Second Reign to the First Republic.<sup>56</sup> Summarizing, the PA structure in that municipality was formed by traders who remained as supporters after breaking away from the ruling party.

In 1920, Alberto Gomes Veiga was the PA candidate in the dispute for the position of mayor of Paranaguá. He competed with José Gonçalves Lobo. Running for re-election, Lobo was a prominent local figure in the PRP. In that election, the PA's efforts to consolidate its presence in the political and administrative life of that municipality were unsuccessful. While Lobo garnered 474 votes (84%), Veiga only managed 90 votes (16%). In the race for city council and district judge positions, the PRP's superiority was less pronounced. However, the PA's vote was insufficient to elect its candidates. Therefore, the information below should be analyzed (Table 3):

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<sup>55</sup> *Commercial*, Paranaguá, n. 19, Jul 3, 1886, p. 2.

<sup>56</sup> In this context, it is worth noting that in the 1890s Alberto Gomes Veiga and João Guilherme Guimarães were part of the ruling elite of that city. In 1893, as members of the governing party, Gomes served as a city councilor, while Guimarães was simultaneously mayor of Paranaguá and president of the City Council. *A República*, n. 66, March 25, 1893, p. 1.

**Table 3:** Result of the elections for councilor and district judge in Paranaguá (1920-1924-1928)<sup>57</sup>

1920							
Name of the group of candidates for city councilor	Total number of candidates	Total number of elected candidates	Total number of votes for the specific group	Percentage of votes for the specific group	Total number of candidates to reelection	Total number of candidates belonging to trading activities and private companies	Total number of candidates who were lawyers
Republican Party of Paraná group	8	8	2,076	65.3	4	7	1
Autonomist Party group	8	0	787	24.7	0	8	0
Others	6	0	321	10	0	6	0
Name of the group of candidates for district judge	Total number of candidates	Total number of elected candidates	Total number of votes for the specific group	Percentage of votes for the specific group	Total number of candidates to reelection	Total number of candidates belonging to trading activities and private companies	Total number of candidates who were lawyers
Republican Party of Paraná group	4	4	1,003	46.3	2	4	0
Unofficial government group	5	0	720	33.2	0	4	0
Chapa do Autonomist Party group	4	0	445	20.5	0	4	0

*Continue*

<sup>57</sup> In 1920, two years before the National Guard was disbanded, the Paranaguá Vote-counting Board stopped to mention the ranks that the candidates for city councilor and justice of the peace held in that corporation.

Continuation

Name of the group of candidates for district judge in Rio das Pedras	Total number of candidates	Total number of elected candidates	Total number of votes for the specific group	Percentage of votes for the specific group	Total number of candidates to reelection	Total number of candidates belonging to trading activities and private companies	Total number of candidates who were lawyers
Republican Party of Paraná group	4	4	56	63,6	0	-	-
Unofficial government group	4	0	32	36,4	0	-	-

## 1924

Name of the group of candidates for city councilor	Total number of candidates	Total number of elected candidates	Total number of votes for the specific group	Percentage of votes for the specific group	Total number of candidates to reelection	Total number of candidates belonging to trading activities and private companies	Total number of candidates who were lawyers
Republican Party of Paraná group	8	8	1,418	72.1	4	8	0
Unofficial government group	8	0	495	67.9	0	8	0
Name of the group of candidates for district judge	Total number of candidates	Total number of elected candidates	Total number of votes for the specific group	Percentage of votes for the specific group	Total number of candidates to reelection	Total number of candidates belonging to trading activities and private companies	Total number of candidates who were lawyers

Continue

Continuation

1924							
Republican Party of Paraná group	4	4	802	68.4	2	4	0
Unofficial government group	4	0	370	31.6	0	4	0
Name of the group of candidates for district judge in Rio das Pedras	Total number of candidates	Total number of elected candidates	Total number of votes for the specific group	Percentage of votes for the specific group	Total number of candidates to reelection	Total number of candidates belonging to trading activities and private companies	Total number of candidates who were lawyers
Republican Party of Paraná group	4	4	56	66.7	2	-	-
Unofficial government group	4	0	28	33.3	0	-	-
1928							
Name of the group of candidates for city councilor	Total number of candidates	Total number of elected candidates	Total number of votes for the specific group	Percentage of votes for the specific group	Total number of candidates to reelection	Total number of candidates belonging to trading activities and private companies	Total number of candidates who were lawyers
Republican Party of Paraná group	8	8	2.347	64.8	3	8	0
Others	10	0	797	22	0	10	0

Continue

1928							
Unofficial government group	7	0	474	13.2	0	7	0
Name of the group of candidates for district judge	Total number of candidates	Total number of elected candidates	Total number of votes for the specific group	Percentage of votes for the specific group	Total number of candidates to reelection	Total number of candidates belonging to trading activities and private companies	Total number of candidates who were lawyers
Republican Party of Paraná group	4	4	1.209	52.9	1	4	0
Unofficial government group	4	0	775	34	0	4	0
Others	1	0	300	13.1	0	1	0
Name of the group of candidates for district judge in Rio das Pedras	Total number of candidates	Total number of elected candidates	Total number of votes for the specific group	Percentage of votes for the specific group	Total number of candidates to reelection	Total number of candidates belonging to trading activities and private companies	Total number of candidates who were lawyers
Republican Party of Paraná group	4	4	94	69.1	1	-	-
Unofficial government group	3	0	37	27.2	0	-	-
Others	3	0	5	3.7	0	-	-

**Sources:** *A República* (PR); *Almanak Laemmert* (RJ); *Atas da Câmara Municipal de Paranaguá* (1920;1924;1928); *Diário da Tarde* (PR); *Diário do Commercio* (PR); *O Dia* (PR).

Regarding the results of the 1920 election, five observations should be made. First, it is worth noting that the elite of government politicians remained socially homogeneous. The absorption of individuals not belonging to the commercial and port sectors into this elite was very limited. Half of the councilors elected in 1916 managed to be re-elected in 1920 (Table 3). It was, therefore, a time of low renewal of the ruling elite. It was in this election that Joaquim Soares Rodrigues won his third consecutive term as councilor, and was also the most voted candidate (318 votes).<sup>58</sup> To sum up, in this election, a situation remained unchanged in which wealthy businessmen were the most competitive candidates in the city. This group consisted of candidates whose political power was limited to ensuring a consistent presence in the local council.

On that occasion, however, there was a small change in the socio-professional composition of the council. Such change resulted from the election of the lawyer Francisco Accioly Rodrigues da Costa (1878-1933). Coming from the state of Santa Catarina, he had been living in Paranaguá since 1901, when he occupied the position of public prosecutor.<sup>59</sup> Therefore, a slow process was observed for Costa's integration to the pro-government group supported by PRP to apply for a candidacy for city councilor.

It is therefore necessary to support the second finding of this section. In 1920, Aníbal Dias de Paiva was elected councilman and thus joined the pro-government group which had the formal support of the PRP in the elections. As highlighted, in the 1910s that businessman was unsuccessful in his two attempts to be elected councilman on the unofficial list of the incumbents. Thus, Paiva's case corroborates the assertion that running outside the official list did not mean that the candidate sought to break away from the ruling party.

Participation in an unofficial ticket indicates that, at the time of the election, the incumbent candidate did not have his political ambitions endorsed by the managers of the local PRP directory. However, this lack of support could be reversed. The party leaders managed to keep individuals in their circle of allies who, like Aníbal Paiva, did not obtain official support in their first electoral contests. Thus, unofficial candidates such as Paiva preferred to await the endorsement of the incumbent leaders instead of joining the opposition group headed by Alencar Guimarães.

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<sup>58</sup> PARANAGUÁ. *Atas da Câmara Municipal de Paranaguá*. Ata da Junta Apuradora Municipal, Jul 6, 1920, p. 75.

<sup>59</sup> *A República*, Curitiba, n. 285, Dec 17, 1901, p. 2.

On the other hand, the third finding of this section implies that the support of his relatives was crucial for this politician to gain support for the PA in Paranaguá. In 1920, one of the then-senator's cousins, Acrísio Guimarães (1891-1976), ran for city council in that city on the PA ticket. He was João Guilherme Guimarães's son. These relatives recruited former members of the ruling party into the ranks of the PA. Former councilman Policarpo José Pinheiro, for example, had been a supporter of the Guimarães family since the 1890s. In 1920, he ran for a seat on the City Council affiliated with the PA.<sup>60</sup> In fact, at that time, the opposition in Paranaguá was led by former members of the pro-government group, who aimed at recovering some space in local institutions.

Fourthly, it is important to highlight that the emergence of the PA did not have the support of all the antagonists of the official candidacies. In addition to the PA candidates, six other individuals faced the PRP candidates in the race for city council seats (Table 3). The PA ticket proved more competitive compared to this other group of rivals of the incumbent candidates. However, the 1920 election in Paranaguá was not a moment of particularly fierce competition, so the percentage of votes for the government group in the city council election (65.3%) was not much lower than that obtained by the incumbent tickets in the three previous elections.

Finally, the fifth finding relates to the dispute for district judge in Rio das Pedras, a rural area where the Alexandra colony is located, originally formed by Italian immigrants. The result of the dispute shows that electoral polarization was less pronounced in that place. In that area, which is about fifteen kilometers from the historical center of the municipality, the official candidates of the PRP obtained significant number of votes (Table 3). As evidenced in the next stage of this section, this party formed a broad base of supporters in Rio das Pedras through the involvement of some of its inhabitants in schemes to fill public positions. In that locality, therefore, the political activity of the opponents of the incumbent party was not relevant.

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In 1921, PA was dissolved, and the state opposition became disorganized again. Consequently, a scenario was re-established in which only the PRP sought positions such as state deputy and senator. This situation was not unique to Paraná. In 1924, in two-thirds of Brazilian states, government

<sup>60</sup> In the mid-1910s, they migrated together to the opposition party. At that time, they had been allies for decades. In the early 1890s, for example, Policarpo Pinheiro was a councilor in Paranaguá alongside Alberto Gomes Veiga and João Guilherme Guimarães. *A República*, n. 66, Mar 25, 1893, p. 1.

candidates had no competitors in the elections for the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies.<sup>61</sup>

In Paranaguá, the electoral demobilization of the opposition restored a scenario that had prevailed in the 1900s and 1910s. Such scenario was characterized by the clash between the official and unofficial PRP groups in elections for city councilor and district judge. Thus, the 1920 election was merely a brief interruption of a political dynamic in which the official party was not challenged by other groups. The PRP was the only active party in Paraná. In Paranaguá, its members remained divided into groups that competed for control of municipal institutions. In 1924 and 1928, in the last two elections for local government, there was no active opposition group in the state. In the meantime, the only initiative aimed at forming a new party to rival the PRP was short-lived.<sup>62</sup>

It is therefore necessary to substantiate two observations regarding the elections for city councilor and district judge of Paranaguá that took place on June 21, 1924.<sup>63</sup> First, it seems relevant to highlight that in that year, the incumbents' performance in the elections for the municipal council was similar to that obtained in the elections of the 1910s. In other words, the PRP once more obtained the support of more than two thirds of the voters. In the mid-1920s, the council competition was marked by the exclusive presence of individuals belonging to the merchant class. The five new councilors elected in 1924 belonged to that professional group (Table 3).

Second, it is noteworthy that the electoral competition once again pitted politicians with the endorsement of the governing party against those in power who, despite lacking this endorsement, did not seek to move to the opposition. In this regard, it should be noted that in 1924, the aforementioned Juvenal Ferreira Arantes sought a new term in the local council. On that occasion, he returned to the status of a government supporter without the formal support of the PRP. The fact that he ran on an unofficial ticket meant

<sup>61</sup> *O Dia*, Curitiba, n. 201, Feb 19, 1924, p. 1.

<sup>62</sup> From 1926 to 1927, the Democratic Party of Paraná (PDP, Brazilian acronym for Partido Democrático Paranaense), whose presidente was João Guilherme Guimarães. In 1927, the defeat of the PDP candidate in the election for federal deputy was accompanied by a further fragmentation of the opposition group. See GRANATO, Natália Cristina. O Partido Democrático Paranaense de 1927 a 1930: um estudo dos capitais familiares e sociais de seus dirigentes. *Revista NEP - Núcleo de Estudos Paranaenses*, Curitiba, v. 4, n. 1, p. 36-55, 2018.

<sup>63</sup> On that occasion, there was no election for mayor. Since 1922, that position had been held by Francisco Accioly Rodrigues da Costa due to the resignation of José Gonçalves Lobo. In 1924, Accioly was confirmed in the position through an appointment by the state president Caetano Munhoz da Rocha. FREITAS, Waldomiro Ferreira de. *História de Paranaguá: das origens à atualidade*. Curitiba: Vicentina, 1999, p. 224.

that Arantes only achieved the status of alternate councilman, by virtue of which he could only participate episodically in council sessions.<sup>64</sup>

Thirdly, it is noteworthy that the election of district judges in Rio das Pedras allowed the PRP to absorb descendants of Italian immigrants into its ranks. A portion of those descendants joined the party, obtained elected mandates, and campaigned for candidates recommended by the PRP. Among the new supporters of the ruling group were Luiz Belletti and Félix Albini, who were elected district judges in 1924 and 1928, respectively. Those elections were an initial step in their engagement in campaigns for candidates backed by the PRP.

In Alexandra, in the late First Republic, Belletti managed the municipal tax collection agency. Albini, in turn, was a state civil servant working as a school inspector.<sup>65</sup> In 1929, both declared their support to the presidential candidacy of Júlio Prestes de Albuquerque, candidate supported by the PRP.<sup>66</sup> This shows that belonging to the pro-government group could result in electoral support and nomination to public positions occupied at the discretion of mayors and state governors.

On June 21, 1928, when a new municipal election was held in Paranaguá, the political situation in Paraná had not changed. There was no active opposition party. The PRP continued to exert absolute dominance over the state's electoral life, and the political landscape of Paranaguá had not undergone any changes.

In that year, the positions of councilor and district judge were contested only by members of the PRP (Table 3). The peculiarity of that election lies in the fact that there was a contest for the position of mayor. However, it was a competition between government supporters. This competition did not threaten the success of the candidates registered on the official ticket.<sup>67</sup> In such context, rivals of official candidates were, as already verified in previous elections, members of the ruling party. Those members preferred to wait long

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<sup>64</sup> Records indicate that, in 1926, Juvenal Arantes participated in sessions of the Paranaguá City Council along with another alternate councilman, Álvaro de Souza Viana. PARANAGUÁ. *Atas da Câmara Municipal de Paranaguá*. Session of April 14, 1926, p. 110.

<sup>65</sup> *Almanak Laemmert*, Rio de Janeiro, 1930, v. 4, p. 548.

<sup>66</sup> *A República*, Curitiba, n. 190, Aug 15, 1929, p. 1.

<sup>67</sup> This dispute involved Didio Iratim Affonso da Costa (1881-1953), official candidate, and José Gonçalves Lobo. The former obtained 440 votes (71.3%), while the latter obtained 177 votes (28.7%). PARANAGUÁ. *Atas da Câmara Municipal de Paranaguá*. Ata da Junta Apuradora Municipal, Jul 6, 1928, p. 204.

years until they managed to get official support to their candidacies, to the detriment of taking part in the creation of an opposition party.<sup>68</sup>

## Final considerations

There are three results from this analysis that require special attention. First, we demonstrated that the city of Paranaguá, from 1908 to 1928, had a socially homogeneous political scene with a routine aspect. Such aspect stems from the fact that electoral competition existed, but it was restricted to a group of tradesmen linked to the ruling party. Except for the 1920 municipal election, when an opposition party participated, the city's political life was marked by repeated clashes between members of the PRP. In Paranaguá, the majority wing of that party managed to elect its candidates. The minority wing, in turn, was composed of alternates for municipal positions. This scenario did not change during the aforementioned time period.

Secondly, the brief activity of an opposition party (PA) in the city's electoral system was observed; however, it did not motivate the consolidation of a group dedicated to competing with the official candidates. In that municipality, the PA was unsuccessful in gaining numerous supporters among voters and government supporters excluded from the official PRP lists.

Thirdly, one aspect of the ruling party's power was maintaining within its ranks individuals who did not receive official support for their electoral ambitions. Candidates lacking such support remained within the ruling order, waiting to be included on official tickets. In Paranaguá, there was an oligarchy whose members competed with each other in municipal elections. However, it was not frequent for those members to be involved in dissenting movements that led to the creation of opposition parties. There was, therefore, a high degree of political cohesion among the members of that oligarchy.

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<sup>68</sup> Consider the case of Eurípedes Rodrigues Branco (1876-1956). In 1908, he was unsuccessful in his candidacy for city councilor on an unofficial ticket. In 1912, he was elected district judge. However, it was only in 1928 that he gained the support of the PRP to be elected city councilor of Paranaguá. *Idem*, p. 203.

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