Masters in Administration and Public Policies

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“The effects of the ‘tachas’ (options) voting system on the election of provincial legislators from the point of view of the relationship between representatives and those whom they represent, in the province of Tierra del Fuego, Antarctica and the South Atlantic Islands for the period 1991-1999.”

The issue addressed is that of representation in the legislative branch in the provinces of Tierra del Fuego, Antarctica and the South Atlantic Islands from 1991 to 1999. The central case in point is political representation, its crisis, the relationship with the mechanisms by which an elected position is reached (incorporation of new electoral rules), and the effects that take place in some components of the political system as a result of applying these rules.

The case was selected because it is the youngest province in our country (1990), and due to the need of its people to put forward provisions for a different institutional order through their representatives, aimed at building the identity of the province. Dogmatic and government principles were selected and understood to be an improvement on those in force known from personal and third party experience. This is how preferences and the “tachas” system came to be introduced as the electoral system for collegiate bodies.

The research focuses on the application of the tachas system for the election of provincial legislators from 1991 to 1999 and analyses its characteristics and the effects it produced on some of the principal problems of political representation such as participation in elections, the change in the electoral monopoly of the political parties, the consolidation of the governability of the system, female representation and localism.

It analyzes the meaning of electoral rules, their scope, and the effects of their application, in such a way that it will allow us to observe how these turn out to be much more complex than they appear to be, with little knowledge of the political consequences of their application or modification by those who promote them.

The development of the research was based on two hypotheses, one called constitutional, and a theoretical one that will test the first one. The constitutional hypothesis arises from the analysis of the debate at the Provincial Constitutional Convention in relation to the argumentation of its promoters, regarding the Fuegian Popular Movement, on the introduction of the “tachas” system as an electoral system meant to improve participation, the selection of candidates and the representation of the people of the province of Tierra del Fuego for collegiate bodies. The theoretical one, in turn, expresses what is expected to occur according to the political analysis of the effects of the electoral system, that is to say, what has been corroborated by the evidence provided by the experience of the application of this electoral system or from what is produced from the analysis of other comparable, similar experiences, and also from the theoretical contributions of academics on electoral systems and the analysis of their effect on different components of the political system.