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Abstract. The proposal of the present paper is to explore the informational asymmetry that exists between politicians and citizens, especially towards voting, and directives for regulation and public policies that may diminish it. We develop a reading of the specialized literature, alongside the case study of a civil society organization that develops this institutional role in the city of Jundiaí, Brazil, which, albeit restricted geographically, leads up to broader implications. Based on these sets of data, we develop the following argument: information asymmetry is a problem in any context where rationality in voting decisions are a value to be pursued. In this situation, policy and legislation can be designed to interact with society in order to achieve this value by three different basic ways: a) providing relevant, unbiased and accurate information; b) increasing the data processing capability of individuals; c) emulating the effects of full information.

Keywords. Informational asymmetry, political information, citizenship, voting.

Introduction.

The act of choosing a candidate to vote in the elections can be something tricky in quite a few political scenes - situation especially truth in the Brazilian political scene, as we will discuss later (Borba, 2008; Praça, 2005). Big number of candidates to choose from, not much information about them, marketing influenced behavior and campaign. All this leaves the citizen in a situation of lack of information that makes rational political choice extremely difficult. The candidate will always know his own interests and political priorities – among other characteristics –, but how will the citizen know them for sure?

Akerlof, in his classic paper, describes “markets in which buyers use some market statistic to judge the quality of prospective purchases” (1970, p. 487). He uses as example the used cars’ market, where buyers may not know the actual quality of the product he is buying, but have certain knowledge on the average quality of used cars. In this situation, argues the author, the general perception of quality affects the concrete perception of quality. This makes good quality used cars worth less while bad quality used cars tend to be worth more than they actually should. The result is a process he calls “adverse selection” where good cars tend to leave the market, leaving it crowded with bad quality ones. The problem, in essence, results from the informational asymmetry between the parts involved in the transaction. To face it, private and governmental institutions may arise.
We argue here that some aspects of the problem presented by Akerlof are more general, extrapolating the field of economics. There are other situations where there is an informational asymmetry and people are obliged to choose between different strategies based on a general perception of the payoff they may, or may not, receive seems to share certain characteristics with his model. For example in the field of politics, where the informational asymmetry that exists between citizen and politician would also demand institutions that are capable of mitigating this process. This study does not try to diminish the value of democratic representation by comparing it with used cars, but does notices certain similarities with Akerlof’s model, which allows us getting closer to the problem in hand.

In the present paper we discuss the act of voting in the elections as a situation that fits the model, and how institutions may arise in the attempt of diminishing the informational asymmetry that exists between citizens and politicians – thus being a possible way of promoting governance between civil society and State. These institutions would come not only from (global) civil society itself, but also as legislation and public policy, and they would all interact towards the achievement of those objectives.

It bases itself in three sets of data that we believe are complementary. We go back in the literature about information and voting in order to find relevant premises for our work. Then we present a qualitative study on a Brazilian CSO – Civil Society Organization – that develops the institutional role in diminishing information asymmetry. Our axiological agenda comes from the idea of Open Society, brought by Basedow (2013), in his reading of the concept, developed before by Bergson (1932) and Popper (1998). From those sets of data, both empirical and axiological, we draw our argumentation. The implications for legislation and policy design derive from the relation between the social dynamic described and the values to be pursued.

With that in mind, we structure the paper as follows. First, we make a short review on the literature about information and voting. Second, we define our axiological view on the problem, which will determine the objectives that are to be achieved. Third, we shed some light into the peculiarities of (global) civil society that are especially suited for mitigating the problem, which should be legally protected and stimulated. Forth, we present the case of a Brazilian CSO that has been having success in developing the institutional role we describe here. Then we conclude.

A short review on the literature.

Democracies are better off when citizens have broad education to rely on and certain level of political knowledge (Hochschild, 2010). More specifically, when considering the issues around solely rational political choice, we could say the ideal scenario is to have full information on politics and
politicians, alongside complete data processing capability to evaluate that information. Reality, on the other hand, shows that this ideal scenario is very difficult to achieve.

To face this problem, people would develop forms of low information rationality, which, according to the literature, happens by a series of reasons. Procuring, analyzing and evaluating information carries a cost – in terms of time and energy – and the result expected in a political decision, especially when it is restricted to voting, may not compensate those expenses (Popkin, 1993, p. 17). Despite the costs involved, information about politics, policy and politicians can easily be scarce, uncertain and unreliable (Popkin, 1993, p. 35), making the process of rational political decision even more difficult. In addition, there is even another factor when we consider education a necessary tool for the citizen to process adequately the information he has access to (Popkin, 1993, p. 34). Facing this, people would develop instruments in order to enhance the rationality of their political decisions. Information shortcuts, argues Popkin (1993), would serve as cheap – in terms of time and energy – even though not so reliable methods to find which candidate suits the voters’ best interests. They would work in a similar fashion as Spence’s (1973)iii screening mechanisms – tools that enhance the certainty of a decision made in low information circumstances. Party identification, “natural” attributes of candidates and supportersiv, shortcuts on inferring competence of candidates and retrospections on the life quality people had under specific political regimesv would be focal points used by citizens in order to make, at least approximate, rational decisions towards voting.

Even though, it is not the same as having full information. Bartels (1996, p. 204) tries to simulate the behavior of electors fully informed, interested in, and sophisticated in thinking about politics. He compares this projection with data regarding actual voters that have little access to political information and base their decisions on a general notion of the political scene. In this sense, Hochschild (2010) refers to Bartels’ voters (1996) as Bayesian players. The result is that uninformed voters have worst results in choosing the candidate that better suits their interests then they would if had full information. The effects of informational asymmetry, according to Bartels, does diminish in the aggregate scenario – when considering the whole set of voters in determined political scene –, but are by no means fully eliminatedvi. In addition, the compensation of the informational asymmetry effect in the aggregate would only happen if the “errors” in voting are regarded to be only random. If one introduces nonrandom errors – if the press delivers biased information, or if candidates try to use those socially disseminated informational shortcuts to represent something different than they actually are –, then the benefits of aggregate decision-making are lost (Lau & Redlawsk, 2001, p. 952). Moreover, the usage of information shortcuts, or cognitive heuristics, appear to be only effective when used by political experts, having its effectiveness as a toll for good quality voting decreased when used by non-experts in politics (Lau & Redlawsk, 2001).
On another point, social institutions and electoral rules can be used as mechanisms in reducing the informational asymmetry between citizens and politicians, and enhancing the effectiveness of democratic governance. Those institutions would be Political Parties, in a certain sense, the media, and interest and advocacy groups. Those two last are regarded as such because they can pressure politicians and be effective in guaranteeing that those represented can stay ignorant and still have their interests met. Yet in another view, activism can influence political outcomes making the results became closer as they would be if voters had complete information (Dahl, 1961). In this sense, though, they emulate the effects of fully informed political choice.

One can also design Electoral Rules in order to at least, reduce the effects of informational asymmetry. One example would be the proposal among the American constitutional frames to create large electoral districts and relatively few representatives, so that only a small number of the best men would arise as candidates (Hochschild, 2010).

We can conclude from this literature that informational-based decision-making is a layered process. If the best conditions are not available, then people search for the second best, and so forth. The best-case scenario is to decide in a condition of full information and enough data processing capability to extract the most adequate solution from the data. As information is not complete and as people do not have unlimited processing capability, they try to make the best with what they have. This is when information shortcuts, retrospective voting and cognitive heuristics comes to life (Fiorina, 1981; Popkin, 1993; Lau & Redlawsk, 2001). However, even though these mechanisms can enhance the rationality in low information decision making, they do not substitute the benefits of full information (Bartels, 1996). What is necessary then is to provide cheap – in terms of time and energy spent in processing –, reliable and effective information about politics, in order to spread the possibility of rational voting among citizens. To do so, the literature presents institutions – political parties, the media, advocacy groups etc., which can be easily biased – and electoral rules that, if not act on diminishing the asymmetry, at least try to emulate the effects of full information voting by the citizens. Based on this, we propose here to focus on the development of these social mechanisms, giving special attention to CSO action, in order to create an environment that facilitates rational voting decisions.

Just a last remark. We do not intend here to make an objective distinction between the concepts of good and bad politician. Our argument is that citizens should have the necessary information at their disposal that allows them making the rational political choice that suits better their own interests. What we defend is access of relevant information about politics as a value. It is out of the scope from the present work to develop any normative definition regarding the essentially good or essentially bad politician. This would be the scope for another work, in political philosophy, and not this one.
Here we defend merely that, despite de definition of good or bad, citizens should have enough reliable information to make optimal rational decisions.

In any consideration where rational political choice is a relevant value to be pursued and protected, there must be institutional machinery to avoid the legitimacy emptiness caused by the process of adverse selection in politics. We need institutional screening mechanisms that allow us to guarantee a rational differentiation between any two politicians and, more important, that are capable of pushing the political reality towards the ideal scenario where better, more transparent and reliable politicians enters the political scene.

**Rational political choice as a component of Open Society.**

First, I would like to address that in this section we have no intent on reconstructing the thought of those authors, as they would have conceived them. The intention here is merely to present a coherent and concise possible reading. General lines of the political philosophy that guide our intent of action.

Basedow (2013) brings back light to the dichotomy between *Closed* and *Open* Society, developed before by Bergson and Popper. Two ideal extremes that signals a way for political action. Both Popper and Basedow manage an interpretation of history suggesting a natural tendency for the opening of society.

Popper observes the transition from a tribal to a non-tribal social organization in ancient Greece. In his view, close contact with other societies would make people rethink its own social organization and social norms, in a manner that cultural relativism becomes a fact. The result is that any identity between natural and moral laws would tend to fade. In this case, as there is no longer a natural form of social organization, society would be able to become whatever its own components make it to be. Social organization becomes a matter of practical reasoning, which ought to be rationally oriented toward the achievement of better life conditions (Popper, 1998, pp. 184-217).

Basedow, in his work, sees globalization as a driving force of open society, and believes that “the transition from closed to open is a model for the development of mankind” (2013, p. 64). He sees in globalization a tendency to create a cosmopolitan open society. A process that tends to spread the aspects of *openness* all over the globe. What at first was a system of self-satisfied and clearly separated Nation-States, would be the point of departure and the center model for the process of globalization. The result, a growing *permeability of national borders* and *interconnectedness of legal orders* that would result from the highly increased flow in goods, services, capital and people, causing a convergence of economic, cultural and political spaces (Basedow, 2013).
Closed society would then be that governed by instinct and necessity; where the link that holds people together resembles more those of a beehive, or the cells of an organism. The right way is always determined even though difficulties must be overcome in following it. The norms of conduct in the society must be followed by necessity. There is no rational attempt in organizing society in such a manner that it improves the conditions of its members. It is a society governed by taboos. Magical tribal institutions that can never become object of critical consideration.

The Open Society, in its turn, rejects all those characteristics of the Closed. It is a place where personal decision may lead to the alteration of taboos (Basedow, 2013). People are allowed to act rationally, and to build criticism towards traditional social institutions. The way society is organized, and the norms of conduct that regulate social relations, they are no longer viewed as natural objects that offer no alternative rather than to be endured\textsuperscript{vii}. One can think about institutions and design them to better suit the needs of a society. Its central values would be rationality – so that people have the material conditions to criticize and change society –, and democracy – which signifies that people are allowed to criticize society, having the institutional guarantees to do so.

Therefore, considering that values can be understood as a relation between actual and ideal worlds, one can base action-oriented theory on them. In this sense, negative values represent those sets of things we want to keep out of our world, while positive values represent what we want in our ideal world. We want to get rid of bad things while want to fill our world with good things. To pursue this ideal world one must act accordingly, and the idea behind action oriented theory is to investigate those actions and ideal worlds that correspond to the values pursued. For our purposes in this paper, the set of negative values is represented by closed society, while the set of positive values is represented by open society.

The inherent potential of (Global) Civil Society in performing democratic screening.

In a situation of informational asymmetry, as shown by Akerlof (1970), Spence (1973) and Rotschild-Stiglitz (1976), people will still have to make choices. Moreover, to turn those choices optimal, series of institutions would be created in order to mitigate the failure in the flow of information, which we believe is epistemic. The literature (Rilley, 2001; Fiani, 2009) has turn to aggregate these institutions into two main categories. Signaling ones are those used by the player with complete information to show other players its qualities. For example education certificates that are used by the candidate to show the employer how capable he is on doing the job. Or the certification of NGOs, used in many countries, as a form of attracting possible donors by showing them their money will be well spent. Screening institutions, on the other hand, are those used by the player with incomplete information to try to gather better results in making choices in this situation. They can be
the same ones used for signaling, but from the other perspective. The possible donor that searches for certificated NGOs would be one example. The requirement of guaranties in credit market, another. In addition, in the context of the present paper, the act of searching for reliable information about politicians that would optimize rational political choice in the elections would also be a form of screening. In this matter, as politicians tend not to voluntarily disclose enough relevant information about them – at least not in Brazilian political scene –, the job must be done by third, independent actors. This role is played usually by CSOs that act specifically on democratic screening. The natural characteristic of the third sector, as being independent from the strains of Market and State, alongside with some additional organizational practices, guarantee the legitimacy of the information delivered, and make them reliable lighthouses helping on the choice of candidates.

Third Sector has its specific logic; it is value-driven and rely heavily on communicative power, distinguishing itself from the Market and the State. It does not play with rewards and remuneration, as the first, neither with coercion and sanctions, as the second (Corry, 2010, pp. 13-14). Being non-profit but private means that they are not necessarily submitted to those kinds of interests that characterize the first and second sectors. This leaves Civil Society as a neutral observer, concerned only with its own values and interests. These characteristics make civil society the ideal actor in performing democratic screening. Its independence from those interests gives it the legitimacy to deliver that information. People will have more trust in the word of the part that has nothing to gain or to lose with its speech.

However, it would not be adequate here to refer to Civil Society as a neutral part. It is by no means neutral in the process of democratic screening. The search for information and its publication serves its own interest. People want to vote in politicians that suits their bests interests, as in other contexts people want to consume quality products. The aim is always the decision that brings them the most gain. Information is a necessity in both these contexts to allow optimal rational choice, and the words of the politician, alongside with the words of the market, are not always reliable. Exactly because of the interests in which those actors are immersed in.

That is why institutions intended to mitigate informational asymmetry must be immune to pressures and interest coming from those sectors. Third Sector, by its nature, lies “outside a system of hierarchic state control and freedom from a market-driven imperative to generate or keep surplus value” (Corry, 2010, p. 14). Not saying it will never be coopted, but these characteristics make easier the job of designing institutions that are independent from the Market and the State, and therefore able to maintain the legitimacy in presenting relevant information for the public.

Extrapolating for the global level. Global Civil Society Organizations (“GCSOs”), as they are not necessarily attached to a State, or local, environment, can be even more indifferent to political and economic pressure coming from actors that have their power restricted to those locations.
Situations such as those shown by Heurlin (Heurlin, 2010) and McDuie-Ra (2007), where traditional power structures in the local and State levels can exercise pressure over civil society actors that goes against their interests, is a minor concern for GCSOs spread by several locations and organized primarily by long distance communication.

There can be partnerships between CSOs, market actors and governments. Many kinds of organizations may find these partnerships very relevant for their strategies of development. Moreover, this is inherently a possibility in the dynamics of these relations. However, for the process of democratic screening we describe in this paper, it is very important to maintain the independence of the organization. The disclosure of information is very likely to go against the interests of certain actors, and may cause trouble for them. If there are any links of dependence, the impartiality, alongside with the legitimacy of the information presented, may be lost.

The *Movimento Voto Consciente* and its work with democratic screening: a case in Jundiaí, Brazil.

The Brazilian political scene has some peculiarities. There are 32 political parties (Brazil, 2014), all of national representation, and no one can become a candidate if not affiliated to one of them. Literature defines Brazilian political system as of proportional representation with open list and the transfer of nominal votes lost (Praça, 2005, pp. 97-98). Which means that representatives can be elected with the votes given to non-elected ones according to the list presented by the partisan or party colligation, to the Electoral Justice. This would create a situation where representatives do not know their constituency, making political parties not the best intermediary between politics and citizenry. For example, in 1994, only 3 of the 70 elected representatives for the State’s Chamber of Representatives (Assembleia Legislativa) in São Paulo were elected with votes of their own (Santos, 1999). This discrepancy would demand other kinds of action on reducing informational asymmetry on politics.

The *Movimento Voto Consciente* Jundiaí.

Some remarks on the methodology. Between April and July 2014, I accompanied the work of the CSO keeping sporadic contact with some of its members and performing interviews. Moreover, documental data was collected both by internet and with its members. The interpretative focus is the sense of the actions performed. Their values and intentions, alongside descriptive statements about their projects.
The Movement *Voto Consciente* (in English, Conscious Vote) first started in late 80’s during the constitutional debates in the transition period from dictatorship to democracy in Brazil. It started as an informal group of people that defined themselves as a civic, voluntary and unpartisan organization. Their proposal was to accompany the work of elected politicians in order to verify what they were doing. The original nucleus is located in the city of São Paulo and accompanies both the work of the Local Chamber (*Câmara de Vereadores*) and the State’s Chamber (*Assembleia Legislativa*). Nowadays several other nuclei develop similar actions in other cities, mainly in the State of São Paulo, southeast Brazil. They are highly independent from the original one, some of them even not registered as association, foundation, or other legal form, as the unit we focus on.

Located in the city of Jundiaí, countryside of São Paulo State, *Voto Consciente Jundiaí* (hereafter “Voto”) started in 2006 from a group at the Association of Industries (*CIESP*). Composed mostly by the local youth, they intended to evaluate the work of the city’s representatives in the *Câmara de Vereadores* (hereafter “Chamber”). The initial idea was to make annual reports of the legislative production and to furnish subsidies and references to promote a conscious choice of representatives. Soon they realized that only providing information was not enough. Then, they began to spread their field of action to other related areas, developing political education in the city and acting as a channel between the citizens’ interests and the city’s politicians. Next, we describe their activities in these fields.

*Actions on political information.*

The report presented in 2007 had five criteria analyzed. Participation at the Chamber daily sections, partisan fidelity, information requests made by Voto, promotion of the Executive’s accountability and projects of legislation. Regarding the projects, they made reports on who presented the proposal, its content, and on which representative voted for each project. This was necessary because these data were not actively released by the Legislative. Citizens who would like to know about this had to attend to the sections, which happened in the afternoon, while most people where still at work. Based on those criteria, the Voto evaluated the local representatives, giving them a grade accordingly. The idea was that citizens would be able to compare the grades and the criteria and use it to help them choose the candidate that better suited their own interests. However, this first report was criticized by the politicians, which argued that that grade did not represent all the aspects of their work in the Chamber and that it confused citizens by giving the impression that it was based on every aspect of their work, when in fact it was partial.

For the legislatures of 2008/2010, and 2010/2012, the methodology passed through adaptations, and Voto focused on making the reports, leaving the analysis for the citizen. In addition,
two of the criteria changed. “Partisan fidelity” and “information requests by the Voto” were both removed from the list, and instead “presence in the internet” and “presence in Legislative Study Committees” added (Voto, 2012). Even though, for that period, the Chamber did not provide the section’s official reports – they started releasing in the website from 2012. Forcing the Voto members to record each section, and from there compare the data with the unofficial reports made by the volunteers. This took tremendous work, demanding lots of time and energy, and was clearly not feasible by the normal citizen. Despite that, some concessions made in the period where the installation of a digital board showing the votes each representative made in the Chamber decisions, the votes stop being secret, and the sections where transferred to the evening, allowing more people to attend.

Apart from the representatives’ report, the Voto has also being making, since 2009, an annual report on the degree of transparency of the Chamber’s website. Initially there were 20 criteria analyzed in the website, from which 13 were present, but not in a format easy to process or for machines to read, making difficult any attempt to analyze the available information. The last report available, from 2012-2013, showed an increase in transparency, now being 17, from 20, the requirements disclosed in the website. However, the format of the information is still difficult to process by machines and unable to download, making the data public, but not properly open. The three criteria not available were (a) the reports of the Legislative Study committees, (b) the list of legislative projects approved and sanctioned by section, theme and period, (c) all the statutes regulated, by theme and period (Voto, 2014).

Actions on political education.

Regarding political education, they mainly promote speeches in the City trying to spread notions of political consciousness. As recurrent in the interviews, the sense of their action is to say that it is possible to talk about politics without partisan affiliation. Therefore, that it is possible to discuss politics and policy simply as citizens, not members of a party. This concern is made evident both in their speeches and in the material they produce. This is especially interesting in a political scene marked by a lack in legitimacy of political parties, which is due, among other matters, by issues in the electoral rules, as described above.

Their main target are teenagers, and the speeches are presented in schools alongside the teachers. Such that some of them even end up becoming part of Voto. There is a concern in approaching politics to their reality, both in the examples and in the material presented. Always trying to do so in unbiased fashion. Even though being unbiased does not mean there is no position. There
are interests behind the ideas presented, but these are made clear in their discourse. The intention is to allow citizens to pursue their interests, and to do so, there are the tools they try to provide.

*Actions as channel between the citizen’s interests and the city’s politicians.*

Alongside political information and political education there are two main projects focusing on direct participation. The Cidadonos (translation would be something like “Citizowners”) and Tribuna Livre (free tribune). This last one was a result from the first edition of Cidadonos. The proposal is to open speech time in the Chamber’s sections so that citizens can present their interests and proposals. It would work as a direct channel of communication between the legislative and population, as a form to mitigate the lack of attachment between politicians and its constituency.

*Cidadonos* was an initiative from Voto (Jundiaí) that started in 2009. They rely an older web platform used for discussions about policy. The idea was to use the available platform the make a contest of proposals for the City, as a form to motivate participation. They would collect the twelve proposals that received more support in the contest, and present them to the candidates. Then they register each candidate’s remarks on the proposals and use it to compose the material that is both used in the speeches and distributed throughout the city. Each citizen, politician and CSO can present a proposal for the context, and there are fixed quotas in the twelve final ones for each of these actors.

The first edition of the context attracted a big number of participants. About one thousand proposals were presented and about four thousand active members on the discussions, which represent about 1% of the city’s population. Despite the problems in selecting only twelve among one thousand, the winners were the most supported and thus received more legitimacy. This improved their function as a sample of the citizen’s interests, and made them directions to pressure the candidates.

To finance the material produced, which includes the content from Cidadonos, and their other activities, they rely solely on donations and crowd funding platforms. There is no attachment with companies or the government, which works as a form to keep their legitimacy as information providers. There is no physical infrastructure and all the members are volunteer. The money made with the donations were used in their projects and their accountancy is published in the website, the only actual structure of the group, supported by its members. Moreover, the projects developed do not demand heavy institutionalization, allowing Voto to keep it low. Individual voluntary participation and online organization, alongside a place for reunions, is enough to maintain the works.

*Conclusion.*
We derive from the presentation above the following hypothesis: the problem leading to the emptiness of political representation is epistemic. It relates to the natural form by which information flows in society. Full information finds its limits at the capability of human beings to apprehend and process data. We believe then that an absolute solution for the problem of uninformed players in political individual choice is not possible. However, there is a broad set of institutions that can be strengthen and have the capability of reducing the effects of informational asymmetry. Be it by increasing the amount of reliable, cheap and unbiased information – (global) civil society action, for example. Be it by increasing the data processing capability of individuals – education, data processing mechanisms etc. Be it by emulating the effects of full information political choice – legal institutions, activism, pressure groups, etc. In this context, (global) civil society action would be extremely relevant. Our case shows that attempts in this sense can be very profitable for citizenship. This would be due both to its private, thus unattached to the machinery of the State and institutionalized politics, and non-profitable, thus unable to be greatly influenced by the market. Which allows these CSOs value driven democratic action not related with the pursuit of profit. In this sense, it also shows to be worth analyzing both legislation and policy designed to guarantee that civil society organizations can perform this type of activity without being forced out of work by state or market pressure.

Another conclusion albeit more distant can be drown from the model. As the problem of informational asymmetry in political representation shows itself to be epistemic, then it would justify other forms of political participation and political empowerment of citizens. Mechanisms such as participative budget, national conferences, public audiences and other kinds of democratic empowerment would also gain legitimacy as a form of reducing it or its effects.

References


[Accessed 16 08 2014].


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1 “It has been seen that the good cars may be driven out of the market by the lemons. But in a more continuous case with different grades of goods, even worse pathologies can exist. For it is quite possible to have the bad driving out the not-so-bad driving out the medium driving out the not-so-good driving out the good in such a sequence of events that no market exists at all”. “The purchaser’s problem, of course, is to identify quality. The presence of people in the market who are willing to offer inferior goods tends to drive the market out of existence… It is this possibility that represents the
major costs of dishonesty – for dishonest dealings tend to drive honest dealings out of the market” (AKERLOF, 1970; 490; 495).

ii We chose to write “(global) civil society”, with the parenthesis, to represent the validity of the statements both to the local and global levels. Of course there are differences, but as we are deriving statements to the global level basically from observations at the local level, we found interesting to take this care and make it explicit.

iii “This process of inferring the policy preferences of a candidate from demographic characteristics is the political equivalent of screening job applicants by reading their résumé instead of by evaluating their work, which would take more time and effort” (POPKIN, 1993; p. 28).

iv “Characteristics such as a candidate’s race, ethnicity, religion, gender and local ties … are important cues because the voter observes the relationship between these traits and real-life behavior as part of the voter’s daily experience” (POPKIN, 1993; p. 28).

v Also known as retrospective voting, when voters are assumed only having to know if their conditions became better or worst under the political regime. The main claim here is that “citizens know enough to judge trajectories from the recent past even if they cannot make good decisions about the near future” (HOCHSCHILD, 2010).

vi “The empirical analysis indicates that the behavior both of individual voters and of the electorate as a whole deviates in significant and politically consequential ways from the projected behavior of a “fully informed” electorate” (BARTELS, 1996; p. 195).

vii “Les lois qu’elle [la société] édicte, et qui maintiennent l’ordre social, ressemblent d’ailleurs par certaines côtés aux lois de la nature. Je veux bien que la difference soit radicale aux yeux du philosophe. Autre chose, dit-il, est la loi qui constate, autre chose celle qui ordonne” (BERGSON, 1922; pp 7-8).