

The "Strategy of God" in the 2014 presidential election campaign in El Salvador, Central America.

By Luis Eduardo Aguilar Vásquez

Professor of the Department of Sociology and Political Science

Universidad Centroamericana "José Simeón Cañas". El Salvador

Key words: Sociology of Religion, Religious Sociology, Politology of Religion, Elections, El Salvador

During the election campaign the different political parties and their candidates, seeking to gain the support of different social groups using their religious concerns to be transformed into votes in the next presidential election. This resource is quite important Salvadoran democracy where, according to University Public Opinion Institute- IUDOP, in its report 122 "Survey on religion for Salvadorans" suggests that only 8% of total Salvadorans do not profess any religion (p. 16). The survey shows that currently most of the population is considered Christian, and it could be important because of the influence that religious beliefs may have in the speeches of presidential candidates in order to attract votes .

According to David O'Connell in his book "God wills it: Presidents and the political use of religion" (2012), religious arguments in the campaign are something that most candidates and presidents use in modern democracies. One explanation for this it may be the following hypothesis: When a candidate uses language or religious image as a means of argument in politics is a strategic choice, as it has calculated that with this particular type of argument states that God is on their side and that God is not neutral, and that this can improve your chances of getting what you want, this is what may be happening in this election.

These basic forms of religious rhetoric used in election campaigns by candidates for president are varied and include: Quoting the Bible, take advantage of the proximity of the celebration of religious holidays (including Christmas, Easter, the patrimonial festivities and others), participate and promote religious rituals and practices such as praying and divine worships, discuss the importance of certain values such as justice, mercy, forgiveness, brotherhood, respect for life and others. All these forms through which religious rhetoric expressed emphasize some moral issues are addressed in a language that the faithful will understand. However, according to David O'Connell religious rhetoric is not used in excess, as it may prove a double-edged sword, and can generate a feeling of rejection rather than acceptance. Put another way, increased use of religious elements in the speeches not a sign of greater acceptance by message recipients. In the social network

The "Strategy of God" in the 2014 presidential election campaign in El Salvador, Central America.

twitter presidential candidates FMLN Salvador Sanchez Ceren, Elias Antonio Saca of Movimiento UNIDAD and Norman Quijano ARENA religious elements have been used in any of your messages:

- Norman Quijano (twitter 10/21/2013): "I take this pledge with determination, courage, with faith in God, and to triumph in the first round of 2014"
- Tony Saca (twitter 09/07/2013): "When you do things away from God, there is no prosperity in our nation."
- Sanchez Ceren (09/22/2013): "With the blessing of the creator we are receiving this rain today in # St Vincent to be fulfilled by power and victory".

In general, the authors claim that "God strategy " has worked better for the rulers of conservative parties, although it should be noted that on occasion the reformers also have tried to make use of it. There are questions that can be used to further analyze this phenomenon, for example: How each candidate use religious arguments to convince voters want? How far is compelling the use of religious elements of the candidates to influence the vote of the citizens? These questions can be answered as the campaign expires and then see effective to obtain support to each of the candidates.

References:

- O'Connell, D. (2012). "God Wills It: Presidents and the Political Use of Religion" (Doctoral dissertation, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY).
- IUDOP. (2009). "Encuesta sobre la religión para los y las salvadoreños" Inform #122 Recovered from: <http://www.uca.edu.sv/publica/iudop/Web/2009/informe122.pdf>

Twitter:

Quijano, Norman- "Presidential candidate from Political Party Alianza Republicana Nacionalista ARENA 2014-2019" @norman_quijano

Sánchez Cerén; Salvador "Presidential candidate from Political Party Frente Farabundo Martí para la liberación Nacional FMLN 2014-2019" @sanchezceren

The "Strategy of God" in the 2014 presidential election campaign in El Salvador, Central America.

Saca, Antonio "Presidential candidate from Political Party Movimiento UNIDAD
2014-2019" @tonysacaoficial