THE CHILEAN TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY
AND THE DEMOBILIZATION AND EXCLUSION OF
THE POPULAR SECTORS

by

SUSAN SPENCE, B.A.

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in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

Department of Political Science

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POLITICAL SCIENCE - GENERAL
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THE HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

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Architecture	0729
Art History	0377
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Dance	0378
Fine Arts	0357
Interpersonal Science	0723
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Mass Communication	0708
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EDUCATION	
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Adult and Continuing	0514
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Finance	0577
Guidance and Counseling	0519
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Language and Literature	0579
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Philosophy of	0523
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Religion	0427
Science	0714
Sociology	0423
Social Sciences	0424
Sociology of	0440
Special	0429
Teacher Training	0430
Technology	0710
Tests and Measurements	0288
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LANGUAGE, LITERATURE AND LINGUISTICS	
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General	0409
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Modern	0291
Older	0401
Classical	0294
Comparative	0295
Medieval	0297
Modern	0298
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Asian	0305
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Canadian (French)	0303
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PHILOSOPHY, RELIGION AND THEOLOGY	
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SOCIAL SCIENCES	
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Political Science	0326
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Commerce-Science	0305
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THE SCIENCES AND ENGINEERING

BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES	
Agriculture	0473
General	0285
Animal Culture and	0475
Arabic	0474
Plant Science and	0476
Technology	0339
Forest and Wildlife	0478
Plant Culture	0479
Plant Pathology	0480
Plant Physiology	0481
Range Management	0277
Wood Technology	0744
Earth Sciences	
General	0304
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The undersigned hereby recommend to
the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
acceptance of the thesis,

**THE CHILEAN TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY AND THE
DEMOBILIZATION AND EXCLUSION OF THE POPULAR SECTOR**

submitted by
Susan Spence, B.A.
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Chair, Department of Political Science

Thesis Supervisor

Carleton University
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ABSTRACT

The transitions from authoritarian rule which swept Latin American throughout the 1980s were characterized by high levels of mass collective action demanding the immediate withdrawal of the authoritarian regime. The popular sectors often constituted the core of the mass mobilization movement despite being primary targets for repression. My thesis addresses a paradox: why is it that the popular sectors are excluded by new democratic governments despite the fact that they were the crucial actors in bringing about the conditions which initiated a transition to democracy? Drawing on the insights derived from transitions theorists I explore the way the requirements of mutual security among elites in a process of moving from authoritarianism to democracy lead to the demobilization of mass actors in cases where transitions proceed through negotiations among elites. However, I argue that the terms of these negotiations are guided by an important socio-economic logic in addition to a political logic. That is, the elites who benefited from the changes brought about by authoritarian rule are unlikely to support a regime change unless they can obtain guarantees from the democratic opposition that their interests will not be threatened. I illustrate this argument by discussing the transition to democracy in Chile, where the achievement of democracy, characterized by an increase in political equality, came at the price of maintaining prevailing social and economic inequalities, engendered by the strict adherence to an open, free-market socio-economic model. Consequently, transitional democratic governments do not work at creating channels for the participation and representation of the popular sectors, whose demands for social and economic equality would undermine the terms of the bargain through which democracy was attained.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AD	<i>Alianza Democrática</i> (Democratic Alliance)
CPC	<i>Confederación de la Producción y el Comercio</i> (Confederation of Production and Commerce)
CTC	<i>Confederación de Trabajadores del Cobre</i> (Confederation of Copper Workers)
CUP	<i>Comando Unitario de Pobladores</i> (Unitary Congress of Pobladores)
CUT	<i>Central Unitaria de Trabajadores</i> (Central Union of Workers)
DOS	<i>División de Organizaciones Sociales</i> (Division of Social Organizations)
FOSIS	<i>Fondo de la Solidaridad e Inversión Sociales</i> (Fund for Solidarity and Social Investment)
FPMR	<i>Frente Patriótico Manuel Rodríguez</i> (Manuel Rodríguez Patriotic Front)
MDP	<i>Movimiento Democrático Popular</i> (Popular Democratic Movement)
MEMCH-83	<i>Movimiento Por Emancipación de la Mujer 1983</i> (Movement for the Emancipation of Women 1983)
MIDEPLAN	<i>Ministerio de Planificación y Cooperación</i> (Ministry of Planning and Cooperation)
MIR	<i>Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionario</i> (Movement of the Revolutionary Left)
PC	<i>Partido Comunista</i> (Communist Party)
PDC	<i>Partido Demócrata Cristiano</i> (Christian Democratic Party)
PPD	<i>Partido Por Democracia</i> (Party For Democracy)
PS	<i>Partido Socialista</i> (Socialist Party)
RN	<i>Renovación Nacional</i> (National Renovation Party)
SERNAM	<i>Servicio Nacional de la Mujer</i> (National Women's Bureau)
SNA	<i>Sociedad Nacional de Agricultura</i>

SOFOFA	(National Agricultural Society) <i>Sociedad de Fomento Fabril</i> (Society for Industrial Development)
UDI	<i>Unión Democrática Independiente</i> (Independent Democratic Union)

INTRODUCTION

There is nothing more difficult to execute, more dubious of success, nor more dangerous to administer than to introduce a new system of things: for he who introduces it has all those who profit from the old system as his enemies and he has only lukewarm allies in all those who might profit from the new system.¹

Machiavelli's warning encapsulates the key difficulties encountered by states and societies presently undergoing transitions to "a new system of things"- that is, a regime change from authoritarian to democratic governance. Initially, the recent phenomenon of transitions from authoritarianism generated widespread optimism and even claims that we had reached the "end of history" marked by a new era in which all societies are governed according to liberal democratic principles.² More recent accounts, however, have pointed to the instability and crises which plague many of the transitional democracies as well as the failure of many in meeting some of the key criteria for liberal democratic status.

One of the conditions which gave rise to the initial optimism was the resurgence of popular activity as grassroots movements and other elements within

¹ Niccolò Machiavelli quoted by Phillippe C. Schmitter in "Transitology: The Science or Art of Democratization," *The Consolidation of Democracy in Latin America*, edited by Joseph S. Tulchin with Bernice Romero, (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1995), 11.

² Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*, (New York: Avon Books, 1992).

civil society mobilized in opposition to the dictatorships. This was an important development in the context of Latin American authoritarianism because most of these regimes were dedicated to destroying the capacity for the popular sectors to engage in collective action. This was especially true in the Southern Cone dictatorships where repression of organized labour and urban shantytown populations was most severe. Consequently, the ability of the popular sectors to resist the negative impact of the neoliberal restructuring initiated by the military regimes was significantly diminished. The standard of living for most members of the popular sectors deteriorated greatly under authoritarian rule.³ Hence, when these groups seemed to regain their capacity for collective action and the popular sectors led the protest movements that initiated processes of transition, prospects appeared positive that these transitions would result in fully inclusive democracies. This has not been the case, however. In most instances where popular sector mobilization played a significant role in demonstrating the illegitimacy of the authoritarian regime, the dynamics of a transition to democracy led to the

³ In Philip Oxhorn's words the term "popular sectors" refers to "the 'disadvantaged' groups in highly segmented, unequal societies." It is a much broader term than "class," and an important characteristic of the popular sectors is their diversity and heterogeneity. In addition to the working class, the popular sectors include those who work in the informal sector, the unemployed, and the youth and women inhabiting urban shantytowns. *Organizing Civil Society: The Popular Sectors and the Struggle for Democracy in Chile*, (University Park: Pennsylvania State UP, 1995), 299-300.

exclusion, rather than the full incorporation, of the popular sectors.

This is, broadly speaking, the issue which I will address in this thesis. My more specific question is why the popular sectors, whose involvement was so critical in the pre-transition period, have been excluded in post-transition politics. Popular sector exclusion exists in many of the new democracies to the extent that channels for their participation and representation in the formal political system are generally absent, and the interests of the popular sectors tend to be continually subordinated to the interests of the middle and dominant sectors. In order to determine the causes for popular sector exclusion my thesis will first analyze the dynamics of transitions and the way they generally favour elite over mass actors. My second task will be to examine the manner in which those who benefited from a change in power relations during the preceding authoritarian period are able to exert pressure over the transition with the goal of maintaining their privileges. The main argument throughout my work is that where a regime change is accomplished through negotiations, achieving the initial transition to democracy is the result of a trade-off: democratic transitions, characterized by an increase in political equality for all members of society, can only be realized once political elites agree to maintain a particular set of social and economic relations that perpetuate unequal relations in the socio-economic sphere. The terms of this bargain compel new democratic governments to exclude the popular sectors by restricting, rather than

expanding or creating channels through which members of the popular sectors can participate and articulate demands for greater equality.

When Robert Dahl asked the question of how a closed regime could be transformed into a competitive regime he gave great weight to the issue of mutual security among elites.⁴ This problem lies at the core of processes of regime change. That is, an authoritarian regime and the elites that support it are unlikely to agree to a regime change unless they are reasonably certain that such a change will not seriously threaten their interests. Hence, transition theorists such as Guillermo O'Donnell and Phillipe Schmitter pay much attention to the requirement of "pacts" among elites which allow conditions of mutual security to be achieved.⁵ It is within these agreements that the elites who profited under the authoritarian regime are able to obtain guarantees from those elites who want democracy. Herein is the trade-off which allows a regime change to occur.

Even before a situation is reached in which elites negotiate the terms of a transition we might ask what conditions cause an authoritarian regime to become vulnerable. However, given that regime changes have occurred amidst widely

⁴ Robert Dahl, *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*, (New Haven: Yale UP, 1971).

⁵ Guillermo O'Donnell and Phillipe Schmitter, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies*, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins UP, 1986).

varying situations it is very difficult to pinpoint the causes of authoritarian regime failure. O'Donnell and Schmitter point out that the "Achilles' heel" of all dictatorships is the problem of legitimacy.⁶ This is especially relevant in the Latin American cases where the authoritarian regimes seized power from democratic governments and justified their rule by appealing to the need to restore order, reduce societal polarization and conflict, and restore economic growth. Thus, they were not really meant to be permanent, but rather, interim regimes restoring the necessary conditions for an eventual return to competitive politics. However, those who have a monopoly over power rarely give it up willingly and in most cases, the return of democracy was possible only after wide-scale societal mobilization emerged in opposition to the authoritarian regime's continuation in power. In most cases, it was the popular sectors who contributed most heavily to the mobilization of opposition.

It is exceedingly difficult for authoritarian elites to feel secure about a regime change when confronted by a highly mobilized society, especially one in which the presence of disadvantaged groups, such as the popular sectors, is at the forefront of the opposition. It was, after all, the increased mobilization of the popular sectors which threatened capitalist elites and the middle classes and lent

⁶ *Ibid.*, 15.

their support in the "coup coalitions" of the 1960s and 1970s. Therefore, in order for a regime change to be successfully carried out, political elites favouring democracy must be able to convince protesters to cease engaging in actions which are threatening to outgoing elites. Whereas the early periods signaling the possibility of a transition are marked by mobilization "from below," the actual process of moving from an authoritarian regime to a democratic one is largely orchestrated "from above". Once political elites assume primacy in the process, a trend towards a demobilization of society normally begins. As O'Donnell and Schmitter observe, "political parties, whether revived or emergent...show themselves to be not only, or not so much, agents of mobilization as instruments of social and political control."⁷ This control is crucial in order to provide conditions of mutual security among elites. In this way, the popular sectors who often initiate protest are excluded from the process of negotiating a regime change.

Popular sector exclusion after a regime change emerges out of the "pacts" which allowed for mutual security among elites. Additionally, the changes to the socio-economic structures which occurred during authoritarian rule constrain new democratic leaders in their attempt to initiate political and social reforms which could lead to the incorporation of the popular sectors. Most importantly, those

⁷ *Ibid.*, 58.

capitalist elites that benefited from the changes to the country's social and economic structure are unlikely to support the pro-democratic elites pressing for a regime change unless there are guarantees in place for the maintenance of the socio-economic model. The constraints on new democratic regimes are even more significant in cases like Chile, where the years preceding a transition were characterized by significant economic growth benefiting not only the dominant elites, but large segments of the middle class as well. This means that the potential for new democratic governments to address the social and economic inequality which often accompany neoliberal economic reform is limited by the very need to maintain the model. Consequently, the interests of the popular sectors are subordinated to those of the middle classes and dominant elites.

The problems posed in new democracies by the simultaneous attempts to craft democratic institutions while remaining committed to a free-market model emerge out of the fear of provoking instability. There is, therefore, an economic logic in addition to the political logic which surrounds processes of transition. In many cases both political elites as well as members of society recall the instability created by the populist democracies that preceded (and largely gave rise to) the authoritarian regimes. Thus it is not surprising that the desire to avoid populist responses to problems of poverty and inequality is widespread. The problem, however, is that even slight deviations from free-market principles are labeled

populist and therefore threaten to bring about instability and create a perception of threat on the part of capitalist elites. This is reinforced by the crises initiated by the "heterodox" policies adopted in transitional democracies such as Peru and Argentina. These failures have strengthened the present commitment to orthodox, neoliberal development models. The overarching goal for the new democracies in Latin America has become economic stability and growth as dictated by strict adherence to free-market principles. This creates tensions with the simultaneous attempt to bring about democratization because the capacity for the new democratic governments to be responsive to the needs of the popular sectors is undermined by their fear of provoking instability. Consequently, transitional governments attempt to limit the potential for disadvantaged social groups to articulate demands that elites consider to be destabilizing.

In Chapter 1 my argument is further elaborated through a discussion of the dominant theories of transitions to democracy. While the body of literature on transitions, initially inspired by O'Donnell and Schmitter's four-volume study- *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule*- is taken as my starting point and informs the basis of my understanding of transition processes, I draw out some of the main shortcomings which have become dominant in the contemporary literature. In brief, contemporary accounts of democratization, emerging out of transition experiences in which elite actors played the primary role amidst backdrops of

rapid change and contingency, have tended to view democratization as a purely political process and have disassociated the public realm from socio-economic structures, and separated elites from mass actors. Their focus on the political process and the political logic which influences transitions obscures the way in which an economic logic functions to exclude the popular sectors. This focus is problematic primarily because it misses the significance of popular sector exclusion after regime changes have taken place, and mistakes the principal threat to democracy as being primarily a political one rather than emphasizing the nature of the connections between the economic and political realms. The dominant preoccupation with a highly circumscribed political realm in which elite actors figure prominently cannot explain the way transitions so often result in popular sector exclusion. Most importantly, the separation of the political realm from the inequalities in the social and economic realms is problematic because it is this very condition which tends to produce popular sector exclusion.

In Chapters 2 and 3 my argument is illustrated by analyzing the transition to democracy in Chile and the subsequent democratic regime. Chile is a useful case study because popular sector mobilization was critical in initiating the *apertura* (opening). In the midst of the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression, the copper workers' union called for a day of national protest which ignited a protest movement that engulfed the entire country. Popular sector protests

continued for three years in the face of an intransigent dictatorship. The movement did, however, cause General Augusto Pinochet to begin to seek some civilian allies and allow a certain degree of liberalization by way of allowing the resurgence of political parties. Chapter 2 details the dynamics of the process of transition and illustrates the way a demobilizing logic resulted in the exclusion of mass actors from the process.

In Chapter 3 I show why popular sector exclusion has been maintained after a transition to democracy had been secured. The failure of two successive centre-left governments to promote popular sector interests demands our attention because both President Patricio Aylwin and his successor, President Eduardo Frei, have declared their commitment to redressing the "social debt" of sixteen years of harsh military rule. The incidence of poverty doubled during the dictatorship and was at its highest point during the economic crisis of the early 1980s. The number of Chileans living in poverty has been steadily declining since the mid-1980s when the economy entered a period of sustained growth.⁸ In 1987, 38.1 percent of Chileans lived in poverty. By 1990 that number had been reduced to 34.6 percent

⁸ David Hojman, "Poverty and Inequality in Chile: Are Democratic Politics and Neoliberal Economics Good For You?" *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 38, 2/3 (Summer/Fall 1996), 74. Hojman writes that average annual economic growth since 1985 has been around 6 percent.

and by 1992 the number had fallen to 27.7 percent.⁹ However, David Hojman explains that declining rates of poverty have more to do with falling unemployment and an appreciating peso than government social policy. Additionally, while poverty is being steadily reduced as the economy continues to grow, the neoliberal model is producing increased inequality and social policy has not yet been directed at correcting such inequality through redistributive mechanisms.¹⁰

I argue that the fear of provoking instability, which largely derives from the threat that authoritarian and capitalist- both domestic and international- elites are perceived to represent, led President Aylwin, leader of the *Concertación* coalition, to pursue extremely moderate policies with the result that the popular sectors in Chile continue to be economically and socially marginalized. Their political marginalization results from the government's fear of appearing fiscally irresponsible and hence not wanting to be seen as responding to popular sector concerns of persistent social and economic inequality. In Chile, an economic logic limiting popular participation is intricately linked to a political logic emerging out of the many constraints outgoing elites succeeded in placing on the incoming democratic government.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 77.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 86.

Chapter 3 also addresses some of the mechanisms which tend to reinforce popular sector exclusion. Most importantly, the types of collective action which members of the popular sectors normally employ, such as strikes, demonstrations, and land seizures, are condemned by the governing *Concertación* as being destabilizing. Thus, we see that the demobilizing logic of the transition has been carried over into the new democratic regime. Given that the new government is not creating alternative channels through which the popular sectors can participate, participation for members of the popular sectors is largely limited to electoral mechanisms. A further problem for the popular sectors is that the parties which normally promoted their interests, the Socialists (PS) and the Christian Democrats (PDC)- the two largest parties in the *Concertación*- have significantly moderated their platforms in order to appeal to the broadest possible electorate as well as to avoid provoking concern among capitalist elites. The changing nature of the political party system is also discussed in Chapter 3 and its contribution to reinforcing popular sector exclusion is demonstrated.

I conclude the thesis in Chapter 4 by drawing out some preliminary implications of popular sector exclusion for the future of democracy in Latin America. Most importantly, the danger lies in the growing apathy and indifference to democracy which can be detected in many of the transitional regimes that have failed to allow for the participation and incorporation of the popular sectors. This

is highly problematic given that many of the hopes generated for the future of liberal democracy in developing countries were premised on the claim that there was a new found consensus over the value and legitimacy of democracy as a way of organizing society. Thus, the many optimistic accounts citing an increase in democratic political cultures as contributing to the global resurgence of democracy may be undermined by the growing apathy and disenchantment with democracy. If this is the case then the potential for these new democracies to become fully consolidated liberal democracies is compromised by the lack of support that democratic principles can muster. In other words, there will be fewer defenders of democracy within society and if this trend continues, support for undemocratic solutions to long-standing problems in Latin American societies may begin to gain support.

In order to develop my theoretical framework I draw most heavily on the growing body of literature on democratic transitions led by O'Donnell and Schmitter's work and further developed in O'Donnell, Mainwaring, and Valenzuela's work on democratic consolidation. My critique of this approach is informed by feminist scholars such as Verónica Schild and Sonia E. Alvarez, along with other authors, such as Philip D. Oxhorn and David Lehmann, who look to civil society rather than elites to discover the potential for further democratization. For the analysis of the Chilean transition and popular sector exclusion in post-

transition politics I have relied primarily on secondary sources and authors who have conducted detailed studies of popular sector organizations.

Until this point I have spoken in rather general terms about democracy, democratization, regime change, and transitions. Before going any further it is important to discuss the various distinctions and meanings of these terms. Philippe Schmitter and Terry Lynn Karl define a *regime* as

an ensemble of patterns that determines the methods of access to the principal public offices; the characteristics of the actors admitted to or excluded from such access; the strategies that actors may use to gain access; and the rules that are followed in the making of publicly binding decisions.¹¹

Thus, a regime change has occurred when these patterns are fundamentally altered, as they are, for example, in moving from an authoritarian regime to a democracy. Regime changes may also be in the reverse direction- from a democracy to an authoritarian regime. In this work, I take "transition" to be roughly synonymous with regime change and employ the terms interchangeably. However, the processes under examination in this thesis involve *two* transitions. Thus, I am using O'Donnell's distinction between two different kinds of transition: "[t]he first is the transition from the previous authoritarian regime to the installation of a democratic government. The second transition is from this government to the

¹¹ Phillippe Schmitter and Terry Lynn Karl, "What Democracy Is...and Is Not," *The Global Resurgence of Democracy*, edited by Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins UP, 1993), 40.

consolidation of democracy.”¹² This is an important distinction because the two transitions are marked by different dynamics. Scott Mainwaring, Guillermo O'Donnell, and J. Samuel Valenzuela, in their introduction to a volume on democratic consolidation, explain that a key difference between a consolidated as opposed to transitional democracy is that in a consolidated democracy, democratic procedures for determining outcomes are taken for granted. In contrast,

the elected governments of transitional democracies operate in a political environment in which democratic continuity is still uncertain. They face actors who are unwilling to submit fully to democratic rules of the game and who can use their access to state or other resources to issue credible threats of destabilization and thereby block policy initiatives.¹³

It is, nonetheless, a difficult task to determine with precision when the second transition has ended. The first transition- from authoritarian rule- is easy enough to distinguish. That is, once the authoritarian regime has conceded a transfer of power, and a new regime is installed in a competitive process, then the first transition has been completed. To determine when a new regime has been consolidated is much more difficult. On a general level, however, there is at least one crucial indicator for democratic consolidation: the overcoming of the

¹² Guillermo O'Donnell, “Transitions, Continuities, and Paradoxes,” *Issues in Democratic Consolidation*, edited by Guillermo O'Donnell, Scott Mainwaring, and J.S. Valenzuela, 18.

¹³ Mainwaring, O'Donnell, and Valenzuela, “Introduction,” *Issues in Democratic Consolidation*, edited by Mainwaring, O'Donnell, and Valenzuela (Indiana: Notre Dame UP, 1992), 3.

transitional "pacts" which allowed for the first transition to be brought about. Consolidation must encompass this condition because these pacts were often premised on distorting the popular will, for example, through over-representing certain sectors in the electoral process, and by guaranteeing certain powers for authoritarian or capitalist elites who fear that a return to democracy would threaten their interests. Thus, the goals of the second transition often include attempts at overcoming these conditions and thereby allowing policy outcomes to be determined by procedures which are more consistent with democracy.

A final distinction I wish to make is between "democratization" and transitions or regime changes. The former term is, in my view, much more encompassing than merely a change in regime- even a transition to democracy. Dietrich Rueschemeyer, Evelyne Huber Stephens, and John Stephens observe that democracy, "is a rather counterintuitive state of affairs, one in which the disadvantaged many, have, as citizens, a real voice in the collective decision-making of politics."¹⁴ In a democratic regime, the requirement that all citizens possess formal equality means that, in principle, political power is more or less equally distributed in democracies. However, the capacity for all citizens to

¹⁴ Dietrich Rueschemeyer, Evelyne Huber Stephens, and John D. Stephens, *Capitalist Development and Democracy*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 41.

exercise their political power is certainly not equal given the widely varying distortions in social and economic power which exist in most democracies and which can undermine citizens' ability to participate fully in the political realm. Thus, *democratization* is a process in which all citizens can progressively realize the goal of exercising influence in the public sphere and thereby, over their collective future. A transition to democracy is certainly the beginning of a larger process of democratization but it does not complete the process. A democratic regime, therefore, can be further democratized as it continually aims to improve citizens' capacity to participate and articulate their interests.

CHAPTER 1

Contemporary Theories of Democratization and the Limits of “Polyarchy”

Many of the conditions in the new democracies that account for the exclusion of the popular sectors remain underanalyzed because of the nature of the assumptions embedded within the contemporary literature on regime transitions. The literature is characterized by several self-conscious methodological commitments. The first has to do with the very scope of the meaning of democracy. Contemporary theorists by and large explicitly assert their usage of Robert Dahl’s rather limited concept of “polyarchy”. The second related methodological feature dominant in the literature on transitions is the analytic separation of the political realm from the social and economic structures in which politics are practiced. Within many analyses of transitions the principal threat to democracy is seen as political instability and the threat of authoritarian reversions. Finally, the preoccupation of most analysts of transitions is with elites as the primary actors that influence and shape the process of regime change. Transitions and the consolidation of new regimes are hence analyzed in a “top-down” manner.

In this chapter I will explore the implications of these three tendencies and in so doing, set out the key components of my own approach. It is my contention that the focus on formal democracy in a sharply circumscribed realm of politics in

which elites are the primary actors leads to a paradox: precisely when more and more citizens are living under regimes characterized as “democratic,” and there appears to be an emerging consensus that democracy is of intrinsic value as an end in itself, the scope and content of democracy is becoming emptied of much that renders it desirable in the first place. Because I am concerned with a broader process of “democratization” and view transitions to democracy as merely the beginning of this process, my approach pays greater attention to the connections between the political realm and socio-economic conditions. I emphasize the way an economic logic, rather than merely a political logic, operates in such a way as to constrain new democratic governments in their capacity to incorporate the popular sectors. Dominant approaches that focus exclusively on the political threats to democracy fail to apprehend the significance of the economic logic at work in new democracies. It is, in my view, the prevailing conditions in the social and economic spheres which limit the scope and content of democracy, especially in transitional regimes where the quest for stability becomes paramount.

My argument in this chapter is that the limited procedural definition of democracy borrowed from Dahl does not adequately address problems of participation and representation. The focus on the political realm as distinct from historical and structural variables ignores the way power relations (and inequalities) are created and reproduced in such a way as to undermine the

democratization of the political realm, especially in highly unequal societies. Furthermore, separating the political realm from prevailing economic conditions leads to a belief that the main threat to democracy is authoritarian reversal, i.e., the emergence of another coup coalition. The significance of the threat emerging from the economic realm and capitalist elites is therefore downplayed or entirely overlooked. Finally, a focus on democratization "from above" misses the important and complex interaction between elites and mass actors within society. Furthermore, it reinforces a very limited conception of democracy by ignoring the importance of the role played by civil society in democratization. In failing to analyze the potential contribution of civil society, the dominant approach also misses the significance of the way the civil society itself is organized. Most importantly, feminist critics of the dominant approach have pointed to the problems with being blind to the role gender plays in the emergence of organizations in civil society and their potential to play a role in further democratization.

Taken together these shortcomings are problematic for theory-building. They are especially inadequate for addressing the issue of popular sector exclusion in new democracies, because, as I argue, this exclusion derives primarily from the prevailing conditions in the socio-economic sphere. The approach that I take in this thesis focuses on the connections between the political realm and socio-

economic conditions. I consider the primary threat to democracy to be the threat that capitalist elites- both domestic and international- are perceived by new democratic governments to represent. Therefore, it is not merely the threat of a renewed military coup that causes political elites to limit the potential for the popular sectors to participate, but rather, the fear that being responsive to the needs of disadvantaged groups would be viewed by capitalist elites as a threat to their interests. The desire for stability in new democracies is connected to an economic, rather than narrowly political, logic. Furthermore, this economic logic must be connected to prevailing conditions in the international realm. The consensus among the hegemonic powers and the key international institutions in the present context is not merely that liberal democracy is the most desirable regime type, but that a neoliberal and outward-oriented economic model is the proper means for achieving economic growth and the consolidation of democracy.

My framework for analyzing democratization also takes a broader view of the meaning of democracy because the continued exclusion of the popular sectors is not visible from a theoretical perspective which limits the scope of democracy to procedures of competition among elites and reduces the meaning of participation to legitimizing elites through electoral mechanisms. Moreover, if popular sector exclusion is made invisible by the limited conception of democracy dominant in the literature today, some of the most serious threats to the future of democracy in

Latin America are also rendered invisible. Analysts will continue to be preoccupied with achieving consensus among elites without recognizing the dangers posed by the growing distances between elites and the masses. These distances, and the lack of channels for the participation of many groups within civil society, may ultimately lead to the erosion, rather than the consolidation, of democracy in the region.

The Meaning of Democracy

Robert Dahl's "Polyarchy"

The debt that contemporary analysts of regime transition owe to Robert Dahl's *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition* is quite extensive although most authors only acknowledge this debt when defining democracy according to Dahl's concept of "polyarchy".¹ Dahl makes an important distinction between democracy and polyarchy. The former term, for Dahl, resembles an "ideal" to which states and societies have yet to approximate.

I should like to reserve the term democracy for a political system one of the

¹ Robert Dahl, *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*.

characteristics of which is the quality of being completely or almost completely responsive to all its citizens....As a hypothetical system, one end of a scale, or a limiting state of affairs, it can...serve as a basis for estimating the degree to which various systems approach this theoretical limit.²

In contrast to this "ideal," polyarchies have empirical referents:

Polyarchies, then, may thought of as relatively (but incompletely) democratized regimes, or, to put it another way, polyarchies are regimes that have been substantially popularized and liberalized, that is, highly inclusive and extensively open to public contestation.³

This distinction is important for the way it delimits the scope and content of democratic criteria. Dahl made the distinction because he was somewhat more skeptical than most of his contemporaries concerning the prospects for democratization in the developing world. However, recent transition theorists seem to favour Dahl's approach because it limits the focus to the political realm and concentrates on political variables.

An even more critical distinction found in Dahl's work than the difference between democracy and polyarchy is the distinction between two dimensions of democratization: competition and participation.⁴ The former is concerned with the process by which a public opposition emerges within a formerly closed or non-competitive regime. This may occur independently of the second process, which has to do with the proportion of the population that is included (and can thus

² *Ibid.*, 2.

³ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 4.

participate) in the political process. Democratization, therefore, is a process in which *both* the competitive aspect and the inclusionary and participatory elements are progressively realized. Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe Schmitter, in their *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies*, borrow this framework and make a distinction between liberalization (what Dahl calls competition or opposition) and democratization (what Dahl calls participation or inclusion). O'Donnell and Schmitter say that liberalization, a process defined by an increase in the tolerance of opposition activities and the beginning of the (re)extension of civil and political rights to citizens, normally precedes a process of democratization, characterized by the holding of elections and the expansion of institutions guided by the principle of citizenship as well the expansion of the portion of the population which can exercise citizenship rights.⁵

It is important to draw out the implications of appealing to Dahl's limited notion of polyarchy. Because it stops short of encompassing the provision of welfare for its citizens, it may be seen as a procedural rather than substantive concept. However, Dahl only alludes to this distinction in his brief mention of the three "waves" of democratization. It is in the third "wave" that the

⁵ O'Donnell and Schmitter, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies*, 6-8.

democratization process goes beyond polyarchy and at least implies a more substantive element. In the end, Dahl is somewhat ambiguous about this distinction and does not develop it very much. The contemporary analysts of transitions who appeal to Dahl's terminology are, in contrast, quite explicit that in employing the term polyarchy they equate democracy with formal or procedural aspects rather than substantive or material outcomes. Guillermo O'Donnell writes,

The democracy to which I refer is political democracy (or polyarchy, according to the definition of Robert Dahl), which may coexist with varying degrees of democratization in the economic, social, and cultural spheres.⁶

J.S. Valenzuela also advances a formal and explicitly "minimalist" concept of democracy which is "based on an admittedly narrow notion of citizenship and formal legal and political equality, rather than on a more comprehensive conception of equality".⁷ Terry Lynn Karl also adopts the "procedural minimum" definition of democracy, only adding the requirement of "civilian control over the military" to Dahl's requirements of competition and participation.⁸ Scott Mainwaring observes that "procedural definitions now dominate the scholarly

⁶ Guillermo O'Donnell, "Transitions, Continuities, and Paradoxes," *Issues in Democratic Consolidation*, 18.

⁷ J.S. Valenzuela, "Democratic Consolidation in Post-Transitional Settings," *Issues in Democratic Consolidation*, 61.

⁸ Terry Lynn Karl, "Dilemmas of Democratization," *Comparative Politics* 23,1(October 1990), 2.

debate.”⁹ Consequently, the debates waged in earlier periods concerning the real meaning of democracy, whether citizen participation is central or marginal, whether economic inequality renders political rights less meaningful, or whether highly unequal relations in the family, the workplace, and the broader community might undermine purely formal rights to political equality, have all faded into the background as a consensus has emerged over the meaning of procedural, political democracy. A democratic regime is one where broad protection exists for citizens’ political rights (to freedom of association, freedom of expression, to rights such as *habeas corpus*, and the protection of minority rights); where the electoral process is central to decision-making and citizens can freely choose among competing representatives; and where all citizens enjoy these rights equally, i.e., no social groups or segments of the population are formally excluded from participating in the exercise of these rights.

Before discussing the problems engendered by this focus it would be useful to point out why this consensus may have emerged. The reasons for the popularity of procedural definitions are important and illuminate changes in the way political scientists have thought about democracy in the developing world. This intellectual shift is also relevant to explaining why contemporary analysts

⁹ Scott Mainwaring, “Transitions to Democracy,” *Issues in Democratic Consolidation*, 297.

focus more narrowly on political processes amenable to democratization rather than on historical processes and socioeconomic conditions.

Following World War II and the process of decolonization there was a concern among social scientists to understand how these new states could become democratic, thereby avoiding the dangers and the instabilities associated with fascist or totalitarian paths. Quantitative cross-national studies had repeatedly revealed a link between (capitalist) development and democratic political regimes.¹⁰ Dominant interpretations of this correlation posited increases in wealth, urbanization, increased education and literacy, and the growth of a middle class as the main explanatory variables for the emergence of democratic regimes.¹¹ The recipe for democracy, then, was capitalist economic development, and the industrialized countries of Europe and North America represented models to follow. However, both development and democracy seemed to be elusive in much of the developing world. Moreover, in the countries where capitalist industrialization had advanced furthest, authoritarian regimes, rather than democracy, seemed to be the norm. In fact, O'Donnell's earlier work analyzing the emergence of bureaucratic-authoritarian regimes in the Southern Cone of Latin

¹⁰ Dietrich Rueschemeyer, Evelyne Huber Stephens, and John D. Stephens, *Capitalist Development and Democracy*, 17.

¹¹ Seymour Martin Lipset, "Some Social Requisites of Democracy," *American Political Science Review* 53, (1959).

America posits a causal relationship between modernization and authoritarianism.¹²

An alternative approach to problems of democracy and development in the Third World focused on long-term structural and historical conditions rather than quantitative indicators of social and economic development. This approach, exemplified by Barrington Moore's work,¹³ yielded much less optimistic predictions for the emergence of democracy in the Third World.¹⁴ Instead of viewing democracy as the inevitable outcome of a process of capitalist development, these authors concluded that the emergence of democracy in the advanced industrialized countries was related to a unique and non-repeatable constellation of conditions coinciding with early capitalism.

The conditions necessary for achieving economic development in a capitalist world economy dominated by a highly developed "core" were actually hostile to democracy in the "periphery". That is, the need for a strong "developmental" state in order to achieve "late" industrialization alters the balance of power between state and society in favour of the state. Democracy was unlikely

¹² David Collier, editor, *The New Authoritarianism in Latin America*, (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1979).

¹³ Barrington Moore, *The Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1966).

¹⁴ Rueschemeyer, *et.al.*, *Capitalist Development and Democracy*, 17-27.

in such conditions.

An implication of the more pessimistic theories of democracy and development was that the model of liberal democracy and capitalist development entailed in theories of modernization was not only illusory, but undesirable. The focus shifted to the economic realm as domestic and international structural impediments to development came to assume a central place among Third World scholars. The dominance of dependency theory thus temporarily muted discussions of democracy. Democracy was considered a "sham," a "bourgeois" façade, masking societal inequality within states and rigidly unequal relations among them. Even the model of liberal democracy in the industrialized world was considered undesirable by most radical scholars and leftists in the Third World and hence the socialist revolutions of the Soviet Union and Cuba were viewed as models to emulate.

Thus, despite decades of scholarly attention to the problems of democracy in developing countries, very little agreement had been reached concerning the necessary conditions for its realization. It is not surprising, then, that the wave of transitions from authoritarian rule which occurred in the 1980s had not been predicted by political scientists. The terrifying experiences of the dictatorships endured by so many Latin Americans in the 1960s and 1970s caused many scholars and activists to re-evaluate the worth of democracy. The political rights

for individuals which accompanied liberal democracy could not be derisively labeled a "sham" after so many had suffered in their absence. Consequently, decades of debate concerning the meaning (and value) of democracy came to a close with even the most radical thinkers endorsing the notion of formal democracy as a worthy end in itself.

Aside from the normative commitment to the rights that correspond to political democracy, many authors point out the methodological appeal of a procedural rather than substantive definition. The search for the necessary conditions for democracy did not, as I mentioned, yield widely accepted results, except that there *is* a correlation between economic development and democracy. However, "such a correlation, no matter how often replicated, does not carry its own explanation."¹⁵ Analysts today prefer to employ a minimalist definition of democracy in order to analyze the possible relationship between a particular political system and the economic and social system. Karl argues that "what the literature has considered in the past to be the preconditions of democracy may be better conceived in the future as the outcomes of democracy."¹⁶ Therefore, separating procedural or political variables from social and economic ones allows for continued investigation into the hypothetical relationship between democracy

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 4.

¹⁶ Karl, "Dilemmas of Democratization in Latin America," 5.

and economic and social development. In the same spirit, O'Donnell argues that "the distinction between political democracy on the one hand and socioeconomic and cultural democratization on the other is precisely what allows us to explore the various relationships between the two."¹⁷

This very justification ought to draw our attention to the way particular socio-economic conditions can undermine democratization. Rueschemeyer *et.al.* in their work *Capitalist Development and Democracy* do carry out this analysis and although they make a distinction between polyarchy and substantive democracy, they do not entirely separate the political realm from socio-economic structures. Instead, they adopt a political economy approach to democratization and analyze how various paths to capitalist development either undermine or promote democratization. Their approach is, therefore, much more useful in understanding how an economic logic in transitional regimes can operate to produce the exclusion of certain sectors of the population.

¹⁷ O'Donnell, "Transitions, Continuities, and Paradoxes," *Issues in Democratic Consolidation*, 18.

Limits to Polyarchy

While the normative and methodological justifications for defining democracy according to procedural criteria are persuasive there are some worrisome omissions in this new found consensus. Because most writers uncritically employ Dahl's procedural criteria, many of the assumptions concerning participation and representation are reproduced by contemporary writers. As mentioned earlier, polyarchy contains two distinct aspects that need not occur simultaneously: competition and participation. According to Dahl, the requirements for a regime to satisfy the participatory element are: freedom to form and join organizations; freedom of expression; the right to vote; and eligibility for public office.¹⁸ In order to be classified as a polyarchy a regime must not exclude portions of its population from these rights. These procedural rules are not, however, very demanding given that participation in a competitive regime will, for the vast majority, be limited to participating through the mechanisms of representation. There are no requirements that a regime, to rank high on the scale of participation and inclusion, actually encourage the creation of organizations or mechanisms through which all social groups within society can participate.

¹⁸ Dahl, *Polyarchy*, 3.

Critiques of pluralism indicate flaws in presuming that the mere existence of the *freedom* to form organizations will lead to the proliferation of voluntary associations capable of pressuring a (neutral) state to promote the interests of its members. The fate of the popular sectors (especially the youth and the unemployed) in a model of democracy based on pluralist assumptions would not necessarily be enhanced by the mere freedom to form associations. Phillippe Schmitter explains that,

those social groups that are in greatest need of collective action (i.e., those with numerous, dispersed, and relatively impoverished individuals as potential members) are the least likely to be successful in attracting these members on a rational and voluntary basis.¹⁹

The assumption of pluralist theory that voluntary interest groups will proliferate and that this will lead to a dispersion of power among social groups is not very credible. Power continues to be concentrated among social groups and classes which have greater access to resources due to their role in capitalist economies. The capitalist classes, because of their control over productive and financial resources are better placed to exert influence than social groups lacking in these resources. A further assumption of pluralist theory is that states are neutral arbiters of the competing claims of interest groups. However, given the

¹⁹ Schmitter, "The Consolidation of Democracy and the Representation of Social Groups," *American Behavioral Scientist* 35,4/5(March/June 1992), 436.

requirements of economic growth (e.g., investment), the interests of the capitalist classes will normally take primacy over those of the subordinate classes.

While theorists of transitions today do not explicitly endorse the classical pluralist paradigm, the consensus on a delimited version of democracy manages to reproduce many of these assumptions by limiting the procedural criteria for what counts as a democracy. Consequently, Schmitter observes that, "[I]f left to its own devices, then, the new 'liberal associability' could produce a systematically skewed overrepresentation of dominant class, sectoral, and professional interests."²⁰

Participation and Polyarchy

The procedural criteria for polyarchy do not give any content to the practice of citizenship. Schmitter stresses that citizenship, as perhaps the most distinctive feature of democracy, "is not confined to voting periodically in elections. It can be exercised by influencing the selection of candidates, joining associations or movements, petitioning authorities, engaging in 'unconventional' protests, and so

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 437.

forth.”²¹ However, in many of the new democracies citizens’ participation is largely limited to voting as these regimes do not effectively try to promote further avenues through which individuals and social groups can articulate their interests to the state. In fact, new democracies are much more likely to limit the participation of many social groups. This is extremely problematic given the extent to which previous authoritarian regimes forcibly dismantled channels of political mediation. Because unions were repressed, political parties disbanded, and very few, if any, channels of representation were left open to the population, the restoration of democracy must include the rebuilding of institutions to foster participation and adequate mechanisms of representation.

Most analysts of transitions indicate that during this process of reconstructing political institutions, great care must be taken to constrain conflict and promote consensus. The stated goal is *political* stability. This is viewed as crucial in order to avoid the possibility of renewed authoritarian aggression. For example, Valenzuela writes that in transitional regimes,

The resulting overload of issues difficult to resolve and public disorder as demonstrations and possibly violent confrontations among groups spill into the streets can foster doubts about the ability of the fledgling democratic process to address national problems and can rekindle sentiments in favour of renewed authoritarian rule.²²

²¹ *Ibid.*, 426.

²² Valenzuela, “Democratic Consolidation in Post-Transitional Settings,” *Issues in*
(continued...)

While military elites do, in many cases, represent a threat to democracy in transitional regimes, an equally significant threat is posed by capitalist elites. A focus on the political process alone often downplays this aspect. Political leaders in new democracies are guided by a fear of provoking economic uncertainty. Economic stability, it is reasoned, requires that political elites *avoid* responding to or encouraging the articulation of demands from the vast segments of disadvantaged social groups. The new democracies of Latin America, ever fearful of inspiring economic uncertainty or capital flight, take great care to appear moderate with respect to social and economic policy. The requirements of moderation and restraint in addressing problems of poverty in highly unequal societies do not favour the expansion of channels for the disadvantaged to participate. An approach to democratization that is preoccupied with political processes overlooks the important economic logic which constrains political elites in new democracies.

In extolling the virtues of moderation in the contemporary literature on transitions one is reminded of the "competitive elitist" theories of democracy prevalent in the 1950s.²³ In these accounts a minimal conception of democracy

Democratic Consolidation, 85.

²³ See David Held, *Models of Democracy*, (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1987), 144-185, and Carole Pateman, *Participation and Democratic Theory*, (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1970), 2-12.

could remain stable so long as the political system (in which elites competed amongst themselves for power) was protected from the excessive demands of the population.²⁴ It is true that the instability provoked by populism in Latin America in the 1950s and 1960s (which many argue led directly to the authoritarian regimes) must be avoided. Nonetheless, it does not follow that a greater role for popular participation would lead, in the present context, to a similar spiraling of demands and populist alliances of earlier decades. There seems to be a great fear on the part of scholars and politicians that, at present, there is a trade-off to be made between the goals of stability and the possibility for popular participation in the new democracies.

Feminist writers are among the main critics of the consensus over a limited conception of democracy and citizenship. Elizabeth Jelin, concerned with the marginalization of citizenship, explains:

In the democracies now under construction the requirement of being governed and represented on the one hand, and citizen participation and control of the running of the government on the other, are often looked on in the short term as incompatible, thus presenting a difficult choice. In fact, the building of democracy requires both. Representative democracies quickly stop being democracies when they do not concern themselves with creating institutions through which citizen participation and control can function.²⁵

²⁴ Jean Cohen and Andrew Arato, *Civil Society and Political Theory*, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992), 6.

²⁵ Elizabeth Jelin, "Building Citizenship: A Balance Between Solidarity and Responsibility," *The Consolidation of Democracy in Latin America*, 86-87.

The stress on the containment of potential political conflict through procedurally minimum models of democracy which restrict participation are inconsistent with the aspirations of democratization. The opposite path- opening up channels for the exercise of citizenship- may in fact enhance stability and would likely give a regime greater legitimacy. Moreover, as Cohen and Arato explain, "it is through political experience that one develops a conception of civic virtue, learns to tolerate diversity, to temper fundamentalism and egoism, and to become willing and able to compromise."²⁶

The tendency to advance limited definitions of democracy is connected to a methodology which views political processes as more or less independent of economic and social structures. Political processes of elite negotiation are, of course, at the center of transitions from authoritarian rule. However, the broader issue of democratization- as opposed to merely regime change- is also posed in much of the literature in relation to political variables. This fits neatly with a perspective that emphasizes limited procedural criteria which often restrict rather than expand the potential for disadvantaged social groups to participate and perhaps challenge existing power relations.

²⁶ Cohen and Arato, *Civil Society and Political Theory*, 7.

The Autonomy of Politics

Rueschemeyer *et.al.* write that, "democracy is above all a matter of power. Democratization represents first and foremost an increase in political equality."²⁷ The issue in this section is whether it is possible to consider a process by which people gain political power (through democratization) to be distinct from power relations which exist in the social and economic realms. This is important for addressing the problem of popular sector exclusion. A purely political perspective that separates the political from the economic realm misses the impact of unequal relations in the social and economic realms and thus cannot adequately address the underlying causes of popular sector exclusion. These causes, I argue, emerge out of the trade-off required for a transition to occur at all. The terms of the trade-off are such that an increase in political equality (democratization) can only be realized if it presents no threat to the prevailing inequality in the social and economic realms.

The dominant tendency among theorists of transitions is to view political processes of regime change apart from structural variables. This approach emerged for many of the same reasons discussed in the previous section. The

²⁷ Rueschemeyer, *et.al.*, *Capitalist Development and Democracy*, 5.

choice of procedural rather than substantive definitions of democracy and the focus on separating the political realm from social and economic processes both stem from a rejection of previously dominant paradigms in the study of democracy in developing countries. Mainwaring explains that dependency theory and other structural approaches were harshly criticized for perceiving politics as merely derivative of domestic and international socioeconomic structures. Today, many Latin American scholars see democracy “more as a product of political elites and arrangements, electoral and party systems, than of a level of modernization, a mode of interaction with the international system or a form of social structure.”²⁸

Karen Remmer explains that this “retreat to voluntarism” represents a logical outcome of the collapse of previous theories.²⁹ Earlier explanations of democratization focused on economic and social variables and either posited a positive correlation between modernization and democracy (for e.g., Lipset and Gabriel Almond), or, in contrast, discovered a negative correlation between industrialization and democracy in dependent capitalist economies.³⁰ However,

²⁸ Mainwaring, “Transitions to Democracy and Democratic Consolidation: Theoretical and Comparative Issues,” *Issues in Democratic Consolidation*, 326.

²⁹ Karen L. Remmer, “New Wine or Old Bottlenecks? The Study of Latin American Democracy,” *Comparative Politics* (July 1991), 483.

³⁰ O'Donnell's model of the bureaucratic authoritarian state is found in David Collier (ed.) *The New Authoritarianism in Latin America*. The dependency theory perspective is represented in Fernando Henrique Cardoso and Enzo Faletto, *Dependency and Development in Latin America*, translated by Marjory Mattingly Urquidí, (Berkeley:

(continued...)

both of these conclusions have been called into question by Latin American reality. That is, authoritarian regimes did emerge in some of the most modernized states in the 1960s and 1970s (such as Brazil and Argentina), while more recently, democratization has coincided with severe economic crises. Contemporary analyses of the emergence of democracy have thus been more concerned with explaining the *political processes* through which an authoritarian regime withdraws and a competitive regime is installed.

This process-oriented approach was largely inspired by O'Donnell and Schmitter's seminal work- *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule*. They argue that "normal science methodology" is inappropriate in rapidly changing situations, where those very parameters of political action are in flux."³¹ Overall, structural factors which give rise to more or less predictable outcomes are mediated by the uncertainty and "flux" engendered by processes of transition. In such cases outcomes are much more contingent and open-ended than would be the case where democratic or authoritarian regimes are stable. Adam Przeworski's article in the *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule* volume also favours a process-oriented approach. He contrasts a "macro-oriented" methodology, for which structures and

University of California Press, 1979).

³¹ O'Donnell and Schmitter, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies*, 4.

historical paths determine regime outcomes, with a “micro-oriented” method which “emphasize[s] the strategic behaviour of actors embedded in concrete historical situations.”³² He is highly critical of the determinism embedded within structural approaches which denies agency to those involved in struggles for democracy and instead condemns them to wait for more propitious social and economic conditions to materialize.

Although most scholars today avoid the search for overarching determinants for democratization because of the uniqueness of recent democratic transitions, it is difficult to sustain the separation of political processes from the wider socioeconomic and historical context. Remmer observes that,

The picture that emerges from the literature is one of leaders who seem to float above society, manipulating events, resisting change, entering into pacts, or otherwise shaping outcomes, apparently unconnected to their followers and unrestricted in their political options by larger social forces.³³

In fact, options are not unrestricted and despite the contingency within transitions political elites operate within certain constraints. In other words, the contingency which operates does so within certain boundaries. These constraints would include the requirements of capitalist economies, the balance of power among classes, and international forces. Karl proposes that the excessive voluntarism

³² Adam Przeworski, “Some Problems in the Study of the Transitions to Democracy,” in *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Comparative Perspectives*, 47.

³³ Remmer, “New Wine or Old Bottlenecks?” 485.

evident in much of the transitions literature needs to be supplemented by greater attention to the larger constraints on authoritarian and pro-democratic elites. Even in conditions of "flux," according to Karl, "the decisions made by various actors respond to and are conditioned by the types of socioeconomic structures and political institutions already present."³⁴ For example, a transition to democracy in Venezuela cannot be explained without recourse to the conditions generated by the vast resources earned by petroleum.³⁵ Transitions are also extensively shaped by the nature of political party systems. The existence of strong political parties which can represent the interests of various elites may be required in order for the outgoing authoritarian elites to have leaders with whom to negotiate their withdrawal. The existence of such parties, in turn, is shaped by historical conditions as well as by social and economic variables.³⁶

Although the literature often analyzes regime transitions from authoritarianism as purely political processes, there is a general agreement that processes of democratic consolidation require greater attention to social and economic processes. Schmitter explains that as our focus moves from the first

³⁴ Karl, "Dilemmas of Democratization in Latin America," 6.

³⁵ Karl, "Petroleum and Political Pacts: The Transition to Democracy in Venezuela," *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Latin America*.

³⁶ The manner in which Latin American political party systems were shaped by socio-economic structures is explored in Rueschemeyer *et.al.*, *Capitalist Development and Democracy*, *Capitalist Development and Democracy*, 166-167.

transition towards an analysis of the conditions necessary for democratic consolidation, we must look to different actors and consider many more processes as being relevant in shaping outcomes:

The consolidologist must shift from thinking in terms of an exciting form of 'political causality,' in which unpredictable and often courageous individuals take singular and even unprecedented choices, and adjust to analyzing a much more settled form of 'bounded rationality'- a form conditioned by capitalist class relations, long-standing cultural and ethnic cleavages, and persistent status conflicts.³⁷

In brief, while it may be possible to view the actual process of regime change as being more heavily influenced by the strategic decisions of the actors themselves rather than by the historical and structural context in which these actions are played out, once the democratic regime is installed the constraints on its actions take on greater significance. Much of the literature concedes that the primary constraint on new democratic governments emerges from the *type* of transition which occurred. While the path of transition does constitute an important constraint on new democratic leaders, a condition which I emphasize throughout Chapter 2, a broader focus is needed. My framework highlights the importance of historical and socioeconomic conditions and, more importantly, analyzes changes that occurred during the authoritarian period.

³⁷ Phillippe C. Schmitter. "Transitology: The Science of the Art of Democratization," *The Consolidation of Democracy in Latin America*, 13.

Paths of Transitions and the Nature of Authoritarian Rule

Nearly all of the transitions literature advances some sort of a typology for describing different paths of transition from authoritarian rule. For Przeworski the main distinction is between extrication and collapse.³⁸ Kari's typology differentiates between imposition, pacts, reform, and revolution.³⁹ O'Donnell's typology is somewhat broader because he links the mode of transition to the success or failure of the authoritarian regime at carrying out its project.⁴⁰ Regimes which were unsuccessful (i.e., "economically destructive") collapsed, as in the case of Argentina. In contrast, regimes that were successful at transforming their economies- such as Brazil and Chile- negotiated their withdrawal. The very success that they experienced conferred advantages for their negotiated exit.⁴¹

³⁸ Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market: Political and Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America*, (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991).

³⁹ Kari, "Dilemmas of Democratization in Latin America," 8.

⁴⁰ O'Donnell, "Transitions, Continuities, and Paradoxes," *Issues in Democratic Consolidation*, 24-25.

⁴¹ This variable- economic success- is also central in Robert Kaufman and Stephen Haggard's study of democratic transitions. They see the crucial variable as being whether or not the authoritarian withdrawal occurred in the context of economic crisis. Where withdrawal took place in non-crisis situations, it was the democratic opposition rather than the outgoing authoritarian regime which faced numerous constraints. This is because economic success creates more powerful interests for significant continuity, at least in (continued...)

This approach allows us to explore the way the changes to the economic and social structures brought about by the policies of authoritarian regimes affect the process of democratic consolidation. Specifically, where power relations changed significantly during the dictatorship we must ask how a shift in the relations of political power, brought about by a transition to democracy, can be undermined by the concentration of economic power that was an outcome of the authoritarian period. This is especially relevant where the authoritarian regime attempted to entirely reverse past development trajectories, as was the case in the Southern Cone dictatorships.

Where authoritarian regimes have successfully transformed social and economic structures, and thus altered power relations significantly, those gaining from these changes will be much more likely to support the authoritarian regime and perhaps be hostile to a return to democracy. The existence of economically powerful elites as allies gives the regime greater leverage in negotiating its exit. In fact, high levels of economic success can cause the regime's leaders to believe they will be successful in electoral competition, thereby legitimizing their power even further. This was the case in Brazil and Chile where the authoritarian elites miscalculated the extent to which past economic success would outweigh

memories of repression.⁴² Most importantly, economic success deprives the democratic opposition of allies within the capitalist elite. This means that in order to provide the conditions of mutual security among elites which make a transition possible, pacts or negotiations will need to ensure the protection of the capitalist elite's economic interests. In brief, power relations in the economic realm cannot be threatened by a shift in power relations in the political realm (i.e., by democratization). We are left with a rather unsatisfactory outcome: equalizing power relations through a process of political democratization can only occur if elites agree to sustain unequal power relations in the economic realm.

Therefore, political equality must coexist with social and economic inequality. Ultimately this may serve to undermine the formal equality in the political realm because of the need to limit the potential impact of political democratization on social and economic relations by minimizing the potential for disadvantaged groups to participate and articulate demands for social and economic equality. My approach, therefore, conceives of the way economic elites can continue to exert pressure after a transition with the result of popular sector exclusion. The threat is not merely political and remains hidden if we focus too

⁴² Still, it is interesting to note that despite the fact that Pinochet's dictatorship was perhaps the most repressive of the Southern Cone regimes, he managed to receive the support of forty-three percent of the population in the 1988 plebiscite.

much on the autonomy of the political realm. A purely procedural conception of democracy coheres with the requirement of limiting participation because it renders invisible the problem of limits on the participation of disadvantaged groups while giving greater attention to the role of political elites who recognize the terms of the trade-off.

Consequently, the third characteristic of much of the literature which emerges out of this paradox is the preoccupation with the role of elites and a reduced role for civil society in the process of consolidating a democratic regime.

Elites, Civil Society, and Democratization

Elites and Civil Society in Transitions

The study of transitions must begin by analyzing *why* authoritarian elites, with a significant monopoly on power, would agree to relinquish their monopoly and allow an opposition to emerge with whom they must then compete for power. Hence the core of most analyses is on divisions within the regime between hard-liners and soft-liners as the crucial factor which initiates a transition. A divided authoritarian elite alone does not ensure a regime change, however. A further necessary condition is for the democratic opposition to be organized and led by elites with whom the soft-liners within the regime can ally. Moreover, these elites

must have the capacity to deliver the support of their social bases in order for the concessions at the bargaining table to have any credibility. In other words, if the leaders of the democratic opposition are unable to prevent their followers from engaging in disruptive protests (e.g., strikes) then elites threatened by such actions (e.g., capitalists) may prefer to utilize their power to prevent a transition rather than negotiating with the democratic opposition's leaders. This is why, as O'Donnell and Schmitter observe, transitions ultimately contain a demobilizing logic. Pacts among elites require a rather strict control over social mobilization. Przeworski divides the relevant elites into four categories: the authoritarian segment includes the hard-liners and the reformers, and the democratic opposition is composed of moderates and radicals. He explains that for a negotiated transition to occur, "the Moderates must either deliver terms tolerable to Radicals, or if they cannot obtain such terms from Reformers, they must leave enough power in the hands of the apparatus of repression to intimidate the Radicals."⁴³

Overall, this process requires two things: first, the ability of all relevant elites to reach a consensus on the "rules of the game" which will govern the transition; and second, a certain kind of relationship between elites and masses. The problem is that while analysts devote extensive attention to how elite

⁴³ Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market*, 69.

negotiations proceed, as well as which factors contribute to pacts among elites,⁴⁴ very few authors explain how the relationship between elites and their social bases allows for negotiated transitions to occur at all. Oxhorn notes that O'Donnell and Schmitter's explanation of the "resurrection" and then demobilization of civil society borders on being functionalist: when the "popular upsurge" which is crucial in signaling the illegitimacy of the authoritarian regime threatens the mutual security among elites, and masses protesting in the streets threaten an authoritarian retrenchment, people simply go home and allow the elites to take over.⁴⁵

If closer attention is paid to the organization of society under authoritarianism we can get a better sense of how the relations between masses and elites contribute to the dynamics of transitions. The demobilizing logic of transitions is brought to the forefront of our analyses only when we focus on the relations between political parties and social organizations and better understand how it is that political elites are able to transmit to their social bases the

⁴⁴ A good example is *Elites and Democratic Consolidation in Latin America and Southern Europe*, edited by John Higley and Richard Gunther, (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1992). The key variable in their analysis is the existence of a consensually unified elite who agree on the fundamental "rules of the game" concerning the practice of democracy.

⁴⁵ Oxhorn, "Where Have All the Protesters Gone? Popular Mobilization and the Transition to Democracy in Chile" *Latin American Perspectives* 21,3 (Summer 1994).

requirement of discontinuing their mobilizational tactics.

The Role of Civil Society in Democratization

There is an even more important reason for complementing an analysis of elite interactions with closer study of the role of civil society in democratization. Numerous analysts have highlighted a phenomenon marked by the “rebirth” of civil society and the emergence and proliferation of social movements during the dictatorships. Given the absence of democracy in the political realm and the continued (and in some cases worsening) inequality in the economic realm, the domain of civil society came to constitute an important site for the struggle for equality and democracy. The discourse of civil society, as Cohen and Arato admit, presumes that such a realm exists somewhat independently of the market and of political society.⁴⁶ In this framework, “civil society stands for a network of groups and associations between (in some versions, including) families and face-to-face groups on one side and outright state organizations on the other, mediating between individual and state, private and public.”⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Cohen and Arato, *Civil Society and Political Theory*, 16.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 48.

It was initially predicted that the growth of organizations and associations at the level of civil society would have a positive impact on democratization in Latin America. There are two main components of the argument. First, the highly mobilized popular sectors were instrumental in bringing about a transition because of their role in placing pressure on the regime. Even though this was not a sufficient condition to bring about a regime change O'Donnell and Schmitter do point out that this had the effect of pushing the transition further than it would have otherwise gone.⁴⁸ Even more important was the belief that the popular movements and grassroots organizations would contribute to a more democratic political culture by enhancing the capacity for citizens to actually practice democracy. Many observers stressed the highly egalitarian and participatory nature of the grassroots initiatives which proliferated under the dictatorships. O'Donnell and Schmitter point out that the "exercise and learning of citizenship can flourish in deliberation about issues of everyday concern."⁴⁹ Likewise, Mainwaring writes that, "the quality of democracy will be closely connected to the dynamics of grassroots movements and their relationship to the State."⁵⁰

⁴⁸ O'Donnell and Schmitter, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies*, 56.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 53.

⁵⁰ Mainwaring, "Grassroots Popular Movements and the Struggle for Democracy: Nova Iguaçu," *Democratizing Brazil: Problems of Transition and Consolidation*, edited by Alfred Stepan, (New York: Oxford UP, 1989), 168.

Popular organizations emerged in the context of authoritarianism in Latin America precisely because of the projects initiated by many of these regimes. Firstly, the regimes which seized power during periods of economic crisis normally attempted to stabilize the economy through orthodox measures relying on reducing consumption, reducing the role of the state, and expanding the role of the market. These policies resulted in a worsening of material conditions among the popular sectors and thus many of the grassroots organizations which emerged were an attempt to collectively cope with economic hardships. Secondly, the regimes specifically targeted the normal channels for representation of the popular sectors such as unions and leftist political parties. Thus, newer types of organizations emerged in the urban shantytowns where repression was somewhat more difficult. Finally, because the dictatorships were extremely repressive many organizations emerged to cope with persecution and the violation of human rights. The organizations dedicated to coping with material deprivation and human rights abuses were often initiated by the Church and were normally dependent on the financial assistance of the Church as well as other NGOs. It is also important to note that most of these organizations were staffed with women and in order to understand their emergence, their role, and their potential for further democratization, an understanding of their gendered nature is critical.

Philip Oxhorn, in his study of the popular sector response to authoritarian

rule in Chile, argues that a process of democratization of civil society, entailing the growth of popular organizations, was a direct response to the repression and economic restructuring of the military regime.⁵¹ David Lehmann also stresses the importance of the social movements, church related or inspired organizations, and other grassroots initiatives, for in them, “individuals are being citizens and are also exercising a right which they cannot take for granted, namely that of assembly.”⁵² Therefore, “[t]his collective activity is in itself a beginning of citizenship.”⁵³

If this is to mean anything, however, closer attention needs to be paid to how this type of organizing can be accommodated within the elite-led transitions. In other words, a return to “elite politics” will not allow for the potential benefits of a more organized and active civil society to be realized.

The Survival of Popular Organizations after Transitions to Democracy

There is, however, a problem with a preoccupation with *either* elites *or* civil society and social movements as being the key to successful democratic

⁵¹ Oxhorn, *Organizing Civil Society*, 5-7.

⁵² Lehmann, *Democracy and Development in Latin America: Economics, Politics, and Religion in the Post-war Period*, (Philadelphia: Temple UP, 1990), 153.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 154.

consolidation. If popular organizations and a more active civil society are to play a role in further democratizing Latin American states and societies, we need to understand how they can coexist with institutions of political society. Jane Mansbridge offers a useful distinction with which to begin this task.⁵⁴ She distinguishes between two types of democracy based on the presence of common or conflicting interests. What she calls *unitary* democracy exists when smaller groups share a common set of interests and deliberate collectively in face-to-face settings. Outcomes and decisions are the result of consensus. In contrast, *adversary* democracy operates in large-scale settings where people have conflicting interests. Democracy at this level requires institutions of representation and outcomes that are based on the principle of majoritarianism. She argues that, "every polity contains both common and conflicting interests and that every polity therefore needs both unitary and adversary institutions to make democratic decisions."⁵⁵

The problem, however, is how to ensure the survival of the institutions of unitary democracy practiced in the popular organizations and some of the social movements which emerged under authoritarian rule after a return to political

⁵⁴ Jane J. Mansbridge, *Beyond Adversary Democracy*, (New York: Basic Books, 1980).

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 3.

democracy which is characterized by more rigid, hierarchical, representative institutions. Oxhorn writes that, "[t]o date, it seems that civil society is 'losing': once elections are called, there is a generalized demobilization of society as political activity is channeled through political parties."⁵⁶

The tension between the two forms of democracy in the Latin American context stems from many factors. One has to do with the fact that parties, the principal vehicles through which adversary democracy functions, are not necessarily democratic themselves. Consequently, "[r]igid, hierarchically organized party structures, which have an insulated national party elite who manage party affairs in a highly centralized fashion, are most likely to generate conflicts between parties and popular organizations."⁵⁷ Secondly, the nature of competition central to adversary democracy has the tendency to produce divisions and conflicts within and among organizations which would normally have a common set of interests. As Mainwaring claims, "[r]ather than enhancing the unity of social movements, democratization increased competition among movements."⁵⁸ Hence, a central characteristic of these movements, i.e., a

⁵⁶ Oxhorn, "From Controlled Inclusion to Coerced Marginalization: The Struggle for Civil Society in Latin America," *Civil Society: Theory, History, Comparison*, edited by John A. Hall, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995), 270.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 271.

⁵⁸ Mainwaring, "Urban Popular Movements, Identity, and Democratization in Brazil," *Comparative Political Studies* 20,2(July 1987), 154.

common identity emerging out of shared interests, is undermined by the institutions of adversary democracy.

A more overwhelming tension between the grassroots movements and the institutions of political democracy, a tension which is overlooked by most scholars, derives from the gendered nature of the grassroots initiatives. Verónica Schild points out that most analyses of grassroots organizations miss the significance of the fact that participation within them has been predominantly female.⁵⁹ Because it is women who have traditionally been central to the realm of reproduction, the policies of the authoritarian regimes- the withdrawal of the state from its welfare role as well as policies which exacerbated unemployment and poverty- had an enormous impact on women. Another author observes that "[i]t was the question of economic survival that shaped the social agenda of the women's movement and, crucially gave it a mass base."⁶⁰ While many of the initiatives were concerned with what we might call the "private," or household realm, and mostly took the form of communal kitchens, buyers' and sellers' cooperatives, handicraft workshops, and community day-care centres, the

⁵⁹ Verónica Schild, "Recasting 'Popular' Movements: Gender and Political Learning in Neighborhood Organizations in Chile," *Latin American Perspectives* 21,2(Spring 1994), 61-61.

⁶⁰ Joe Foweraker, *Theorizing Social Movements*, (London: Pluto Press, 1995), 110.

experience of organizing collectively did, for many women and the women's movement overall, have far-reaching implications which cannot be separated from what we may more strictly term the political. Women whose first experience at organizing may have come from participating in these neighborhood organizations propelled issues relating to gender and struggles for equality into the political sphere.⁶¹

While the contribution of women's movements to the democratization of civil society and to the struggle against the authoritarian regimes was critical, a problem has surfaced since the transitions to democracy. Schild locates the problem in the attempts of women to expand their participation into mid-level organizations and larger representative bodies of popular organizations. The problem is that these larger groups tend to be dominated by men and the women who attempt to participate ultimately experience frustration:

It is one thing to develop a capacity for decision-making and to acquire a public voice in a predominantly female context; it is quite another to carry these achievements into contexts in which unequal gender relations have historically appropriated for men both the public voice (with its distinct political vocabulary) and the power of decision-making.⁶²

Sonia E. Alvarez, studying the contributions of women's organizations to

⁶¹ Maria Elena Valenzuela, "The Evolving Roles of Women under Military Rule," *The Struggle for Democracy in Chile, 1982-1990*, edited by Paul W. Drake and Iván Jaksic, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1991), 161-187.

⁶² Schild, "Recasting 'Popular' Movements," 72.

democratization in Brazil, discovered that despite their overwhelming participation and contribution to the mobilization of protest against the dictatorship, women's organizations have neither been able to sustain this level of collective action nor been able to further democratize the political regime.⁶³ The main problem is that once a return to political democracy was realized, previously autonomous women's organizations became institutionalized within either the state apparatus or within a political party, both of which were dominated by men. The tendency was to dissipate the movement as well as significantly dilute its goals. Ultimately, only those aspirations which do not fundamentally challenge the existing order and traditional power relations are advanced within the state apparatus or promoted by a party.⁶⁴

In sum, the contribution of grassroots organizations to further democratization is limited by the gendered nature of popular organizations. As Schild concludes, "[i]t is conceivable, then, that the failure of efforts to organize the various neighborhood groups into viable regional bodies is linked in part to women's subordinate position in the wider political arena."⁶⁵ A further limitation on the potential for a more organized civil society comprised of numerous smaller

⁶³ Sonia E. Alvarez, "Politicizing Gender and Engendering Democracy," *Democratizing Brazil*.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 206.

⁶⁵ Schild, "Recasting 'Popular' Movements," 73.

organizations is these organizations' precarious or conflictual links with the institutions of adversary democracy.

Oxhorn argues that political parties now control the fate of civil society to the extent that they can continue to monopolize the system of political representation by dominating popular activity. This will lead to even less activity within civil society. In contrast, parties could encourage and promote links with movements that respect the autonomy of these sectors and their independent potential for action and representation. This is one reason why Oxhorn is so critical of the contemporary literature which stresses the need for stronger political parties in consolidating democracy. In contrast, he argues that, "traditional political parties are also part of the problem because of the ways in which they undermine the emergent civil society."⁶⁶

In a similar manner, Lehmann calls for reforms of political institutions in order to provide a more hospitable climate for social movements and their democratic potential. He notes that there is a possible contradiction between the popular organizations' distrust of formal political mechanisms and their desire to remain small and non-institutionalized, and the need to create institutional links to be effective and permanent. The main danger, according to Lehmann, is,

⁶⁶ Oxhorn, "From Controlled Inclusion to Coerced Marginalization," *Civil Society*, 272-273.

a proliferation of pressure groups which may individually have comparatively short lives, and thus a failure to accumulate forces, to translate the grassroots mobilization into a sustained mobilization at the level of formal politics.⁶⁷

Conclusion

In this chapter I pointed to the problems with three of the dominant characteristics of the contemporary literature on democratization: a limited procedural model of democracy; an emphasis on the autonomy of politics; and the preoccupation with elites. Accounts of democratic transitions which contain these features will be incapable of first, detecting popular sector exclusion, and second, accounting for *why* the popular sectors are excluded and the threats this poses to the consolidation of the new democracies.

With respect to the first claim, a preoccupation with limited procedural criteria for the masses and competition among elites makes the absence of channels of participation for the popular sectors unproblematic. Thus, popular sector exclusion is built right into a model of democracy grounded in Dahl's limited conception of polyarchy. This is because minimal participation through electoral procedures is the norm in polyarchy thereby narrowing the possibility for

⁶⁷ Lehmann, *Democracy and Development in Latin America*, 195.

the popular sectors to participate. Regarding the second claim, that the literature will not be able to account for popular sector exclusion, a focus on the political process alone misses the significance of the changes in power relations that occurred under authoritarian rule and how these changes introduce an economic logic into transition processes. I argued that an increase in inequality in the economic and social realms, which was a product of the authoritarian regime's policies, undermines democratization. That is, an increase in political equality and the potential for this increase to threaten economic elites, is what ultimately produces popular sector exclusion. The elites that negotiated the pacts allowing transitions to take place understand the terms of the trade-off and consequently, new democratic governments comprised of these elites do not create mechanisms for the incorporation of the popular sectors.

The framework in which I analyze how a transition to democracy in Chile led to the exclusion of the popular sectors adds to the political process approach of O'Donnell and Schmitter by reconnecting the political realm to socio-economic structures and thereby broadening the focus on democratization. I am especially interested to investigate the way capitalist elites place constraints on incoming democratic leaders with the result that popular sector participation is viewed as destabilizing.

My approach also concentrates on the links between political elites and

their social bases in civil society. Most importantly, I examine the way the system of representation constrains processes of democratization through an ongoing process of demobilizing civil society during and after transitions have been secured. The system of representation must also be viewed as connected to the changes to social structures which alter the nature of political party competition thereby affecting the way the popular sectors are represented.

Finally, following the insights of Rueschemeyer *et.al.* with respect to capitalism and democracy, I focus on the popular sectors because they are the most likely to continue to push for further democratization. Rueschemeyer *et.al.* argue that democracy emerges out of the contradictions of capitalism.⁶⁸ That is, the inequalities produced by capitalist economic relations generate struggles for greater equality by those who are marginalized. Thus, they find that it was the working class, rather than the middle classes, who have most consistently fought for and defended democracy. They argue that, “fundamentally, democracy was achieved by those who were excluded from rule and who acquired the social power to reach for a share in the political process.”⁶⁹ Therefore, if we want to know how processes of transition can lead to further democratization we should look to those who continue to be excluded. The popular sectors, rather than elites,

⁶⁸ Rueschemeyer *et.al.*, *Capitalist Development and Democracy*, 7.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 46.

are more likely to try to push the democratization process further.

CHAPTER 2

The Demobilizing Dynamics of the Chilean Transition To Democracy

The strategic problem of transition is how to get democracy without either being starved by those who control productive resources or killed by those who have arms. As this very formulation suggests, the path to democracy is mined. And the final destination depends on the path.¹

Introduction

Regime transitions are characterized by political processes defined by uncertainty and strategic decisions by both authoritarian and pro-democratic actors. But these processes are themselves being played out in concrete situations in which historical conditions, as well as social and economic structures, constrain actions and shape alliances. An important aspect of the process of transition is the “cycle of mobilization” in which the role of the popular sectors becomes eclipsed by political elites as negotiations for a transfer of power are initiated. However, in the process of transition we can also detect the conditions for the subsequent exclusion of the popular sectors.

¹ Adam Przeworski, “The Games of Transition,” *Issues in Democratic Consolidation*, 105.

Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe Schmitter observe that transitions from authoritarian rule are preceded by a period of liberalization during which some rights are (re)extended to citizens- such as the right to assembly and free speech. This is tantamount to allowing the first tentative steps towards permitting political opposition to the regime. This process is, however, selective (i.e., the regime may tolerate some expressions of discontent while repressing others) and reversible (i.e., opposition may initially be tolerated and then repressed if it becomes too threatening). In some cases the liberalization period has been relatively brief, such as in Argentina, while in others, notably Chile, a period of selective liberalization lasted for six years prior to any transfer of power taking place. This period is critical in that the interactions and decisions taken by the various actors have important implications for the consolidation of the new regime- hopefully a democracy. Most importantly, it is in the agreements or "pacts" among elites that we find many of the confining conditions placed on incoming democratic governments.

As I argued in Chapter 1, despite the primacy of the political process and the central role of elites in processes of transition, many of the actors' decisions are informed by, or at least related to, the broader historical and socioeconomic context. That is, potential alliances are shaped by the extent to which various elites would benefit from, or be threatened by, an increase in political equality,

and thus would support or try to inhibit a transition to democracy. A further important factor influencing a transition is the relationship between the elites and their social bases. The extent to which the strategy of elites can be transmitted (and adhered to) at the base is important for providing the conditions for mutual security among elites which are so critical to transitions. These conditions will be explored in this chapter.

My framework for analyzing the Chilean transition begins with the insights provided by O'Donnell and Schmitter's work. However, I place greater emphasis on the way an economic logic shaped alliances and constrained pro-democratic actors. Furthermore, I look more closely at the way the close relationship between political parties and social organizations allowed party elites to demobilize and control the popular sectors and ultimately exclude them from the process of negotiating the terms of a transition to democracy.

According to O'Donnell and Schmitter's work, a transition to democracy usually unfolds in the following way: a split in the authoritarian elite between the *duros* (hard-liners) and *blandos* (soft-liners) may initiate a period of liberalization if the *blandos* perceive a potential for moderate allies within civil society. The onset of liberalization, marked by the relaxation of repression and the first stirrings of political discontent, ultimately inspires a "resurrection of civil society," characterized by an increase in open protest activity. This eventually culminates

in a “popular upsurge” in which all elements of opposition to the authoritarian regime form a more or less undifferentiated mass of protesters with a common goal: the return of democracy. This “cycle of mobilization” must come to an end for a transition to occur. When the demobilization phase arrives the regime will still tolerate opposition but this opposition is no longer “in the streets” but has become institutionalized in the form of political parties and other political elites. It is during this phase that negotiations can take place to resolve the pressing problems of mutual security for the authoritarian and pro-democratic elites. It is necessary for pro-democratic elites to prevent the re-emergence of popular protests in order to minimize the threats to authoritarian elites. If pro-democratic elites fail to exert a demobilizing control over their social bases then the hard-liners may be inclined to attempt to reverse the liberalization process and a transition may be halted.

Regarding pacts, O'Donnell and Schmitter explain that, “[a]t the core of a pact lies a negotiated compromise under which actors agree to forgo or underutilize their capacity to harm each other by extending guarantees not to threaten each others' corporate autonomies or vital interests.”² This may include agreements that labour leaders or democratic elites refrain from mobilizing their

² O'Donnell and Schmitter, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies*, 38.

social bases and capitalist elites refrain from investment strikes as a means for creating instability, and above all, authoritarian elites do not call on the military to revert to repression or the use of force to prevent the process of transition from reaching its *telos*: the constitution of a new democratic regime. While such agreements are surely undemocratic to the extent that they have been negotiated behind closed doors and while they may often result in a distortion of the popular will, they are, according to O'Donnell and Schmitter, necessary to allow capitalist and authoritarian elites to perceive that a transition to democracy will not be a serious threat to their interests.

The goal of this chapter is to detail the way the Chilean transition unfolded with the effect of demobilizing and excluding the popular sectors in the process. The process did not entirely mirror the model put forth in O'Donnell and Schmitter's work but its broader tendencies- such as elite negotiations and "cycles of mobilization"- were present. Using the theoretical framework I outlined in Chapter 1, the intent is to show how popular sector exclusion emerges from the dynamics of negotiating a return to political democracy constrained by the necessity of perpetuating unequal power relations in the socioeconomic realm. Therefore, we need to go beyond O'Donnell and Schmitter's political process model and take a broader view of the limits imposed on those negotiating a return to democracy. I will argue that given the terms of the trade-off required to provide

mutual security among elites, political elites become the key actors in the process and work at demobilizing and subsequently minimizing the potential for the popular sectors to participate in the construction of new democratic institutions.

Background to the Chilean Political System

Manuel Garretón points out the importance of three “uniquely interrelated” elements that existed prior to the 1973 coup which abruptly reversed the shape and direction of the Chilean state and society: “import-substituting industrialization with increasing state intervention in the economy; substantive democratization that was gradually incorporating diverse social sectors into the political system and improving their standard of living; and a democratic political regime.”³ There was, therefore, an important role played by the state in all aspects of Chilean development, and social groups looked to the state to address their demands and promote their interests. However, the Chilean system, unlike others in Latin America, was characterized by a strong political party system which managed access to the state. This meant that social groups seeking to advance their interests

³ Manuel Garretón, *The Chilean Political Process*, (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989), 3.

needed to be represented by a political party, whose monopoly over representation was firm. Arturo Valenzuela writes,

the party structures which permeated all levels of society were the crucial linkage mechanisms binding organizations, institutions, groups, and individuals to the political centre. Local units of all parties were active within each level of the bureaucracy, each labour union, each student federation, and each professional association. Parties often succeeded in capturing a particular organization or in setting up a rival one.⁴

The “overdeveloped” nature of the Chilean party system corresponded to the “underdeveloped” nature of civil society. According to Oxhorn, “[t]he development of a civil society was stymied because emergent social organizations were weak and dependent on political parties.”⁵

The monopoly over representation enjoyed by political parties had implications for the urban popular sectors. The terms of the “compromise state” governing party competition since the 1930s were that the functioning of democracy and the continued existence of a strong labour movement (firmly linked to parties of the Left, of course) rested on the exclusion of the rural peasantry and the urban poor.⁶ Rural workers remained under the control of landlords and the urban popular sectors- except for the organized working class- remained

⁴ Arturo Valenzuela, *The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes: Chile*, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins UP, 1978), 16.

⁵ Oxhorn, *Organizing Civil Society*, 47.

⁶ Garretón, *The Chilean Political Process*, 6.

unorganized and unrepresented.

It was not until the Christian Democratic Party (PDC) replaced the Radical Party as the main party of the Centre that the terms of the "compromise state" were reversed and the process of organizing and incorporating the popular sectors began. Timothy Scully explains that the popular sectors were organized and incorporated into Chilean politics in the 1960s through party competition between the PDC and the parties of the Left (mainly the Communists and the Socialists). He explains that, "vast numbers of politically uncommitted *pobladores* became a potential source of support in an increasingly competitive electoral arena."⁷ The Christian Democrats, using their contacts with church organizations, embarked on a massive campaign of "*promoción popular*" (popular promotion). The PDC became the predominant party in the popular sectors by setting up clientelistic neighborhood organizations, recreational clubs, and mothers' centres.⁸ Oxhorn points out the paternalistic nature of the popular sectors' incorporation under PDC president, Eduardo Frei: "[p]obladores were characterized as apathetic and incapable of overcoming their condition of marginality without external help."⁹

An important feature of popular sector mobilization during the period was

⁷ Timothy R. Scully, *Rethinking the Center: Party Politics in Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Chile*, (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1992), 160-161.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 161.

⁹ Oxhorn, *Organizing Civil Society*, 51.

the prevalence of collective acts such as land invasions. David Lehmann points out that this type of collective grassroots action was important both in the way the state responded and in the way it inspired organization among the popular sectors. He explains that under Frei, land invasions became a regular occurrence and the state response "involved the provision of resources in a way which required the community to be organized."¹⁰ Thus, the potential for collective action among the popular sectors was encouraged by the state policies and by political parties.

The growing organization of the popular sectors intensified competition between the PDC and parties of the Left. The Communists and the Socialists began to radicalize segments of the popular sectors as the "reformism" of President Frei's "Revolution in Liberty" ran up against hostility from capitalist elites and the PDC was increasingly unable to carry out its project. When a coalition of Leftist parties- *Unidad Popular*, led by the Socialists- narrowly won the 1970 elections, popular sector mobilization became the core of President Allende's "road to socialism". The radicalization of the popular sectors and the threat of socialist transformation inspired so much fear on the part of Chile's dominant and middle classes that within three years of Allende's term, a brutal coup, with the full support of capitalist elites and much of the middle classes, put an end to

¹⁰ David Lehmann, *Democracy and Development in Latin America*, 178.

democratic politics.

Immediately after the coup, as Oxhorn explains, “[a] preliminary objective of the military regime was the depoliticization of Chilean society through the elimination of the traditional party system and the disarticulation of all forms of collective behaviour, especially on the part of the popular sectors.”¹¹ Consequently, all political parties were banned, and Leftist party leaders, union leaders, and Leftist intellectuals were singled out as targets for repression. The repression during the first phase of authoritarianism (until approximately 1978) was extremely intense and the arbitrariness of the security forces prevented any forms of political opposition from emerging. In brief, civil society was pervaded by a debilitating fear and political society was rendered ineffectual by the brutality of Pinochet’s repressive apparatus.

The Chilean Transition

There are two features of the transition to democracy in Chile which are highly relevant for explaining the failure of the new democratic government to incorporate the popular sectors. First, appealing to Terry Lynn Karl’s typology,

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 65.

the transition away from authoritarian rule sits between an imposed and a negotiated one.¹² The transition took place within the confines of the very narrow space afforded by the 1980 Constitution. The original intention of the Constitution was to produce a "protected" democracy. However, the democratic opposition to Pinochet was able to negotiate some changes to the Constitution prior to the elections which installed the first democratic government since 1973. The second key feature is that the transition occurred after the economic crisis had been resolved. This condition differs markedly from democratic transitions elsewhere in the region which either preceded economic crises or took place simultaneously with economic collapse. In Chile, a severe crisis of the radical neoliberal economic model emerged in 1981-82 and yet a transition did not occur until the end of the decade. What is most critical about this time differential is that once a degree of political space did open up, some economic recovery had been achieved, significantly affecting the nature of the allies available for the democratic opposition. This had significant impact on the course of the transition.

Taken together these two features influenced the course of popular mobilization and the subsequent demobilization during the course of the transition. The mass popular protests emerged in a climate of acute economic crisis and the

¹² Terry Lynn Karl, "Dilemmas of Democratization in Latin America," 9.

first appearances of regime vulnerability. The emergence of popular protests initiated a resurgence of open political party activity and popular sector mobilization soon came to be closely directed by political parties. Consequently the nature of mass mobilization came to be influenced by the opposition parties' overall strategy for trying to bring about a transition. When the strategy of popular protests seemed to be ineffectual and even harmful, the main parties of the opposition- the Christian Democrats (PDC), the moderate Socialists (PS), and some smaller centre-left parties- urged their social bases to refrain from engaging in protests and demonstrations. These parties had significant links with many of the popular sectors. Those groups within the popular sectors- such as particular *poblaciones* (shantytowns)- who continued a strategy of protest were those with links to the Communist Party (PC).¹³ The democratic opposition was therefore divided into moderate and radical factions. As the transition progressed, however, the radical faction became marginalized and its insurrectionary tactics deemed illegitimate.

The strategy of the parties which comprised the democratic opposition was heavily influenced by the lack of space afforded to them by the Pinochet

¹³ Cathy Schneider, "Radical Opposition Parties and Squatters Movements in Pinochet's Chile, *The Making of Social Movements in Latin America: Identity, Strategy, and Democracy*, edited by Arturo Escobar and Sonia E. Alvarez, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991), 260-275.

regime and by the strategy of certain segments of Chile's capitalist class. Following the 1981-82 economic crisis there was a shift in the balance of power within Chile's capitalist classes. This shift resulted from the near collapse of the previously powerful conglomerates that were concentrated heavily in the financial sector. Most importantly it was this sector which had been closely linked to the Pinochet regime and whose interests were most clearly reflected in economic policy. Policies favouring this sector were often detrimental to the interests of other segments of Chilean capital, particularly the industrialists. The manifestations of the crisis in 1981-82 were extremely harmful to these sectors and their support for the regime began to wane considerably. The mass protests which emerged in 1983 and the re-emergence of opposition political parties allowed these disaffected capitalist classes to engage in a strategy whereby they extracted concessions from both the Pinochet regime and the democratic opposition. Ultimately, this strategy influenced the position taken by the opposition parties with respect to their declared economic and social goals for a post-transition government. It also required even greater emphasis on demobilization so as to ensure the tacit support of this capitalist coalition for a democratic transition.

Prior to explaining these processes in greater depth, there are some features of the Chilean authoritarian regime which need to be set out. These features account for the fact that no real opposition emerged prior to 1983 and are related

to the regime's capacity to weather the economic crisis in 1981-82 and ultimately direct and control a transition in the context of a relatively healthy and growing economy. Finally, they account for one of the comparatively unique features of Chile's transition. Unlike other transitions from authoritarian rule, the *apertura* in Chile's dictatorship did not strictly emerge out of a split within the military between *duros* and *blandos*. Rather, a very small opening was embedded within Pinochet's plan for institutionalizing an authoritarian government. The transition he envisioned, however, was one from military rule towards a "protected" democracy. The democratic opposition was able to effect a fuller transition by employing Pinochet's own timetable for a transition.

Concentration of power and the emergence of a transformative project

The military in Chile forcibly removed the socialist government of Salvador Allende on September 11, 1973. The coup followed three years of increasing class conflict, political polarization, and rising tensions fueled by an economy in complete disarray. The military regime which followed resembled other military regimes in the Southern Cone of Latin America in terms of its support from the middle classes, business elites, and the state bureaucracy. The Chilean authoritarian regime further resembled other military governments in terms of its

goal of stabilizing the economy by implementing rather orthodox measures. However, "the Pinochet regime stands out by virtue of how it translated that commitment into reality."¹⁴

The emergence of a project of transformation along extreme neoliberal principles was made possible by Pinochet's capacity to consolidate his power by insulating himself from the pressures of other members of the junta and from the social bases and political elites who had supported the coup to remove Allende. Not all of the opposition to Allende favoured the extreme economic project which was to emerge by 1975. Three trends are relevant to explaining this development. First, the pre-coup coalition of capitalists which had been active in pressuring the military to intervene was not a unified group and therefore did not have a coherent strategy with which to present the military.¹⁵ These capitalists were represented by the *Sociedad de Fomento Fabril* (SOFOFA), the *Sociedad Nacional de Agricultura* (SNA), and *Sociedad Nacional de Minería* (SONAMI), and the largest umbrella organization of capitalists, the *Confederación de la Producción y el Comercio* (CPC), but there were differences in orientation and conflicting interests among them. The second important trend was that the balance of power among

¹⁴ Karen Remmer, *Military Rule in Latin America*, (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989), 115.

¹⁵ Eduardo Silva, "Capitalist Coalitions, the State, and Neoliberal Economic Restructuring: Chile 1973-88," *World Politics* 45(1993), 535.

capitalists was shifting. One reason was that Allende's policies of nationalization had significantly weakened those segments of Chilean capital oriented towards domestic industry. Secondly, the belief within the junta and other segments of Chilean capital that ISI needed to be reversed further weakened this segment of capital which was mainly represented by SOFOFA.¹⁶ Finally, another factor in shifting the balance of power among capitalists was the change in patterns of international lending from multilateral government institutions to private commercial banks. It was those segments of Chilean capital which were engaged in the financial sector and oriented towards international activity which had access to international funds at a time when Chile's foreign reserves were dangerously low. Chilean industrialists did not have access to such funds.¹⁷ Additionally, the nationalizations which had occurred under Allende were being reversed and as it was the internationally oriented capitalists who had access to financing, they were able to acquire the firms being privatized by the military regime. Consequently,

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 538. Guillermo O'Donnell's model of the bureaucratic-authoritarian state does not entirely fit the Chilean case in this respect. While import-substituting industrialization had produced increasingly insoluble contradictions in the economy such as inflation, severe balance of payments crises, and increasing class conflict as worker demands escalated, the military in Chile did not come up with a project of "deepening" ISI or moving from substituting for primary consumer goods to secondary, or capital goods. Rather, the development trajectory based on a state-directed inward orientation was completely reversed.

¹⁷ Eduardo Silva, "Capitalist Coalitions, The State, and Neoliberal Restructuring, Chile: 1973-88," 544.

domestically-oriented industrialists were further weakened as the trend towards the concentration of assets and capital in the hands of a few powerful conglomerates engaged in the financial sector, primary export sector, and internationally competitive manufacturing sector, was initiated.

The third important trend was the concentration of power in Pinochet himself rather than the military or the junta as a whole. Unlike other military dictatorships the Chilean military did not rule as an institution. There was a clear separation between the military as government and the military as an institution.¹⁸ For example, when officers were appointed to positions within the government they actually took a leave from the military and became subordinate to their superiors in government rather than superior military officers.¹⁹ This had the effect of ensuring the continuation of the long-honoured tradition in Chile of military subservience to government. Pinochet also increasingly appointed civilian candidates to key policy-making positions, thereby further separating the military as an institution from the primary power centres of government.²⁰ Once Pinochet had outmaneuvered any potential rivals for the position as head of state, military

¹⁸ Arturo Valenzuela, "The Military in Power: The Consolidation of One-Man Rule," in *The Struggle For Democracy in Chile, 1982-1988*, 22-23.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 34.

²⁰ Augusto Varas, "The Crisis of Legitimacy of Military Rule in the 1980s," *Struggle For Democracy in Chile, 1982-1988*, 77-78.

deference to him was secured. Respect for the tradition of a strict distinction between the military and the government meant that “any military efforts to check his government’s increasing concentration of power could be labeled political, and hence unprofessional.”²¹

The connections between Pinochet’s concentration of power and a transformative economic project lie in the fact that as Pinochet distanced himself from potential rivals, he increasingly relied upon technocratic segments within the state and his personal links with those who favoured a radical neoliberal project. It is important to point out that this project did *not* emerge from the Chilean business community as a whole but rather from within the state itself.²² Manuel A. Garretón explains that the transformative project came from “within the state apparatus by a technocratic sector partly composed of local academics and partly recruited from international financial institutions.”²³ The so-called Chicago Boys, whose name derives from the fact that most of them had received graduate training in economics at the University of Chicago, had a coherent strategy for the transformation of the Chilean economy which greatly appealed to Pinochet. Their

²¹ Remmer, *Military Rule in Latin America*, 127.

²² Manuel A. Garretón, “The Political Evolution of the Chilean Military Regime and Problems in the Transition to Democracy,” in *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Latin America*, edited by Guillermo O’Donnell and Phillipe C. Schmitter, 101.

²³ *Ibid.*

appeal lay not only in the fact that they were able to set out a detailed plan for economic recovery (their so-called "Shock Treatment"), but their "scientific expertise and non-partisan approach" gave them a certain credibility denied to the plans devised by Chilean capitalists or economists connected with political parties.²⁴ The prescriptions of the Chicago Boys were presented as being good for Chile as a whole and were not explicitly tailored to the interests of any particular group of capitalists. Finally, as Pamela Constable and Arturo Valenzuela point out,

Pinochet was especially intrigued by the Chicago Boys' self-described "revolutionary" aims to transform the economy and break with the orthodoxies of the past. The general yearned to be identified with a historic act of national renewal, and he decided these bold technocrats held the key to the new, prosperous future that would forever distinguish his rule.²⁵

Between 1975 and 1983 the Chicago Boys directed Chile's economic and social policies and initiated a complete transformation of the Chilean state, economy, and social relations. Their hegemony was largely unchallenged as the links between other representatives of capitalist groups and the government were gradually removed. The segments of capitalists who benefited from the policies devised by the Chicago Boys were those engaged in internationally competitive

²⁴ Pamela Constable and Arturo Valenzuela, *A Nation of Enemies: Chile Under Pinochet*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1991), 171.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

manufacturing (a very small percentage of Chilean capitalists) and those concentrated in financial and commercial sectors. This group of capitalists was very small but key leaders of the conglomerates comprising this group had long-standing relationships with the Chicago Boys.²⁶ For example, Sergio de Castro, who became Minister of the Economy in 1975, was a very close friend of Manuel Cruzat of the large Cruzat-Larrain conglomerate.²⁷

In contrast, the advances made by representatives of Chile's small and medium sized businesses, which were more oriented towards the domestic economy, were rebuffed by the government. This was a serious blow to Chilean businessmen who felt that their role in bringing down Allende had been crucial and deserved to be rewarded.²⁸ Guillermo Campero explains, "[p]olitically, the entrepreneurs had hoped that their *gremios* would be recognized and acquire institutionalized influence over social and political matters."²⁹ However, the view

²⁶ Eduardo Silva, "The Political Economy of Chile's Regime Transition," *Struggle For Democracy in Chile, 1982-1988*, 99-100.

²⁷ Eduardo Silva, "Capitalist Coalitions, The State, and Neoliberal Economic Restructuring: Chile 1973-88," 546.

²⁸ The role of Chile's small and mid-sized entrepreneurial sector was an important one during the last year of Allende's government. The *gremios* (entrepreneurial associations) were critical in disrupting the economy by staging strikes, withholding goods and crucial services, and arguing in the press that the military ought to intervene to save Chile from communism. See Guillermo Campero, "Entrepreneurs Under the Military Regime," in *The Struggle for Democracy in Chile: 1982-1988*, 128-132.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 132.

of the Chicago Boys was that they required complete autonomy from business representatives in order to "cure" Chile's economy. The "harsh medicine" meted out in the Shock Treatment caused significant hardships for Chilean businesses that did not have access to international financing and had not achieved international competitiveness. Moreover, the deep recession which followed the implementation of the Shock Treatment in 1975 hurt all business that relied on the purchasing power of Chileans. By 1978, however, the economy entered into a period of debt-fueled growth largely spurred by the widespread availability of cheap credit in an international economy flush with petrodollars. This eased the burden on Chile's smaller and middle-sized business community and their economic criticisms of the Pinochet government were temporarily muted.³⁰ It must be stated, however, that even though many Chilean capitalists had economic disagreements with the Pinochet government their political support was unwavering. The experience under Allende had so frightened them that the military government was preferable until any threat of socialism was forever erased.³¹

Nor did significant opposition emerge to Pinochet's rule from other

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 132-133.

³¹ Garretón, "The Political Evolution of the Chilean Military Regime and Problems in the Transition to Democracy," *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Latin America*, 103.

segments within Chile until the economic crisis of 1982. This can be explained by the intense repression visited upon all sectors which had supported Allende's *Unidad Popular* (UP) government and the total ban on political party activity. As discussed at the outset of this chapter, historically in Chile all political activity was coordinated and directed by political parties. Thus, the loss of party leaders as those on the Left were arrested, killed, or sent into exile, and the Christian Democrats were in temporary disarray, prevented the organization of opposition to the dictatorship.³² Any protests which did occur between 1973 and 1983 were spontaneous, erratic, and easily repressed by the authorities.³³ Additionally, union activity was harshly repressed as leaders were jailed or exiled and new labour reforms sharply limited the capacity of workers to express their discontent.³⁴ Overall, the forced depoliticization of Chilean society appeared to be taking effect. Organizing within civil society was limited to small groups concerned with coping with the severe dislocations imposed by the military's model of social and

³² Arturo Valenzuela and J. Samuel Valenzuela, "Party Oppositions Under the Chilean Authoritarian Regime," in *Military Rule in Chile: Dictatorship and Oppositions*, edited by Arturo Valenzuela and J. Samuel Valenzuela, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins UP, 1986), 212.

³³ Garretón, "Popular Mobilization and the Military Regime in Chile: The Complexities of the Invisible Transition," in *Power and Popular Protest*, edited by Susan Eckstein, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 266.

³⁴ Alan Angell, "Unions and Workers in Chile During the 1980s," *The Struggle for Democracy in Chile*, 188-210.

economic restructuring and the repression aimed at the popular sectors.

Institutionalization and the Constitution of 1980

Once Pinochet had succeeded in both concentrating his power and overseeing a transformative economic project he proceeded to institutionalize his rule. According to Garretón, herein lie the very first seeds of the conditions which allowed an eventual transition. Garretón explains that institutionalization of a regime requires that it undertake a *political* project. In other words, it cannot rule on the basis of sheer repression but must be able to reach into society with a coherent political and social, as well as economic project. The process of establishing political “rules of the game” paradoxically opens up a degree of political space within which dissent can emerge and “opposition groups can reconstitute themselves and social movements can be regenerated.”³⁵

The Constitution of 1980 also signals the solution to disputes between hardliners and softliners within the authoritarian regime. One source of resistance to

³⁵ Garretón, “The Political Evolution of the Chilean Military Regime and Problems in the Transition to Democracy,” *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Latin America*, 104.

Pinochet's concentration of power and attempt to prolong his rule came from General Gustavo Leigh. Eventually Leigh declared publicly his desire for a return to civilian rule and a transition to democracy. Pinochet's response was to legitimate his continued rule through a referendum in 1978 held amidst fraud and repression. Not surprisingly, Pinochet achieved a seventy-five percent approval rate. Following the referendum Pinochet orchestrated General Leigh's removal and began to further institutionalize his rule within the articles of the 1980 Constitution.³⁶ Within the Constitution a timetable for a transition from military rule was set out. The document allowed for Pinochet to remain as president of Chile until 1989 at which time the military would name a candidate (probably Pinochet) and a national plebiscite would be held. The president would then continue to rule for another eight years. The junta would continue to act as the legislative body until the election of a new (and extremely subordinate) congress in 1990. Moreover, the ban on political parties would continue until congressional elections in 1989.³⁷ The Constitution placed limits on political rights such as freedom of speech and assembly, while extending property rights. It also outlawed political parties which employed the discourse of class struggle.³⁸ Pinochet and

³⁶ Lois Hecht Oppenheim, *Politics in Chile: Democracy, Authoritarianism and the Search for Development*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 130-131.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 134.

³⁸ Remmer, *Military Rule in Latin America*, 162.

his supporters deemed this a "protected" democracy. Garretón refers to it as an "authoritarian democracy."³⁹ The document was made public on August 11, 1980 and subject to ratification by a national plebiscite within thirty days. Pinochet repeatedly declared that any failure of the public to ratify the Constitution would signal a return to the instability and uncertainty surrounding the aftermath of the coup.⁴⁰

The very ambiguous and restricted transition outlined in the 1980 Constitution was ultimately expanded upon to allow for a more democratic transition in 1988 and 1989. In 1988 over half of the Chilean population voted "No" in the plebiscite on the continuation of Pinochet's rule for another eight years and in 1989 Chileans elected Patricio Aylwin as president. In order to comprehend how this could have happened we need to turn to the events unleashed by the economic crisis of 1982. The crisis set in motion a process which allowed for the re-emergence of political party opposition, a shift in the balance of power among capitalists, and the emergence of mass popular protests.

³⁹ Garretón, "The Political Evolution of the Chilean Military Regime and Problems in the Transition to Democracy," *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Latin America*, 110.

⁴⁰ Oppenheim, *Politics in Chile*, 134.

Economic Crisis and the Emergence of an Opposition

The extreme neoliberal project implemented under the dictatorship interacted with conditions in the international economy to produce the most serious economic crisis in Chile since the Great Depression of the 1930s. I will briefly sum up the conditions leading to this crisis and then detail more closely the political implications for the dynamics of the transition from authoritarian rule.

A key contradiction within the project of the Chicago Boys involved their dedication to a fixed exchange rate which came to be increasingly overvalued as Chile's industrial capacity was nearly wiped out by policies exposing manufacturers to intense international competition.⁴¹ Secondly, total deregulation of capital markets and the growing concentration of assets among a few powerful conglomerates led to a situation wherein the financial well-being of the country was largely dependent on the health of economic actors who were increasingly involved in highly speculative activities. Remmer argues that this reduced the autonomy of the government and accounts for the regime's failure to alter course when economic warning signals emerged. She writes, "precisely because these groups were so powerful, the economic team came to equate their well-being with

⁴¹ See Jaime Gatico Barros, *Deindustrialization in Chile*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1989).

that of Chilean capitalism, threatening the very foundation of the state."⁴² By the early 1980s these conglomerates had accumulated staggering foreign debts and thus put pressure on economic policy-makers to retain an overvalued currency. Between rampant borrowing to finance imported consumer goods and the massive indebtedness of Chile's largest conglomerates, by 1982 Chile's per capita debt was among the highest in the world.⁴³ The first warning sign occurred in late 1980 when an important economic group collapsed, signaling to some the fragility of the economic "boom".⁴⁴

The real disaster struck after the drastic hike in interest rates in 1981 by the U.S. Federal Reserve and the resulting global recession and falling prices for commodities. Chile's policy-makers clung to orthodox measures, putting their faith in the automatic adjustment mechanisms of the free market. The manifestations of crisis included: an abrupt halt to international lending; a 14 per cent drop in GDP; over 800 bankrupt firms, and an unemployment level which

⁴² Remmer, *Military Rule in Latin America*, 167.

⁴³ Oppenheim, *Politics in Chile*, 152. Unlike many other Latin American countries which accumulated massive foreign debts throughout the 1970s, Chile's debt was primarily private rather than public. By 1981 the private sector held 83.9 per cent of Chile's net foreign debt. Silva, "Political Economy of Chile's Regime Transition," 107.

⁴⁴ Garretón, "The Political Evolution of the Chilean Military Regime and Problems in the Transition to Democracy," *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Latin America*, 111-112.

climbed to 28.5 per cent by 1983.⁴⁵ As the large conglomerates teetered on the brink of collapse, the government was left with little choice but to step in and assume control of ten banks and financial institutions. In reality, this meant that the public sector was assuming the private sector's debts. Regime critics sardonically referred to this as the "Chicago road to socialism".⁴⁶

The economic crisis not only destroyed the only firm base of support on which the dictatorship could rely but it initiated increasingly vocal dissent from various segments of society which had previously been acquiescent. Even the middle classes, which had been supportive up until that point, had their confidence in the regime profoundly shaken as unemployment and inflation soared and the gains made by the middle classes began to disappear.⁴⁷ Chilean businesses represented by the *Confederación de la Producción y el Comercio* (CPC) began to openly call for substantive policy changes, and an entrepreneurial revolt also emerged. In 1982 a declaration by an entrepreneurial association read: "We view

⁴⁵ Oppenheim, *Politics in Chile*, 138.

⁴⁶ Remmer, *Military Rule in Latin America*, 164. Another irony is that in taking over the collapsing financial institutions the government employed the same expropriation law used previously by Allende. Constable and Valenzuela, *A Nation of Enemies*, 197.

⁴⁷ Many of the gains made by the middle-classes during the economic boom of the late 1970s were artificial to the extent that they were fueled by debt. As Silva explains, "The middle-class, as never before, borrowed cheap dollars and consumed goods and services, most of them imported, that had previously been the preserve of the upper classes." "The Political Economy of Chile's Regime Transition," *The Struggle for Democracy in Chile, 1982-1990*, 102-103.

with profound alarm the destruction of the entire agricultural and industrial productive apparatus...".⁴⁸ Some groups of entrepreneurs began to undertake more explicitly disruptive activities such as suspending debt payments, organizing truckowner and merchants' strikes, and trying to form a national assembly to come together to pressure the government for changes.⁴⁹

The turning point came in May of 1983 when the copper workers' union- the *Confederación de Trabajadores del Cobre* (CTC)- called for the first day of national protest. The call was heeded by all Chileans who felt frustrated with the dictatorship and a wave of protest engulfed the country. Garretón claims that the mass movement which emerged entailed "a radicalization more visceral than ideological" and had an enormous impact on the regime.⁵⁰ That is, the regime now faced opposition on all fronts. The capitalist classes wanted policies aimed at relieving their debt burdens and providing conditions for economic recovery, and mass popular protests were calling for a more profound democratic transition. Additionally, political parties had resurfaced and began to take an active role in shaping the development of an oppositional strategy.

⁴⁸ Campero, "Entrepreneurs Under the Military Regime," *The Struggle for Democracy in Chile, 1982-1990*, 135.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 135-136.

⁵⁰ Garretón, "The Political Evolution of the Chilean Military Regime and Problems in the Transition to Democracy," *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Latin America*, 113.

It is important at this point to identify the key groups of actors involved in shaping the process leading up to a transition towards democracy. The strategies chosen and the manner in which actors interacted with each other and the regime had a significant impact on the resultant democratic government and the potential for the popular sectors to be incorporated into post-transition politics. A key determinant shaping the transition process was that there was no significant division within the regime itself between *duros* and *blandos* which can be said to have initiated liberalization. Rather, the conditions for liberalization were embedded within the Constitution of 1980 and the democratic opposition utilized the small space opened up by it to defeat Pinochet. Their success in defeating Pinochet is owed to their skill in orchestrating an opposition campaign and bringing together elements which had previously been hostile to each other (i.e., the middle classes and the subordinate classes). The weakness of the opposition and their failure to provoke an earlier transition derive from two main conditions: first, the fact that there were still significant divisions within the opposition, most notably over strategies for defeating the dictatorship; and secondly, Pinochet's carrot and stick approach whereby he co-opted some of the opposition (such as important capitalist groups) while continuing to repress mass protests.

The demobilization and marginalization of the popular sectors during this process are largely due to: a divided opposition and the ultimate marginalization of

the Communist Party (PC) along with their mobilizational tactics; the need for the opposition to operate within the strict parameters set out in the 1980 Constitution; and the moderation of much of the political opposition once Pinochet co-opted important capitalist sectors. The important actors involved in these processes include: the capitalist coalition, mainly represented by the CPC; the moderate political opposition, represented mainly by the Christian Democrats (PDC) and the moderate faction of the Socialist Party (PS); the radical opposition, represented by the Communist Party (PC) and the *Frente Patriótico Manuel Rodríguez* (FPMR); and of course, Pinochet himself.

Capitalist Opposition

Opposition to the regime among capitalists was largely limited to differences over economic policy. In other words, most of the capitalist sectors were ambivalent about democracy at best and hostile to a return to full democracy at worst. The capitalist class is not a unified actor, however, and different segments within it had divergent goals for economic policy changes following the crisis and also expressed differences over tactics for pressuring the regime. The smaller and medium sized businesses had never been entirely pleased with the regime's extreme dedication to free-market principles. They would have preferred more

targeted sectoral policies and a measure of protection for domestic enterprises. As mentioned earlier, however, the representatives of this sector had no influence within the regime and no access to policy-makers. The larger capitalists, those in the mining sector, landowners, and those with external orientations, were represented by the *Confederación de la Producción y el Comercio* (CPC), and members of this group had fewer disagreements with the regime's overall policies, but grew very concerned over the extent of the economic crisis. By 1983 leaders of the CPC formulated an alternative economic recovery plan which included: high exchange rates, low but differentiated tariffs with protection for some sectors, low interest rates, debt relief, and sectoral policies to favour construction and agriculture.⁵¹

The tactical goals of the CPC were to negotiate directly with the regime rather than engage in confrontational activities. The smaller entrepreneurs, however, were calling for a national assembly of entrepreneurs to vocally oppose the regime. Moreover, the latter invited representatives of labour to join them in their protest activities.⁵² The regime responded to this with threats of repression, for example, by preventing labour leaders from attending meetings and rallies, and

⁵¹ Silva, "Capitalist Coalitions, The State, and Neoliberal Economic Restructuring, Chile, 1973-1988," 550.

⁵² Campero, "Entrepreneurs Under the Military Regime," *Struggle for Democracy in Chile 1982-1990*, 136.

by giving small concessions to entrepreneurs to prevent further mobilization. Campero writes, "[t]his strategy effectively diffused entrepreneurial cohesion due to both fear and accommodation to government offers."⁵³ The second drawback for the small entrepreneurs was the lack of support they received from the CPC. The CPC had no desire to engage in political confrontation with the regime at this point and was trying to keep its demands limited to economic policy changes. Because they chose to negotiate with rather than confront the regime, Campero explains, "the historical relationship of dominance of this sector over the organizations of the small and medium sized enterprises was reestablished."⁵⁴ However, the regime was still unwilling to give in to the demands of the CPC and allow either a significant departure from their economic model, nor any representative mechanisms between business and government which would presumably encroach upon regime autonomy.

A turning point came, however, when the political opposition began to take a more coherent shape with the formation of the *Alianza Democrática* (AD). This coalition included elements from all sides of the political spectrum, from the right to the left (except for the Communist Party, a matter to be discussed in the next section) and began to give greater shape and direction to the mass popular protests

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 137.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*.

which were sweeping the country and calling for an immediate transition to democracy. The existence of a broad and encompassing political opposition allowed the capitalist coalition to begin to extract concessions from both the regime and the opposition. After the CPC's first tentative document outlining their proposals for "normalizing" the economy was rejected by the government, leaders of the CPC began hinting that they might join the opposition. Meanwhile the AD was desperately trying to secure an alliance with the capitalist opposition to the regime. Pinochet, realizing the potential dangers posed by such an alliance, began to make conciliatory overtures to the capitalist coalition.⁵⁵ Between 1983 and 1985 the CPC negotiated point by point their proposals for economic recovery. More importantly, the CPC succeeded in influencing the replacement of key ministers linked to the Chicago Boys with ministers with connections to their own organizations. For example, in 1985 the new Minister of the Economy was the head of the Chamber of Commerce and the Minister for Agriculture was a leader of the *Sociedad Nacional de Agricultura* (SNA).⁵⁶ In 1984 an advisory body comprised of business representatives was set up and "the business peak associations' access to policy-makers and participation in policy-making became

⁵⁵ Silva, "Capitalist Coalitions, The State, and Neoliberal Economic Restructuring, Chile: 1973-1988," 551-552.

⁵⁶ Campero, "Entrepreneurs Under the Military Regime," *The Struggle for Democracy in Chile, 1982-1990*, 139-140.

more routinized".⁵⁷

Once greater input from the capitalist classes was realized the resulting policy changes included: larger fiscal deficits; a reduction in interest rates; the initiation of public works to boost the economy and reduce unemployment; and for the first time since the adoption of an extreme neoliberal model, agriculture and industry were able to receive protective tariffs against unfair international competition. Silva refers to this change in policy orientation as "pragmatic neoliberalism".⁵⁸

Most importantly, as Silva argues, the concessions Pinochet made to the capitalist coalition delayed the transition.⁵⁹ The AD was deprived of an important ally when capitalists represented by the CPC became unavailable to pressure the regime for an earlier democratic opening than provided for by the 1980 Constitution. The smaller and middle-sized capitalists which were not represented by the CPC did join the political opposition when it was clear their interests were still being subordinated to those presented by the larger capitalist sectors. However, the AD required more powerful allies to be able to pressure Pinochet

⁵⁷ Silva, "Capitalist Coalitions, The State, and Neoliberal Economic Restructuring, Chile: 1973-1988," 553.

⁵⁸ Silva, "The Political Economy of Chile's Regime Transition," *The Struggle for Democracy in Chile, 1982-1990*, 113.

⁵⁹ Silva, "Capitalist Regime Loyalties and Redemocratization in Chile," *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs*, 34 (1992), 77-107.

into an earlier transition. While powerful capitalist interests were not available as allies for the democratic opposition, the AD still wanted to ensure that they would not oppose the goal of an earlier democratic transition. And, as Silva explains, "By 1985, capitalists had largely weathered the economic storm, now under control, and had developed a more or less stable relationship with the military government. As a result, the pragmatic neoliberal coalition began to maneuver to extract economic policy concessions from *Alianza Democrática*."⁶⁰ This meant that the democratic opposition to Pinochet needed to moderate its stance on economic policy. Silva writes that, "AD committed itself to the economic model of the pragmatic liberal coalition in exchange for acquiescence to political change on the part of capitalists and landowners."⁶¹ The failure to secure support from the capitalist classes, however, was compounded by a further weakness of the political opposition: the failure to unite the moderate and radical segments. This helps to account for the marginalization of the popular sectors in the later stages of the transition.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 93.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 79.

A Divided Political Opposition

Divisions within the democratic opposition were not limited to the radical versus moderate distinction. Divisions also existed between activity at the base and activity directed or coordinated at the level of political party elites. Nor does the latter distinction strictly follow radical-moderate lines. The main actors in the democratic opposition were political parties, which re-emerged after 1983, and the popular sectors. It is significant that political party activity did not openly resurface until the mass protests erupted in 1983. After the copper workers' union called the first national day of protest, the political parties took over and continued to organize monthly days of protests which continued for three years.

The Chilean experience runs counter to the generalization made by O'Donnell and Schmitter that mass protests only emerge following a rupture within the authoritarian regime. In the Chilean case, it was the eruption of mass discontent which compelled the regime to initiate an *apertura*.⁶² Garretón explains,

This "opening" represented an attempt by the government to recapture the support of civilian sectors that had distanced themselves from the regime as well as an attempt to involve the opposition in the institutional framework of the 1980

⁶² Garretón, "The Political Opposition and the Party System under the Military Regime," *Struggle For Democracy in Chile, 1982-1990*, 218.

Constitution.⁶³

The regime wanted to ensure that the opposition would be forced to operate within the institutions which favoured the continuation of authoritarian rule. The opposition tried to avoid doing so but ultimately was forced to subject itself to competition with the dictatorship within sharply circumscribed limits.

Immediately following the coup the earliest opposition to the dictatorship could only emerge under the protection of the Catholic Church. The repressive apparatus of the dictatorship was enormously successful in preventing the organization of opposition. The Church was the only entity which had a degree of immunity from repression and was therefore a haven for individuals and social groups of all ideological backgrounds which feared persecution. The principal criticisms issued by the Church were related to the regime's human rights violations. Even though the role of the Church was not explicitly political, it constituted an important vehicle for allowing the continuation of social organization while also providing the physical space for links between social organizations and party leaders. Consequently, the connections between social organizations and political parties were not entirely severed during the dictatorship. Nonetheless, organizing within the social groups marginalized by the

⁶³ *Ibid.*

dictatorship- notably the popular sectors- was somewhat more autonomous from partisan control than it had been prior to 1973.

Most of the grassroots initiatives were oriented towards enhancing the material well-being of the community. As I noted in Chapter 1, the bulk of those participating in these groups were women as the role of ensuring the survival of families largely fell on them. The predominant forms of activity, often supported initially by the Church, included: communal kitchens, consumer and seller co-operatives, sewing or knitting workshops, and the like. Lehmann points out that less than one percent of those engaged in such groups were men.⁶⁴

Because political parties and other oppositional entities had operated underground since 1973 there were fewer links among organizations. More importantly, it was difficult in this context to formulate a coherent strategy for a transition as most of the political parties made their own survival their overarching goal. When mass protests finally propelled parties into the open the opposition believed that sustained mobilization would cause the regime to collapse. Mobilization included strikes, mass absenteeism, work slowdowns, and mass demonstrations. Initially, frustrated members of the middle class participated in protests. However, the real core of the mobilization movement lay in the popular

⁶⁴ Lehmann, *Democracy and Development in Latin America*, 180.

sectors, especially those inhabiting Chile's *poblaciones*. *Pobladores* marched tirelessly and banged their pots and pans demanding nothing less than Pinochet's resignation.⁶⁵ One author writes, "*poblador* associations provided space for the resumption of political participation, and they became primary building blocks of popular resistance to the dictatorship."⁶⁶ The opposition parties, however, beyond directing protests and mobilization to pressure the government, had no real strategy for a transfer of power. In fact, the opposition was initially demanding Pinochet's resignation prior to negotiations with the military.⁶⁷ According to Garretón, this had the effect of actually strengthening Pinochet's hand because he was able to point out the historical continuity between political parties and the masses of angry protesters mobilized by the parties. This frightened the upper classes and even some members of the middle class. Ultimately, it marginalized those who continued to engage in protests.⁶⁸

Pinochet's initial response to mass mobilization was to appoint Sergio Onofre Jarpa, an ex-Senator of a rightist party- *Partido Nacional* (PN)- to

⁶⁵ Patricia L. Hipsher, "Democratization and the Decline of Urban Social Movements in Chile and Spain," *Comparative Politics* 28,3(April 1996), 281.

⁶⁶ Kenneth M. Roberts, "From the Barricades to the Ballot Box: Redemocratization and the Political Realignment in the Chilean Left," *Politics and Society* 23,4 (December 1995), 503.

⁶⁷ Garretón, "The Political Opposition and the Party System under the Military Regime," *The Struggle for Democracy in Chile, 1982-1990*, 219-220.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 221.

negotiate with the democratic opposition. These talks broke down fairly quickly as it became apparent that it was merely a stalling device on the part of Pinochet to re-acquire the support of the capitalist classes. Once Pinochet had regained the support of an important social base and a measure of economic recovery was under way, repression against mobilization re-emerged.

The lack of coherence and unity among the opposition was beginning to become a serious obstacle as Pinochet's intransigence became evident. On a general level, the opposition can be divided into those who felt that mass mobilization was to be employed instrumentally to compel the regime to negotiate a transition to democracy and those who believed the goal was popular mobilization with the aim of a total regime collapse and a transition to democracy led by the popular sectors. This distinction corresponds to the moderate political parties- Christian Democrats, Socialists, and the Radical Party- and the more radical parties of the left- the Communist Party and its armed faction, the FPMR, and initially, a branch of the Socialist Party- the Almeyda Socialists. Secondly, the distinction is more loosely linked to the differences among grassroots organizations within the *poblaciones* and the political party elites. As the strategy for a transition shifted from popular mobilization to electoral mobilization, those engaged in popular protests, mainly represented by the Communist Party, began to be excluded from the process.

The moderate opposition coalesced into the *Alianza Democrática*. The coalition included some smaller right-wing parties, the Christian Democrats, the "renovated" Socialists,⁶⁹ the Radical Party, the Social Democrats, as well as other smaller centre and left parties. Although they initially supported popular mobilization in the form of the National Days of Protest, the AD was firm in its disavowal of violence. This effectively precluded the Communist Party from joining the coalition. The AD felt that mobilization would place pressure on the regime and eventually negotiations for a transition to democracy would be initiated. In 1985 the Catholic Church orchestrated the formulation of the *Acuerdo Nacional*, which was signed by eleven parties, representing the right, the centre, and the moderate left. However, even within the *Acuerdo Nacional* an explicit strategy for a process concerning a transfer of power was lacking.⁷⁰ By 1986 another coalition of democratic actors came together to create the *Asamblea de*

⁶⁹ The debates and changing orientation of parties of the Left will be further discussed in Chapter 3. During the years of dictatorship the Socialist Party split into two different factions- the Altamirano Socialists and the Almeyda Socialists, so named according to their leaders. The "renovated" segment of the Socialist party was led by Altamirano. The most important change was that they significantly moderated their position and completely rejected the use of violence in achieving their goals. Additionally, their pre-1973 stance on eschewing alliances with centre parties was reversed. Consequently, the Altamirano Socialists and the Christian Democrats constituted an important alliance among the moderate democratic opposition.

⁷⁰ Garretón, "The Political Opposition and the Party System under Military Rule," *Struggle For Democracy in Chile, 1982-1990*, 223.

Civilidad. This group was somewhat more inclusive than the AD and incorporated grassroots organizations, entrepreneurial organizations, labour organizations, and other civic groups. During that year, however, other events contributed to a weakening of mass actors in the transition process.

Three specific events in 1986 contributed to the loss of support for a mobilizational strategy. The *Asamblea de Civilidad* had called for a nation-wide demonstration on July 3, 1986. The demonstration paralyzed Santiago for nearly two days and the confrontation resulted in twelve deaths and an act of unspeakable brutality by the security forces. Two teen-aged protesters were doused with gasoline and set on fire. This event constituted the last large-scale mobilization in which the moderate opposition participated. Secondly, on August 12, 1986 security forces discovered a weapons arsenal belonging to the FPMR. Constable and Valenzuela write that, "[i]t was enough to supply several combat battalions- and to vindicate Pinochet's direst warnings of a terrorist threat."⁷¹ Soon after the discovery of the weapons, the same group- the FPMR- staged an assassination attempt on Pinochet on September 7. The Christian Democrats and the moderate faction of the Socialist Party immediately denounced these actions. Soon after, the more radical segment of the Socialist Party also abandoned the Communist Party

⁷¹ Constable and Valenzuela, *A Nation of Enemies*, 293.

and joined the moderate opposition. These incidents resulted in a renewed state of siege by security forces. Ultimately, the moderate opposition withdrew its support for a strategy of popular protest.

Once the realization dawned on the moderate opposition that Pinochet could not be dislodged through mass pressure they began to give greater weight to a plan for defeating the general by the rules he himself had devised. After the failure of one last-ditch effort to have the regime cancel the plebiscite in favour of broader, multi-party elections, the opposition faced the dilemma of whether to recognize the legality of the 1980 Constitution by registering themselves as legal parties in order to participate in an institutionalized confrontation with the dictatorship. Ultimately the opposition realized that if they wished to be able to monitor the plebiscite to ensure no fraud occurred, then they needed to begin the process of registering themselves. Once the moderate opposition subjected itself to the parameters of the plebiscite and tried to defeat Pinochet in a political contest in which he had numerous advantages, the level of coordination required among the opposition meant that all popular or mass actors were marginalized.⁷²

The radical opposition was comprised of those groups not included in the AD. They came together to form the *Movimiento Democrático Popular* (MDP).

⁷² Garretón, "The Political Opposition and the Party System under Military Rule," *Struggle For Democracy in Chile, 1982-1990*, 227.

This coalition included the Almeyda Socialists, the *Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionario* (MIR), *Movimiento de Acción Popular Unitaria* (MAPU), and the Communists. The primary social base of the radical opposition was in the *poblaciones*. The role these protesters played in the period leading up to the transition was critical. These groups provided the core of the mass protest movement and for three years were heavily engaged in mobilization despite the fact that much of the repression was directed towards the *poblaciones*.

While organizing within the popular sectors preceded the 1983 mass protests, it was not directed at bringing down the dictatorship. One author writes that "[t]he groundwork for the popular protests had been laid by ordinary Chileans whose grassroots organizations were the first signs of the recomposition of civil society."⁷³ These organizations primarily emerged as a response to the dislocations and economic hardships imposed by the extreme neoliberal model and brutal repression under the dictatorship. The Church initially provided the most important support network for the emergence of organizations although eventually a certain degree of autonomy was achieved. Most activities at this level were not explicitly political, but they did contribute to nascent forms of collective identity according to some analysts.⁷⁴ However, once political party activity resurfaced,

⁷³ Oppenheim, *Politics in Chile*, 183.

⁷⁴ For example Philip D. Oxhorn, *Organizing Civil Society*.

partisan cleavages began to fragment the popular sectors, preventing them from participating collectively in the transition to democracy and thereby reducing their capacity to place their demands on the agenda for democratization. Most of the significant political parties had managed to sustain links with these sectors, but it was the PC which had focused most extensively on building a strong party base in the *poblaciones*.⁷⁵ In the end, the strategy of the PC negatively affected its social base within the popular sectors by marginalizing them from the moderate opposition.

Philip Oxhorn's study of the relationship between popular sector organizations and political parties reveals the continuity of political party dominance over all forms of organizational activity.⁷⁶ A significant feature of the Chilean political system has been the intimate links between political parties and all forms of social organization. Arturo Valenzuela and J. Samuel Valenzuela explain, "[p]arty militants were present in neighborhood committees, student associations, mothers' clubs, soccer clubs, and evangelical churches. They also structured the debate in labour unions, trade groups, and professional

⁷⁵ Cathy Schneider, "Radical Opposition Parties and Squatters' Movements in Pinochet's Chile," *The Making of Social Movements in Latin America*.

⁷⁶ This finding is made clear in his essay "Where Did All the Protesters Go? Popular Mobilization and the Transition to Democracy in Chile," 49-68.

associations."⁷⁷ While one of the principal goals of the dictatorship was to depoliticize Chilean society by breaking apart these links, Valenzuela and Valenzuela argue that this has failed to occur and party links to social organizations have been maintained, however weakened parties have been due to operating underground.

The *poblaciones* provided important bases for political parties as activity here was more difficult to repress than attempts at organizing within labour associations. Some authors, such as Oxhorn and Oppenheim, stress the tendency towards greater autonomy of grassroots organizations during the years when political parties had to operate clandestinely. However, Oxhorn also points out that after 1983 when parties re-emerged and directed the opposition movement, this tendency was undermined.⁷⁸ Perhaps the most telling example of this was the attempt among *pobladores* to create their own organization through which they could direct their participation. The *Comando Unitario de Pobladores* (CUP) held a meeting in 1986 in which it attempted to form an umbrella organization which would become their sole, legitimate representative. According to Oxhorn, other umbrella associations linking the *pobladores* were all connected to political

⁷⁷ Arturo Valenzuela and J. Samuel Valenzuela, "Party Oppositions under the Chilean Authoritarian Regime," *Military Rule in Chile: Dictatorship and Oppositions*, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins UP, 1986), 212.

⁷⁸ Oxhorn, *Organizing Civil Society*.

parties. And, at their meeting in 1986, party cleavages undermined the initiative to form a more autonomous and representative association. Over ninety per cent of the delegates were party militants, thereby perpetuating the Chilean tradition of transmitting partisan conflict through all layers of society. *Pobladores* without party affiliations were excluded from the process. In the end, the Congress failed and the potential for the popular sectors to create an overarching association in which their interests could be represented was lost. Oxhorn explains, “[q]uestions about the representativeness of the Congress and interparty competition for control over the CUP prevented it from assuming the leadership of a genuine popular social movement with strong roots in the *poblaciones*.”⁷⁹

Garretón also points out the disruptive influences of partisan dominance within the popular sectors: “[t]he Christian Democrats, the Christian Left, the Communist Party, and the MIR all tried to build up their own political bases in low-income neighborhoods; in so doing they created divisions among the poor.”⁸⁰ The inhabitants of the *poblaciones* were caught in the middle of the disputes between the moderate and the radical opposition. While the capacity for the moderate oppositional vehicles such as the AD to represent popular sector interests

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 234.

⁸⁰ Garretón, “Popular Mobilization and the Military Regime in Chile: The Complexities of the Invisible Transition,” *Power and Popular Protest*, 271.

may not have been terribly high,⁸¹ the strategy to which the radical opposition clung significantly harmed the interests of the popular sectors. Once the moderate opposition strategy had shifted to electoral mobilization and they explicitly condemned the kind of mobilization emanating from the *poblaciones*, the popular sectors were largely excluded from the process. The Communists, for their part, condemned the moderate opposition for participating in an illegitimate institutional context and urged the continuation of popular rebellion and resistance "by any means". However, by 1987-1988 the Communists were politically isolated as even the Almeyda Socialists abandoned the radical opposition to participate in the electoral strategy.⁸²

Now that the emphasis of the opposition was on defeating Pinochet in the electoral arena, political parties became the most important actors. And, because polls indicated that the majority of Chileans were concerned about the potential instability of a transition,⁸³ political parties participating in the mobilization of voters, "were endeavouring to portray an image of moderation, conciliation, and pragmatism that could be seriously undermined by apparently uncontrollable

⁸¹ Oxhorn's interviews with *pobladores* show that they did not feel that middle-class associations such as the *Alianza Democrática* or the demands embodied in the *Acuerdo Nacional* really represented them. *Organizing Civil Society*, 219.

⁸² Roberts, "From the Barricades to the Ballot Box," 508.

⁸³ Garretón, "The Political Opposition and the Party System Under the Military Regime," *Struggle For Democracy in Chile, 1982-1990*, 228.

social mobilization demanding redress for Chile's multiple social problems."⁸⁴ This is why the coalition which emerged to defeat Pinochet- *Concertación de los Partidos Por El No*- was organized in a rather hierarchical fashion with a tight nucleus of leaders drawn from the strongest parties to direct strategy. Oxhorn argues that "[t]he elitist nature of the transition required that the demands of all segments of Chilean society be moderated and their political participation managed by political elites within the limits of the electoral process."⁸⁵

The effects of a purely electoral strategy on the popular sectors were many. First, several party militants who had been instrumental in popular sector organizations were withdrawn in order to participate in the party's electoral campaign thereby depriving the popular sectors of important leaders. Secondly, the activity of registering voters allowed parties to penetrate even more deeply into the popular sectors diffusing the potential for a more autonomous collective identity to solidify.⁸⁶ And most importantly, the fact that many middle-class Chileans feared confrontational tactics meant that the opposition began actively to demobilize the popular movement. As I already pointed out, the close links between political parties and popular organizations meant that party strategy was

⁸⁴ Oxhorn, "Where Did All the Protesters Go?" 55.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 57.

⁸⁶ Oxhorn, *Organizing Civil Society*.

easily transmitted to the popular sectors. As one author argues, "a movement's strategies, tactics, and goals are often heavily influenced, if not directed, by the position of the party with which it has ties."⁸⁷ Hence, those groups associated with the moderate opposition (which was now more broad based than the radical segments) discontinued disruptive activities in favour of campaigning for the "No" in the upcoming plebiscite. Those segments of the popular sectors which were linked to the PC continued in their mobilizational strategy, but their tactics came under increasing condemnation from the moderate opposition.

Ultimately, the Communist Party changed its tactics and threw its weight behind the electoral strategy of the moderate opposition. However, its participation in the coalition was indirect. The parties of the marxist left- such as the PC- formed a subcoalition within the *Concertación* but they were not formally incorporated. Hence, while the previously radical opposition was no longer isolated, it remained marginalized within the democratic opposition.⁸⁸ Moreover, as Roberts points out, once the political context facing the opposition had changed, parties required political resources in order to be successful.⁸⁹ This gave the

⁸⁷ Hipsher, "Democratization and the Decline of Urban Social Movements in Chile and Spain," 284.

⁸⁸ Garretón, "The Political Opposition and the Party System Under the Military Regime," *The Struggle for Democracy in Chile, 1982-1990*, 229.

⁸⁹ Roberts, "From the Barricades to the Ballot Box," 506.

advantage to the more moderate parties who could appeal to a broader segment of Chileans. Among the parties of the left, it was the Socialists who would reap electoral advantages. Due to laws banning marxist parties the Socialist Party changed its name prior to registering in 1987. It became the *Partido por la Democracia* (PPD) and its “renovated” image of moderation allowed it to appeal to middle classes and professional groups. The Communists, on the other hand, because they had supported an insurrectionary strategy, were unable to draw support from a wider base. Furthermore, once they suddenly changed course in 1987 and decided to support the *Concertación*, they alienated some of their social base in the *poblaciones* who had become significantly radicalized during the protest period.⁹⁰

Conclusion

The plebiscite was scheduled for October 5, 1988 and during the months leading up to it the *Concertación* waged an extremely successful and coherent campaign. The plebiscite resulted in a victory for the “No” forces with 55 percent of the vote,

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 511.

while support for Pinochet was 44 percent. Elections were then scheduled for December 14, 1989. During the intervening period the *Concertación* had two important goals. First they had to prepare to wage an electoral campaign according to rules which gave the Right a significant advantage. Secondly, they began the task of negotiating with parties of the Right and the outgoing regime to reform the Constitution. This was an enormously difficult task as Pinochet's stated goals were to enshrine a "protected" democracy with the military retaining their role as the guarantors of order in Chile. The nature of these negotiations and the remaining constraints on the democratic governments will be discussed in Chapter 3 as they are related to the exclusion of the popular sectors.

In sum, the process of moving from an authoritarian regime to a democratic regime in Chile was one which was largely controlled by Pinochet himself. The extent to which his concentration of power prevented the emergence of significant splits within the military regime between soft-liners and hard-liners gave the opposition little opportunity to find allies within the authoritarian elite. Their only prospect was to find support from the disaffected capitalists after the economic crisis in 1982. However, Pinochet quickly removed that option by coopting a powerful capitalist coalition and allowing it to influence the policy process more directly. This placed further constraints on the democratic opposition because while direct support from the capitalist coalition would be impossible, the

opposition needed to ensure that they would meet no resistance from capitalist classes for a transition to democracy. This resulted in the moderation of the democratic opposition. In brief, an increase in formal equality in the political realm could only be realized at the expense of a perpetuation of Pinochet's economic model along with the inequalities it engendered.

The democratic opposition was compelled to further moderate their position once it became clear that Pinochet could not be pressured into a transition by mass mobilization. In fact, after three years of intense mass pressure, Pinochet seemed more entrenched than ever. Moreover, by 1986 and 1987, the crisis which had inspired the mass movement was over. The economy was growing and unemployment was receding. In order to maintain the support of the middle classes who were once again benefiting from Pinochet's economic policies, the democratic opposition had to convince them that a transition would not bring about instability. Therefore, continuity in economic policy was necessary to maintain middle-class support as well.

The purpose of this chapter has been to detail the way the demobilization of the popular sectors emerged out of the dynamics of the transition to democracy. The framework employed in this thesis analyses the way transitions, along with the elites that predominate in the process, are guided by an economic as well as political logic. Thus, I examined the way capitalist elites were able to shape the

alliances made within the democratic opposition and exert a moderating influence over them. Because of this dynamic, those groups which had served as the core of the opposition's mobilizational strategy became increasingly excluded from the process as the opposition moderated its tactics as well as its goals for democratization.

My approach in this thesis has also been to pay close attention to the links between elite and mass actors. In the Chilean case, these links are crucial for understanding the way the political elites were able to successfully demobilize the popular sectors. The fact that the democratic opposition was divided about the role of the popular sectors and the strategy of popular protest further weakened the potential for the popular sectors to play a larger part within the opposition. Most importantly, the historical continuity of political party dominance over social organizations undermined attempts on the part of the popular sectors to develop alternative representative mechanisms through which they could express their interests within the opposition and influence the process of transition. Consequently, as Garretón writes, these failures mean that the popular sectors "remain without a broad-based organization of their own through which their activities are coordinated and their interests collectively articulated."⁹¹ One

⁹¹ Garretón, "Popular Mobilization and the Military Regime in Chile: Complexities of the Invisible Transition," *Power and Popular Protest*, 271.

implication of a demobilized civil society and the absence of autonomous representative mechanisms for the popular sectors has been the continued exclusion of the popular sectors from post-transition politics in Chile.

CHAPTER 3

Popular Sector Exclusion After the Transition to Democracy

Popular sector participation in the second transition (i.e., towards a consolidated democracy) has been minimal. Throughout Latin America, hopes that democratic consolidation would be based on the genuine contribution and participation of all social groups, including the popular sectors who had been so heavily engaged in the mobilization and protests which undermined the legitimacy of the authoritarian regimes, have not been realized. As I illustrated in the last chapter, where authoritarian elites are able to exert significant influence over the process of regime change, pro-democratic political elites work at demobilizing those elements that are perceived as threatening by outgoing elites. Thus, where the transitions from authoritarian rule proceeded through elite-level negotiations, such as in Chile, Uruguay, and Brazil, the demobilization of the popular sectors was the outcome. The virtual exclusion of the popular sectors, however, does not directly follow from their demobilization. In fact, in many cases, the incoming democratic governments were declaring their commitment to building a more participatory style of democracy premised on an expansion of democratic potential at the local

level.¹ While certain limited instances of government efforts to create institutions through which the popular sectors can contribute to democratic consolidation can be detected, the performance of democratic governments in this regard has been fairly poor.

The theoretical framework employed in this thesis begins with the insights derived from transition theorists. However, as I argued in Chapter 1, there are limits to viewing the constraints to democratic consolidation as deriving primarily from the political realm. Thus, my approach in this chapter is to analyze not only the way the “path” of the transition constrains the incoming democratic leaders but also how the structural changes of the preceding authoritarian period undermine the capacity to incorporate the popular sectors. These changes introduce particular dynamics into the political party system and alter the relationship of democratic leaders to the popular sectors.

I am also employing a broader conception of democratization than is found in the contemporary literature on transitions to democracy. This is because, as I argued in Chapter 1, the criteria for polyarchy do not take into account the way

¹ See Philip Oxhorn, “Political Change After Authoritarian Rule,” *Journal of Latin American Studies* 26(1994); Eduardo Canel, “Democratization and the Decline of Urban Social Movements in Uruguay: A Political-Institutional Account,” and Ruth Correa Leite Cardoso, “Popular Movements in the Context of the Consolidation of Democracy in Brazil,” in *The Making of Social Movements in Latin America: Identity, Strategy, and Democracy*.

popular sector exclusion generally operates in new democracies. Most importantly, purely procedural conceptions of democracy overlook the problems which emerge out of constraints on participation and the inadequate channels for representation. I am thus particularly concerned with the way the system of representation inhibits the emergence of collective action at the base.

The explanation for popular sector exclusion is found in conditions which operate on two related levels. First, the very nature of imposed or negotiated transitions places significant constraints on incoming governments committed to democratic consolidation. I argue in this chapter that the failure of democratic governments to incorporate the popular sectors derives principally from the continual threat that *capitalist elites* as well as the military are perceived to represent. Thus, despite the influence that authoritarian elites continue to exert, it is not merely the threat of another coup that compels democratic elites to be cautious in social policy. Governments that are attempting to consolidate democracy operate in a context where the fear of provoking uncertainty, which is threatening to capitalist elites, remains high. Consequently, the overarching concern of governments in new democracies is to reassure the domestic capitalist classes that they have little to fear from democracy. Economic stability and maintaining the confidence of domestic and international investors will be paramount. Addressing substantive issues such as poverty and social

marginalization may upset the pursuit of economic stability and investor confidence. Therefore, rather than incorporating the popular sectors by creating channels through which they can express their needs, democratic governments try to limit the potential for marginalized groups to articulate potentially destabilizing substantive demands.

The second aspect of the explanation for popular sector exclusion emerges out of conditions which inhibit collective action at the base level. My framework in this chapter examines not merely the role of elites, but the interaction between elite and mass actors and the way elite actors are able to continue to exert a demobilizing influence over the popular sectors. That is, the popular sectors have not responded to their exclusion by remobilizing or collectively expressing demands for further inclusion into the democratic politics being constructed. The absence of collective action by the popular sectors is reinforced by the processes at work in the second transition. The nature of the regime's policies for addressing popular sector needs and the way regimes have tried to set up mechanisms for the participation of these sectors has actually resulted in a weakening of popular sector political activity. The nature of the political party system and the manner in which parties are conditioned by the dynamics of the second transition also affect the popular sectors and their strategy for achieving representation.

Constraints on New Democratic Governments: Fear of Authoritarian Elites and Economic Uncertainty

J.S. Valenzuela points out that, "building a consolidated democracy very often requires abandoning or altering arrangements, agreements, and institutions that may have facilitated the first transition...but that are inimical to the second."² Consequently, we must place the attempts to incorporate the popular sectors within the larger context of attempting to consolidate democracy. Consolidating democracy means overcoming or reversing the undemocratic (or even anti-democratic) nature of the "pacts" which secured a transition in the first place. In the Chilean case it also means reversing the authoritarian elements of the Constitution under which an imposed and highly circumscribed transition took place. In general, this means that elites who benefit from arrangements such as biased electoral systems or military tutelage must agree to submit to the outcome of more democratic processes. Crafting democratic institutions out of the transitional "pacts" requires mutual security among elites and the belief that further democratization will not be threatening to their interests.

Because democracy, as Adam Przeworski points out, institutionalizes a

² J.S. Valenzuela, "Democratic Consolidation in Post-Transitional Settings: Notion, Process and Facilitating Conditions," *Issues in Democratic Consolidation*, 58.

degree of uncertainty, the potential for defeat always exists.³ Democratic consolidation requires that defeated elites will respect the outcome of competitive politics by not resorting to threats of authoritarian reversals by the military or disinvestment by the capitalist classes. In a consolidated democracy, "[p]olitical forces comply with present defeats because they believe that the institutional framework that organizes competition will permit them to advance their interests in the future."⁴ Thus, the organization of competition must allow social groups to perceive that it is in their interest to comply with outcomes generated by democratic processes. Presently, in many of the new democracies of Latin America, the organization of competition still favours elite social groups connected to the authoritarian regimes.

Authoritarian Remnants in the Chilean Case

In this section I will discuss the way the constraints that emerged out of the transition from authoritarianism lead to popular sector exclusion. The first limit on the Aylwin government's capacity to implement its agenda emerged from the

³ Adam Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market*.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 19.

many remnants of Pinochet's dictatorship. Between the *Concertación*'s victory in the 1988 plebiscite and March of 1990 when Patricio Aylwin assumed the presidency, Pinochet succeeded in constructing numerous constraints on the incoming government's capacity to implement democratizing reforms. Many of the constraints derive from the anti-democratic nature of the Constitution of 1980 which the *Concertación* was unable to significantly alter.⁵ Valenzuela outlines a set of "perverse" elements which undermine the consolidation of democracy.⁶ The Chilean case contains numerous examples and those relating to issues of military tutelage have proven especially contentious. The Chilean Constitution stipulates the armed forces as guarantors of "the institutional order of the Republic," giving them a rather vague oversight authority.⁷ The armed forces have also maintained "reserved domains of power," another perverse element, through their dominance within the National Security Council. This body possesses a veto power over

⁵ Mark Ensalaco gives a good description of the 1980 Constitution and the negotiations among the *Concertación*, the outgoing regime, and the political Right for reforming it. While some important changes were made, many undemocratic features were left unaltered and the goal of constitutional reform remains on the agenda. "Out With the Old In With the New? The Democratizing Impact of Constitutional Change in Chile," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 26(1994), 409-429.

⁶ Valenzuela, "Democratic Consolidation in Post-Transitional Settings".

⁷ *Ibid.*, 63-64. Brian Loveman explains that the Chilean Constitution makes the "armed forces into a virtual fourth branch of government." "¿Misión Cumplida? Civil Military Relations and the Chilean Political Transition," *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 33,3(Fall 1991), 46.

government initiatives.⁸ Military autonomy is also embedded in the Constitution and consequently, civilian presidents do not possess the capacity to remove leaders of the armed forces.⁹

Valenzuela further explains that when the primacy of the electoral arena in shaping government policy is undermined by threats of authoritarian reversals then democratic consolidation will remain elusive. That is, when authoritarian elites can exercise influence over the government through intimidation rather than through democratic mechanisms such as building a party or through legitimate lobbying efforts, then the democratic process is subverted.¹⁰ This is precisely how Pinochet operated in Chile immediately following the transition. Less than one year after Aylwin assumed the presidency, Pinochet demonstrated his continuing power by ordering a military exercise in which troops throughout the country donned their battle gear. President Aylwin was not informed of the exercise and all Chileans perceived it as a warning.¹¹ Overall, the climate of fear perpetuated

⁸ Loveman, “*¿Misión Cumplida?*” 46.

⁹ President Aylwin did, in fact, request that General Pinochet resign from his position as head of the armed forces in the interest of democratic consolidation. Pinochet refused, however, and will maintain his position until 1997 at which time he is eligible for a seat in the Senate, where all ex-presidents are guaranteed a seat.

¹⁰ Valenzuela, “Democratic Consolidation in Post-Transitional Settings,” 68.

¹¹ Loveman, “*¿Misión Cumplida?*” 36-37. Pinochet’s anger stemmed from criminal investigations which were being made into his personal conduct during the dictatorship and the conduct of the military in regards to human rights abuses.

by Pinochet contributed to the need for Aylwin to exercise much restraint. As Brian Loveman notes, "Pinochet frequently threatened to repeat the '11th of September 1973' if national security were endangered."¹² According to Pinochet, any significant changes in policy direction could constitute a threat to national security, thereby greatly limiting the potential for the reforms necessary to bring about democratic consolidation. Consequently, many constitutional changes were not even attempted.

Between 1988 and 1990 Pinochet had passed a series of "organic laws" erecting barriers to future change. Members of the Supreme Court, appointees to the Central Bank, and members of the federal bureaucracy were hand-picked by Pinochet and could not be removed by the incoming civilian government.¹³ Pinochet also managed to inhibit future attempts to democratize local politics by appointing his supporters as mayors and members of municipal councils. Elections were not initially held at the local level and the incoming government could not remove those appointed by Pinochet. Clearly, Aylwin came to power in a context where numerous limits to an agenda for democratizing reforms existed and the visible presence of the military as a "protector" of democracy gave rise to a very moderate and cautious path lest the military be provoked into reversing the

¹² *Ibid.*, 40.

¹³ Oppenheim, *Politics in Chile*, 210.

transition.

Despite such limits Aylwin did have a strategy for democratic consolidation involving constitutional reform with the aim of reducing the power of the military, achieving democracy at the local level, and electoral reform. The existence of the need for electoral reform, however, came into direct conflict with attempts to bring it about. In early 1989 Pinochet had devised a new electoral law which had the effect of over-representing the Right in both the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate. A system of proportional representation was replaced by a binomial majoritarian system. Under this system two deputies are elected within each district. Two candidates from each party are on the list. The system has the effect, however, of preventing winning parties from getting both seats because to win they need to gain more than twice as many votes as the party finishing second. In a country like Chile, where the electorate has historically been divided into thirds, with the Right, the Centre and the Left each usually gaining about a third of the vote, this system ensures over-representation of the Right by allowing them to gain nearly half of the contested seats with only a third of the vote.¹⁴ One author writes that the binomial majoritarian system “virtually guaranteed that the composition of the Congress would have a minimal relation to the will of the

¹⁴ *Ibid*, 215.

electorate.”¹⁵ This electoral system also has significant implications for the party system by necessitating electoral coalitions. Competition is thereby modified by the need for the Left to ally with the Centre. This limits the capacity for the Left to appeal to the popular sectors on a more traditional Leftist platform of state intervention and the promotion of redistributive mechanisms, an agenda which would alienate the middle classes.

A second feature of the electoral system made the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate significantly smaller. The lower house went from 150 seats in 1973 to 120 seats in 1989 and the upper house from 60 to 26. The most serious affront to democracy was the existence of nine designated senators, appointed by Pinochet prior to his exit.¹⁶ This prevented the *Concertación* from gaining enough of a majority in the Senate to embark on constitutional reform. These conditions lead Ensalcado to claim that “[t]he new Constitution was hostile to the principle of representation.”¹⁷

¹⁵ Ensalcado, “In With the New Out With the Old?,” 418.

¹⁶ Eliminating the presence of designated senators was a primary goal of constitutional reform. While the *Concertación* was unable to achieve this, they did manage to gain, through negotiations with the Right, an increase in the number of senate seats to 36, thereby diluting somewhat the importance of the appointed senators. Since 1990 the government has continued to press for the removal of the institution of appointing senators. However, it was not until 1995 that the political Right, realizing that by 1997 the *Concertación* president, Eduardo Frei, would be able to appoint his own senators, agreed to reform. *Latin American Weekly Report*, November 16, 1995, 526.

¹⁷ Ensalcado, “Out With the Old In With the New,” 418.

Aylwin's Strategy for Reforms: Tax, Labour, and Municipal Democratization

Once a transition to democracy was effected, further democratization was attempted through negotiations between the Centre-Left coalition and the parties of the Right. The government's focus was on three particular reforms, all of which had important implications for the incorporation of the popular sectors. These were tax reform, labour code reform, and municipal democratization. Each of the three proposed reforms was to serve as means for a key aspect of Aylwin's campaign promise: the repayment of the "social debt" of the dictatorship. The proposed reforms represent an attempt to balance the need for social reform with the demands of maintaining Pinochet's neoliberal economic model. This indicates the extent to which an economic logic continued to exert pressure after an initial transition had taken place. Tax reform would allow revenues to be raised for increased social spending without incurring deficits, labour reform could ameliorate the most egregious aspects of the anti-labour attitude embodied in Pinochet's 1979 labour code, and municipal democratization could serve as a mechanism to foster a more participatory and representative democracy.

Most importantly, the manner in which these reforms were attempted and the ultimate form they took, indicate that the strategy pursued by the *Concertación*

was guided by an overarching concern for economic and political stability. Their strategy reflects the belief that democratic consolidation was best sought *after* economic stability and a reduction of uncertainty had been achieved. Carlos Ominami, the Minister of the Economy explained prior to the *Concertación's* taking office that three challenges would face the new democratic government: the first was the need to maintain macroeconomic stability; the second was the challenge of consolidating the export development model; and the third was the challenge for the government to "attain greater social harmony".¹⁸ Only within the last challenge facing the government could the issue of popular sector incorporation and the modernization of regressive labour relations assume importance. An agenda privileging macroeconomic stability placed a premium on restraining popular participation and moderating policy goals so as not to threaten the political Right or the capitalist classes.

Aylwin's strategy for pursuing these reforms coheres with these aspirations. It is not surprising, then, that he did not approach the issue of reform with greater vigour. Aylwin might have mobilized popular pressure for the passage of reforms necessary for democratization yet he chose a much more cautious and low-key

¹⁸ Carlos Ominami, "Promoting Economic Growth and Stability," *From Dictatorship to Democracy: Rebuilding Political Consensus in Chile*, edited by Joseph S. Tulchin and Augusto Varas, (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1991), 22.

strategy. Oppenheim points out that, "[d]uring the first one hundred days, a time when the newly elected government could have taken a high-profile approach, Aylwin proposed very little legislation."¹⁹ Garretón similarly charges Aylwin with failing "to take full advantage of [his] 'honeymoon' period to deepen democratic reform".²⁰ Rather than taking a high-profile approach and encouraging citizen mobilization to pressure the Right into supporting democratic reform, President Aylwin chose to negotiate specific issues with segments of the political Right, negotiations which occurred largely behind closed doors.

The Reforms

With respect to municipal reform encouraging democracy, Aylwin's initial proposals were rejected by the Senate. However, Aylwin later re-introduced legislation for municipal reform and embarked on a process of negotiating a more moderate version of the bill. Eventually, legislation was passed which allows

¹⁹ Oppenheim, *Politics in Chile*, 211.

²⁰ Garretón, "The Political Dimension of Processes of Transformation in Chile," *Democracy, Markets, and Structural Reform in Latin America: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, and Mexico*, edited by William C. Smith, Carlos H. Acuña, Eduardo A. Gamarra, (New Brunswick, U.S.A.: Transaction Publishers), 224.

competitive elections for municipal councils. While mayors are still not elected, the elected council will appoint the mayor. Municipal elections were first held in June of 1992. A second aspect of municipal reform was further decentralization of tasks. The responsibility for the delivery of key social services continued, under Aylwin, to be delegated to the local level.

The tax reform was hailed a success by the *Concertación* because it allowed Aylwin to increase social spending without incurring large deficits. However, as one analyst argues, the reform was neither far-reaching nor very participatory in its implementation.²¹ Delia Boylan writes that, "this reform was not a paragon of broad-based consultation and deliberation but a tactically shrewd, risk-averse political maneuver typical of democracy."²² The reform includes both an increase in corporate taxes and in consumption taxes. The threat posed to business was therefore muted because the burdens of reform did not entirely fall on capitalists. The reform raised corporate taxes from 10 per cent to 15 per cent, and the value-added tax rose from 16 per cent to 18 per cent. Even after the reform, Chile maintains one of the lowest rates of corporate taxes in Latin America.²³ The tax increases were only to be in effect for four years and then any

²¹ Delia M. Boylan, "Taxation and Transition: The Politics of the 1990 Chilean Tax Reform," *Latin American Research Review*, 31,1(1996), 7-31.

²² *Ibid.*, 23.

²³ *Ibid.*, 18-22.

continuation had to be renegotiated. Aylwin's successor, President Eduardo Frei, met significant resistance to an extension of the tax increases and, since 1994, the government has been deprived of an important source of revenue with which to address pressing social concerns.²⁴

The strategy for achieving the tax reform was premised on negotiations with a segment of the Right which, like the *Concertación*, wanted to portray an image of moderation and tolerance. The *Renovación Nacional* (RN) is a Centre-Right party which attempts to appear committed to the process of democratic consolidation. The government's consultative process for reform involved bargaining with members of the RN rather than engaging a broader segment of representative leaders of social groups. Boylan argues that this was a strategic calculation on the part of the *Concertación*, because by first securing an agreement with the political Right first, any opposition which might subsequently emerge from the *Concertación's* social bases- for e.g., from labour- would be viewed as destabilizing.²⁵ In other words, once an agreement was reached, with both sides perceived to have made sacrifices, outspoken criticism by social groups would appear to undermine the consensus and cast doubts on the *Concertación's* ability to restrain its social bases. As Boylan argues, "[t]ransitional governments, ever

²⁴ Pilar Vergara, "In Pursuit of 'Growth of Equity'" *NACLA Report on the Americas*, XXIX, 6, (May/June 1996), 39.

fearful that the prospect of democracy might be jeopardized, can be expected to engage in risk-averse strategies to reassure and guarantee the interests of dominant groups and classes.”²⁶

Labour reform was not an overwhelming success for the *Concertación*. While initially negotiations took place among the government, business organizations, and labour organizations, and a general agreement was reached on the principles of reforming the 1979 labour code, disagreement erupted when the reforms entered congress. The resulting reforms were very mild and labour leaders were understandably angry. In general, workers’ rights are still weak in Chile, most notably due to constraints on collective bargaining. The inability of labour organizations to effect more progressive reforms is consistent with the government’s commitment to reassuring capitalist elites. Alan Angell observes, “[t]he major concern of the government is the support from the business sectors and not labour.”²⁷

Overall, Aylwin’s reforms were extremely limited. One author claims that “[d]espite some important policy initiatives, by 1994 the *Concertación* had

²⁵ Boylan, “Taxation and Transition,” 25-26.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 12.

²⁷ Alan Angell, “The Transition to Democracy in Chile: A Model or an Exceptional Case?” *Parliamentary Affairs* 46,4 (October 1993), 567.

accomplished few of the promised institutional and legal reforms.”²⁸ Despite the failure of the government to bring about deeper democratizing reforms the *Concertación* did not lose the support of most Chilean citizens. In the 1993 congressional election the parties comprising the coalition increased their percentage of the vote to 58 per cent from 55 per cent in 1989.²⁹ The results of this election and the overall political and economic stability of the Chilean transition indicate that at present, most of the important social groups consider it in their interest to comply with electoral outcomes. However, this has not caused the government to feel secure enough to begin to create institutions through which the popular sectors can participate or to begin to promote policies which would serve the interests of marginalized social groups. As I will show in the next section, Aylwin’s attitude towards the popular sectors reinforces their exclusion.

The Popular Sectors in New Democracies

The tendency for popular movements to become more fragmented and less

²⁸ Brian Loveman, “The Transition to Civilian Government in Chile,” *Struggle for Democracy in Chile*, 308.

²⁹ Gerardo L. Munck, “Democratic Stability and its Limits: An Analysis of Chile’s 1993 Elections,” *Journal of Interamerican and World Affairs*, 36,2(Summer 1994), 4.

politically active following a transition to democracy seems to be a paradox of transition processes in general. That is, the return of democracy should facilitate the participation in politics of the popular sectors rather than inhibit it. Explanations for this tendency have been found in the nature of party politics and their dominance in the political system,³⁰ deliberate policies undertaken by the state to atomize the popular sectors and prevent them from collectively expressing destabilizing demands,³¹ and the heterogeneity of the popular sectors and the difficulty in creating a popular collective identity from which collective action may emerge.³² A further critical element is the gendered nature of the grassroots organizations.³³ Each of these conditions is present in the Chilean case and places constraints on the popular sectors' capacity to engage in collective action to pressure the government for a broader role within the new democratic process that is being forged.

³⁰ Eduardo Canel, "Democratization and the Decline of Urban Social Movements in Uruguay," 276-290.

³¹ Patricia Hipsher, "Democratization and the Decline of Urban Social Movements in Chile and Spain," and Scott Mainwaring, "Urban Popular Movements, Identity, and Democratization in Brazil".

³² Mainwaring, "Urban Popular Movements, Identity, and Democratization in Brazil," and Oxhorn, *Organizing Civil Society*.

³³ Verónica Schild, "Recasting 'Popular' Movements: Gender and Political Learning in Neighborhood Organizations in Chile," and Maria Elena Valenzuela, "The Evolving Roles of Women under Military Rule".

Municipal Reform

As mentioned in the previous section, a key goal of the *Concertación* government was to democratize local politics. This would provide the opportunity for the incorporation of the popular sectors by creating more participatory mechanisms. Municipal democratization would be combined with a process of decentralization of social policy to the local level. The municipal governments would then be charged with administering social programs and it was hoped that a new style of democratic politics at the local level would emerge whereby local governments would work with existing popular organizations to determine social needs and strategies for addressing them.

However, remnants from the authoritarian era initially worked against Aylwin's attempts. First of all, municipal reform did not occur until 1992. And, prior to withdrawing, Pinochet had appointed numerous individuals to local governments. Thus, for two whole years following the transition, the view from the popular sectors, and especially the *poblaciones*, was that not very much had changed.³⁴ Secondly, a key vehicle for organizing within the popular sectors, the *juntas de vecinos* (neighborhood councils), was undermined by laws passed by

³⁴ Oxhorn, *Organizing Civil Society*, 276.

Pinochet in 1989. These laws allowed for the creation of multiple neighborhood councils within a single territorial district. The mayors could then choose which of the councils to recognize and through which all subsequent resources would be channeled. This had the effect of creating splits in the *poblaciones*.³⁵ More importantly, the more representative and democratic neighborhood councils were often ignored as a site for the mediation of popular sector interests to the government.

The link between the mayors of the *poblaciones* and Pinochet also created the conditions for a sort of right-wing populism to emerge in some municipalities. During the electoral campaign in 1989 a right-wing party- *Unión Democrática Independiente* (UDI)- engaged in populist campaigning and tried to build a base in the *poblaciones* through their presence in municipal governments. Hence the UDI became known as "the party of the mayors".³⁶ The UDI still possesses a strong presence in some of the *poblaciones*. Since 1992 and the democratization of municipal politics, party competition in the *poblaciones* has increased, with the effect of dividing some of the popular organizations which had previously emerged independently of political parties.³⁷

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ Constable and Valenzuela, *A Nation of Enemies*, 288.

³⁷ Oxhorn, *Organizing Civil Society*.

Social Policy and the Popular Sectors: Fear of Populism and Provoking Instability

Aylwin's strategy for addressing popular sector needs represents a significant break with past democratic governments- especially from that of his own party, the Christian Democratic Party. As I mentioned in Chapter 2, it was the Christian Democrats, under Eduardo Frei, who first began to organize the popular sectors in the 1950s and 1960s. In doing so, however, they deviated from the conditions of compromise on which the stability of Chilean democracy rested. From the 1920s until the 1960s democracy in Chile operated within the confines of a tacit agreement among political elites that the rural sectors and the urban popular sectors would remain unorganized and effectively excluded.³⁸ When the Christian Democratic Party displaced the Radical Party at the centre of the Chilean political system they began the process of organizing the peasantry and the popular sectors. When Frei became president in 1964 he initiated a series of policies directed at incorporating the popular sectors. One of the most important programs was the

³⁸ Frederico G. Gil, *The Political System of Chile*, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1966), and Paul Drake, "Chile 1930-1958," in *Chile Since Independence*, edited by Leslie Bethell, (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1993), 87-128 , and Ruth Berins Collier and David Collier, *Shaping the Political Arena: Critical Junctures, the Labour Movement, and Regime Dynamics in Latin America*, (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1991).

Promoción Popular which organized and sponsored the creation of neighborhood councils, mothers' centres, and youth centres. The government provided material assistance for housing projects and other projects to enhance services to the *poblaciones*.³⁹ *Promoción Popular* "also served as a mechanism for attempting to increase [P]DC support in the *poblaciones* through the establishment of patron-client relationships."⁴⁰ Instrumental in this task were Church related organizations already present in the *poblaciones* which were transformed into party vehicles and education and courses offered to *pobladores* through government sponsored services that could "transmit the party's ideology into the *poblaciones*".⁴¹ In contrast, President Aylwin's approach has been a conscious attempt not to recreate the same kind of paternalistic and highly partisan relations between the government and the popular sectors.

Two principles guided Aylwin's approach: first, policies were targeted to those most in need; and second, autonomous and self-sustaining organizations at the local level would be promoted. Hence, a principal aim was to utilize the grassroots organizations that had emerged under the dictatorship and establish links to local governments. This would foster the emergence of self-sustaining

³⁹ Oxhorn, *Organizing Civil Society*, 50-52.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 52.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

organizations and hopefully integrate the popular sectors into the political and economic system without creating patterns of dependency on government programs. Resources for social programs and social spending were extremely limited given the need to maintain macroeconomic equilibrium and the confidence of the capitalist classes.

Two of the main vehicles to this end were the *División de Organizaciones Sociales* (DOS) and the *Fondo de Solidaridad e Inversión Social* (FOSIS). The DOS was set up to serve as a link between the government and organizations within the popular sectors. Its role is to encourage "self-help" rather than act as a vehicle through which the government would construct patron-client relations with the popular sectors. Oxhorn writes that, "[t]he DOS seeks to moderate popular expectations by reinforcing popular organizations as alternatives to state action for resolving problems faced by the popular sectors."⁴² Thus, the experiences of popular sector organizing to cope with material hardships under the dictatorship were to constitute a foundation for building more active and autonomous organizations in the popular sectors under democracy. However, the DOS is little more than symbolic at this point given that the overwhelming problem for most grassroots organizations is the lack of funds. Many organizations which exist at

⁴² *Ibid.* 262.

the local level continue to receive funding from the Church or from NGOs. In brief, few grassroots initiatives have managed to achieve high levels of self-sufficiency.

The second important vehicle for fostering autonomous and self-sustaining development within the popular sectors is the FOSIS. Again, the aim is to implement development projects in a decentralized manner with an emphasis on recipients' participation in formulation and implementation. The main targets are the poorest sectors and the objective is to create opportunities for productive employment. The FOSIS merely provides the financing for projects while the implementation is left to NGOs or groups within the popular sectors.⁴³ The projects usually try to promote micro-enterprises in an attempt to integrate the most marginalized groups (for e.g., youth and *campesinos*) into the market system.⁴⁴ The belief which underpins this program is that exclusion from participating in the market is the root of the social and political marginalization and hence needs to be addressed first. The program unfortunately suffers from a debilitating weakness- extremely inadequate financing. Because the program receives a mere one percent of all social spending, Pilar Vergara argues that, "the

⁴³ Pilar Vergara, "In Pursuit of Growth With Equity," *NACLA*, 38.

⁴⁴ Pilar Vergara, "Market Economy, Social Welfare and Democratic Consolidation in Chile," *Democracy, Markets, and Structural Reform in Latin America*, 250.

FOSIS program is ill-equipped to become the Aylwin government's principal instrument for combating extreme poverty."⁴⁵

Social reforms since the transition to democracy have resulted in gains in reducing poverty. While these gains are important and impressive, they are not sufficient. A poll taken after Aylwin's term ended indicated that the social services sector was far from functioning well and providing for those Chileans who needed it most. And, poverty was still the third most grave public concern, with 41 percent of the public expressing concern over the persistence of poverty and inequality.⁴⁶

Moreover, while poverty has been reduced mainly because of sustained economic growth, *inequality* has worsened since the transition in 1989.⁴⁷ In 1989 the ratio between the income share of the top 20 percent and the bottom 20 percent was 17 percent but it grew to 18.3 percent by 1992. Despite the best record of economic growth in the region, Chile has the second most uneven pattern of distribution, following Brazil.⁴⁸ One analyst explains that "state social spending

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ Alan Angell and Carol Graham, "Can Social Sector Reform Make Adjustment Sustainable and Equitable? Lessons from Chile and Venezuela," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 27(1995), 208.

⁴⁷ David Hojman, "Poverty and Inequality in Chile: Are Democratic Politics and Neoliberal Economics Good for You?," 73-96.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 75.

has historically been the principal mechanism in Chile by which social inequalities were reduced and channels of social mobility opened.”⁴⁹ However, given the fiscal constraints, spending levels have shrunk to the extent that the state is no longer assuming this function.

Demobilization and Division

Aside from failing to overcome the economic and social marginalization faced by the urban poor, Aylwin’s policies of targeting specific groups among the popular sectors have the effect of inhibiting, rather than promoting, a broad based movement from emerging. One reason for this is the conflict that often surrounds the issue of formalizing and legalizing popular organizations. Oxhorn quotes one *poblador* as saying, “[t]he only way to get resources is through legalization.”⁵⁰ That is, popular organizations that wish to receive benefits from the government or have projects approved and financed, need to have legal recognition first. Oxhorn points out the problems this causes for some *poblaciones*. He claims that divisions or disagreements often ensue because of the hesitancy among many of the

⁴⁹ Vergara, *NACLA*, 39.

⁵⁰ Oxhorn, *Organizing Civil Society*, 274.

pobladores to work with the government. Given that the popular sectors and especially the *poblaciones* were the main targets of state repression for sixteen years, remnants of distrust of the state apparatus are not surprising. Hence, some popular sector organizations did not want to pursue legal status.⁵¹

Patricia Hipsher offers the example of the government's housing subsidy program to demonstrate how government policy causes both divisions among *pobladores* as well as inhibiting collective action.⁵² Housing benefits are given to committees of organized *pobladores* based on how many points each family within the organization has. However, the housing subsidy program weakens popular sector organizations by placing a fairly low ceiling on the number of points a committee can receive. Extra members do not, therefore, translate into more points for the group. Hence, it encourages the proliferation of smaller groups rather than the emergence of a broad-based *poblador* organization. The program also works in a more direct way to inhibit collective action. The committees must have legal status to register for housing benefits, and this status can be revoked if members of the group engage in "extralegal" acts of disruptive mobilization.⁵³ However, it is through the mobilization of protest and collective acts such as land

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 273-374.

⁵² Hipsher, "The Decline of Urban Popular Movements in Chile and Spain".

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 286.

seizures that the popular sectors have historically expressed themselves. Hence, government policies which encroach upon their capacity to employ these tactics deprive the popular sectors of their principal method for advancing their demands.

The *Concertación's* attitude towards the popular sectors also explains why the new democratic government has not created a larger space for popular organizations to participate. This attitude is largely shaped by their desire to gain the confidence of the Right and the capitalist classes that they will not engage in fiscally irresponsible behaviour to solve social problems. The president's main advisor warned that, "[t]he main threat is populism, by which I mean the danger of responding to widespread social demands by making promises that outstrip the resources available to fulfill them."⁵⁴ The *Concertación* continued to stress that it was only through economic growth and prosperity that poverty could be alleviated. And, given that any more immediate response to popular sector needs was being equated with populism and would presumably provoke economic instability, social demands would simply have to wait. If the government was basically conceding that the unresolved issues of poverty among the popular sectors was not an immediate priority, then it is not very surprising that they did not work at creating channels through which popular sector's substantive demands could be expressed

⁵⁴ Quoted in Brian Loveman, "The Transition to Civilian Government in Chile, 1990-1994," *The Struggle For Democracy in Chile*, 305-306.

publicly. Oxhorn cites a Christian Democratic leader in the *población* department as saying, "I don't see real participation by the social movements yet, but I believe that this is a good thing because real participation can be dangerous in the present political situation."⁵⁵

Numerous other examples can be found which demonstrate the *Concertación's* attitude towards mobilization as a means to pressure the government. In 1990 a land seizure involving 800 families was roundly condemned by all the parties of the *Concertación* for being part of a mobilizational strategy intended to destabilize the transitional government.⁵⁶ After the land seizure, a collective action which in previous democratic periods would have inspired words of support from parties of the Left and the Christian Democrats, a Socialist member of the *Concertación* said, "We have to care for democracy. We don't want problems during this transitional period. We can't demagogically promote mobilization as a solution."⁵⁷

⁵⁵ Oxhorn, *Organizing Civil Society*, 286.

⁵⁶ Hipsher, "The Decline of Urban Popular Movements in Chile and Spain". Although, Oxhorn points out that the land seizure was actually organized by the far Right *Unión Demócrata* and part of their intention was to cause problems for the *Concertación* by drawing out the paradox of a Centre-Left government failing to address the critical housing problems faced by the urban poor. Oxhorn explains that, "The UDI knew that the government would not tolerate such activity and hoped to embarrass it by highlighting its inability to solve the desperate housing situation." *Organizing Civil Society*, 268.

⁵⁷ Hipsher, "The Decline of Urban Popular Movements in Chile and Spain," 284.

The *Concertación* has continued to condemn displays of collective action through which disagreement with government policies can be expressed. In June of 1996 when two Socialist Party deputies publicly displayed their support for striking coal miners, the PDC and PPD members of the coalition harshly criticized them.⁵⁸ This demonstrates both the government's stance on collective protest (through strikes and displays of support for this mode of action) as well as the growing problem of the distancing of the coalition's parties from the social bases which a Centre-Left government would normally represent. This indicates an emerging crisis of representation within the Chilean system.

The government has even proceeded beyond condemning collective mobilization and engaged in repressing such activities. A demonstration organized by Chile's largest labour confederation, the *Central Unitaria de Trabajadores* (CUT), was repressed by government security forces. The CUT had organized a "Day for Public Employee Dignity" to mobilize support for striking municipal public workers. The demonstrators, an estimated 5,000 of them, were met with water cannons and tear gas. When President Frei responded to the criticisms of this act of repression he argued that the government was unwilling to engage in "irresponsible, populist fiscal policy" in order to satisfy worker demands.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ CHIP News, *La Epoca*, June 18, 1996.

⁵⁹ CHIP News, *La Epoca*, *El Mercurio*, October 24, 1996.

These incidents and the *Concertación's* responses reflect a change in the type of citizen participation considered by the government to be desirable in the present context. The articulation of the will of the people is to be limited to institutionalized channels such as elections and lobby groups- activities which are least destabilizing in post-transitional settings. However, these avenues leave the popular sectors excluded from participation to the extent that the methods which they have traditionally employed to express their interests (land seizures, strikes, and mass demonstrations) are deemed illegitimate by the government.

Demobilization and Division within Women's Organizations

Verónica Schild explains that the present context is "characterized by a deep fragmentation and demobilization of women's movements and, simultaneously, by the 'institutionalization' of some of their demands."⁶⁰ In other words, women's contribution to the mobilization of protest in the 1980s resulted in gender issues being granted a space on the agenda for democratization in Chile, within the government and within the platforms of political parties. But at the same time,

⁶⁰ Schild, "NGOs, Feminist Politics and Neo-liberal Latin American State Formations: Some Lessons from Chile," *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* 1995 Special Issue: *Evaluating Experiences: Doing Development with Women*, 126.

women's groups, which did, after all, form the bulk of the popular organizations, have been subject to the same demobilizing logic as have the popular sectors as a whole.

There are many reasons for this, the most important of which was explained in Chapter 1. That is, tensions emerged when the smaller, locally-oriented women's groups that emerged in a closed political context attempted to integrate their experiences into reconstituted democratic institutions. As a result, women's participation became marginalized. The hierarchically organized and male-dominated system of representation, ruled by political parties, has proven to be an inhospitable climate for the participation of women's groups.

Maria Elena Valenzuela argues that the women's organizations which emerged *independently* of political parties in response to the dictatorship began to lose this autonomy once the economic crisis of 1982 opened up some political space and parties resumed their prominence in directing political activity.⁶¹ The women's movement was important precisely because in its mobilization efforts it brought about the participation of those normally excluded from political organizing.⁶² The women's movement was extremely diverse and organizations

⁶¹ Maria Elena Valenzuela, "The Evolving Roles of Women under Military Rule" *The Struggle for Democracy in Chile, 1982-1990*.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 183.

existed across class divisions. Eventually, an umbrella organization- *Movimiento Por Emancipación de la Mujer 1983* (MEMCH-83)- was formed, bringing together twenty-four smaller organizations. The goal was to organize demonstrations against the dictatorship and, in so doing, participate *as women* within the political opposition. However, while this movement emerged autonomously from the political parties, "it was not long before opposition politics engulfed these groups."⁶³ The principal problem was that the opposition was divided into two separate vehicles, the *Alianza Democrática* (AD) and the *Movimiento Democrático Popular* (MDP), and the women's groups eventually became subject to division over strategy, especially with respect to which groups they ought to ally themselves with. The women's organizations within the popular sectors eventually linked up with Leftist parties supporting the MDP and this caused tensions in the MEMCH-83. Valenzuela explains, "as the political spectrum became more clearly defined and as the parties began to act openly and freely, the different social organizations were heavily pressured to choose sides in the anti-dictatorial struggle."⁶⁴

The participation of women's groups in the democratic opposition has

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 172.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 173.

allowed women's issues to become a part of party platforms.⁶⁵ However, women have not really gained in terms of access to positions of power in government (for example, the 1989 elections produced only two female senators and seven female deputies), or in terms of policies which are genuinely aimed at enhancing the welfare of women. Schild argues that the new found consensus among the government, the Church, as well as many local and international NGOs, is such that development needs can be met by seeking a degree of "empowerment" which entails integrating popular sector women into the market system. This consensus, and the conception of empowerment it embodies, is in contradiction with the collective empowerment sought by women's organizations as they struggled against the dictatorship and fought for democratization.⁶⁶

Aylwin's policies, incorporated in the *Ministerio de Planificación y Cooperación* (MIDEPLAN) and the *Servicio Nacional de la Mujer* (SERNAM), the two main vehicles through which the interests of women in the popular sectors are addressed, were grounded in the belief that poor women can best be helped by projects aimed at creating micro-enterprises geared towards their integration into the market. This has not proven to be a successful strategy. More importantly,

⁶⁵ Schild, "NGOs, Feminist Politics and Neo-Liberal Latin American State Formations," and Valenzuela, "The Evolving Role of Women under Military Rule".

⁶⁶ Schild, "NGOs, Feminist Politics and Neo-liberal Latin American State Formations," 127-128.

Schild observes that shrinking resources and government control over development projects, through FOSIS and SERNAM, mean that women's groups are increasingly competing with one another. This competition is compelling them to be more concerned with portraying the right kind of image (i.e., market-oriented) in order to attract ever scarcer funds, as well as inhibiting the creation of larger, coordinating bodies.⁶⁷

Ultimately, the gendered nature of many of the popular organizations is contributing to the continual exclusion of the popular sectors. Because women's groups are being forced to compete in a context shaped by the state's market-driven social policy and a political system dominated by parties, a resurgence of women's collective action has not occurred. Paradoxically, a restoration of representative democracy has constrained the organization of women. Valenzuela explains,

The Chilean political system has no legitimate form of participation outside the political parties and labour unions, and the parties are not prepared to incorporate women on equal terms....The absence of other effective mechanisms for participation or influence in the political system (such as lobbies) excludes forces that have no representational capacity from the political process.⁶⁸

Given the dominance of political parties in the Chilean system, it is important to

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 137-138.

⁶⁸ Valenzuela, "The Evolving Role of Women under Military Rule," *The Struggle for Democracy in Chile, 1982-1990*, 183.

turn now to a discussion of how the party system has been transformed since the previous democratic period and how this contributes to popular sector exclusion.

The Political Party System

The attitude of the *Concertación* towards the popular sectors and their role within a democratic regime must be seen as emerging, not only from the dynamics of transitional processes, but also from the effects of authoritarian rule on Chile's political party system. While the dominance of political parties in the political system has remained unchanged since the return of democratic rule, it would be wrong to assume too much continuity within the party system since political parties were banned in the 1970s. In fact, a primary factor leading to the military coup in 1973 was the increasing instability and class conflict generated by highly ideological political parties.⁶⁹ Pinochet was extremely hostile to parties and repeatedly reminded Chileans of the danger inherent in partisan ideas. Due to their role in the breakdown of Chilean democracy in 1973, nearly all of Chile's prominent political parties underwent a process of critical self-reflection during the

⁶⁹ Arturo Valenzuela, *The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes: Chile*, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins UP, 1978).

years of dictatorship. Not only were some parties plagued by the possibility of complete dissolution due to the military's brutal repression, but by the late 1970s all forms of party activity were explicitly banned by Pinochet. Many important leaders were either arrested, killed, or forced into exile, and the relationships between parties and their social bases became exceedingly difficult to maintain.

Historically, the popular sectors in Chile have been represented by the whole range of political parties, from the Right to the far Left. This is not surprising given the heterogeneity of the popular sectors and the nature of party competition in pre-1973 Chile. Garretón explains that,

the dominant mode of political action consisted of organizing a social base in order to bind it to party structures and thus exert pressure on the state, at times demanding fulfillment of claims and at other times seeking to take control of the state itself.⁷⁰

However, given that the bulk of the popular sectors (except for the organized working class) were excluded from the terms of the "compromise state" prior to the 1960s, parties tended to concentrate on social groups such as the middle sectors, the industrialist and landowning classes, or the organized working class.

It was not until the 1960s that the popular sectors became targets of political party mobilization tactics when the Christian Democrats initiated their "Revolution in Liberty". The emergence of mobilization within the urban popular

⁷⁰ Garretón, *The Chilean Political Process*, 12.

sectors under Frei set the stage for the explosion of popular activity as Salvador Allende's *Unidad Popular* coalition of Leftist parties moved into the growing *poblaciones*. The popular sectors quickly became the core of support for the Allende government and their movement radicalized during the short-lived socialist government. When the "Chilean road to socialism" was abruptly halted by the coup the military's policies quickly assumed distinctly "anti-popular" characteristics. The main representatives of the popular sectors- the parties of the Left which comprised the UP coalition- were the principal targets of the security forces' repressive apparatus.

The Left

The Left in Chile was dominated by the Socialist Party (PS) and the Communist Party (PC). The Socialists were the more radical of the two and they eschewed alliances with centrist parties and other classes. Although the Communists were the more rigid and dogmatic of the two parties, their strategy for achieving socialism allowed for flexibility in making alliances. They had traditionally been opposed to an insurrectionary strategy and believed in the possibility of achieving socialism through the ballot box. The evolutionary model for achieving socialism advanced by the Communists caused them to be the voice of moderation within the

Unidad Popular coalition.⁷¹

The Socialist Party in Chile had long been subject to rifts and factionalism. In contrast, the Communists always maintained a strict sense of party loyalty and a hierarchy which allowed the leadership to be certain that the rank and file would submit to decisions taken by party leaders. The experiences of the dictatorship, however, reversed the positions of these two parties, as both underwent extensive changes. The PS was the largest party within Allende's coalition and their leadership was devastated by the coup. The factionalism which had plagued the Socialists prior to the coup intensified as the leadership, segmented from each other and their social base, contemplated their role in bringing about an authoritarian reaction to their project. By 1979 the party split into two distinct factions- the "renovated" Socialists, led by Altamirano, and the more traditional faction still committed to marxist-leninist principles, led by Almeyda. The "renovated" Socialists were critical of the project in which they had participated between 1970 and 1973. They believed it was too narrow and that it was unable to articulate a more encompassing vision of change for Chilean society.⁷² Many of the party leaders were exiled in Europe and became heavily influenced by events taking place there. Party elites hosted by Eastern European countries witnessed

⁷¹ Constable and Valenzuela, *A Nation of Enemies*, 274.

⁷² Garretón, *The Chilean Political Process*.

first-hand the absence of democratic freedoms and principles where “real” socialism existed. Debates underway within European Leftist circles influenced Chilean Socialist leaders as they shifted to a more social democratic posture. They became highly critical of dogmatic principles and came to accept democracy as an ideal in itself rather than as a means to construct socialism.⁷³

Perhaps the most important change was a reversal of their previous position with respect to allying with other parties and other classes. When a democratic opposition to Pinochet finally emerged, the Altamirano faction of the PS moved quickly to forge an alliance with parties of the Centre. This is of great importance given that the hostility between Center and Left parties prevented them from working together in the 1970s to possibly prevent the escalating conflict and polarization which led to the coup. The alliance between the Centre and the Left represented the first indication that democracy could emerge based on consensus and perhaps avoid the dangers of polarized party positions.

The Communists also endured a profound crisis after 1973 which resulted in reversals of their pre-coup position on many issues. They did not, however, undergo the same sort of factionalism as did the Socialist Party. In fact, their mode of organization, namely their hierarchical and tightly knit cell structure, left

⁷³ Roberts, “From the Barricades to the Ballot Box,” 501.

them best suited to endure repression and even maintain a clandestine presence among their social bases.⁷⁴ Within four years of the coup and the failure to win support from other parties, notably the Christian Democrats, for forging an "anti-fascist" alliance to oppose Pinochet, the PC's leadership began to reassess some of the party's principles. Criticisms of the party's moderation became more frequent as the dictatorship began to institutionalize itself. In 1979 the Central Committee took the view that a reformulation of strategy was necessary. The new party line incorporated the need to promote a "popular rebellion of the masses."⁷⁵ The leadership believed that "the only viable option was to mobilize a popular insurrection to confront the regime on its own, military terms."⁷⁶ Once the decision was taken by the leadership, it was quickly transmitted throughout the rank and file and did not meet with much disapproval or dissent given the coherent and highly organized nature of the PC. In order to carry out the party's strategy closer links were forged with the *Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionario* (MIR). The Communist Party also created the *Frente Patriótico Manuel Rodríguez* (FPMR)- in order to "activate armed elements" and operationalize their

⁷⁴ Cathy Schneider, "Radical Opposition Parties and Squatter's Movements in Pinochet's Chile," *The Making of Social Movements in Latin America*.

⁷⁵ Constable and Valenzuela, *A Nation of Enemies*, 274-275.

⁷⁶ Roberts, "From the Barricades to the Ballot Box," 499-500.

insurrectionary strategy.⁷⁷

The Centre

The Christian Democratic Party (PDC) had been the largest party in Chile prior to the coup. Its solid middle-class core and its role in opposing Allende made it rather more difficult for Pinochet to target PDC leaders for repression. The party had initially supported the military's intervention in democratic politics, and operated on the naive assumption that electoral processes would be restored once order had been reestablished. However, once it became apparent that Pinochet had no intention of returning power to democratically elected representatives of the Chilean people, criticisms from the PDC increased. The party was harassed by the military and numerous mechanisms put in place to prevent Christian Democratic elites from expressing publicly their criticisms of Pinochet and the military government. By 1977 all party activity was declared illegal and all parties "in recess".⁷⁸

⁷⁷ Brian Loveman, "The Political Left in Chile," *The Latin American Left: From the Fall of Allende to Perestroika*, edited by Barry Carr and Steve Ellner, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993), 28.

⁷⁸ Constable and Valenzuela, *A Nation of Enemies*, 280-282.

The PDC also underwent a fairly long period of disarray and tension within its ranks over the proper strategy to employ to pressure the dictatorship for a transition to democracy. Much of the internal conflict was between the *chascones* (long-hairs), the progressive faction, and the *guatones* (pot-bellies), the conservatives. The progressives pushed for alliances with other anti-regime actors, including parties of the Left, as well as a strategy of promoting popular mobilization against the dictatorship. The conservative wing of the party remained extremely hostile to communism and parties of the Left and wanted a strategy of negotiating with the regime and parties of the Right.⁷⁹ The tension seems to have been resolved in favour of the progressives when the left-leaning Gabriel Valdés replaced Eduardo Frei after his death in 1982 as leader of the party. Valdés immediately set about creating as broad an alliance as possible with the exception of any party supporting violence as a means to pressure the regime.⁸⁰ Thus, the critical alliance between the moderate Left (the PS) and the Centre was made possible. The Christian Democrats remained the most visible and widely supported party of the democratic opposition.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 285.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

The Right

The political Right in Chile seemed to lose all political ambition after the coup in 1973.⁸¹ They supported both the coup and the policies employed by the regime to stabilize the economy, to reverse Allende's reforms, and to demobilize the popular sectors by weakening organized labour and repressing popular organizations created under Allende. Because the parties of the Right were basically inactive during most of the dictatorship, the right-wing critics of the regime's economic model did not really have an organized forum through which their dissent could be expressed. It was not until after the economic crisis in 1982 that parties began to reconvene. Segments of the Right formed into the *Unión Democrática Independiente* (UDI), a party which continued to support Pinochet and his policies, and the *Renovación Nacional* (RN), a more moderate party that advanced democratic principles. Because the RN wanted to distance itself from the authoritarian Right and appeal to a broader portion of the electorate, they engaged in negotiations with the Centre-Left coalition and often supported key aspects of democratization.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 287.

The Party System and the Popular Sectors

The most important aspects of the changes in the party system are the moderation of positions, with the most prominent parties all converging near the centre and the alliance between the Centre and the Left. This represents a break with past traditions in Chile where parties were much further apart in their ideological positions and a hostility between the Centre and the Left laid the way for democratic breakdown.

Marcelo Cavarozzi considers the alliance between the Socialists and the Christian Democrats to be a crucial "elite settlement" which provided the necessary foundation for a transition to democracy to proceed.⁸² Most importantly, the two parties agreed not only to form an alliance to oppose Pinochet but to maintain that alliance by presenting a joint presidential candidate should they win the plebiscite.⁸³ This moderate pro-democratic alliance was further reinforced by settlements with the moderate RN which agreed to support democratic "rules of the game".⁸⁴ Consequently, only two segments were

⁸² Marcelo Cavarozzi, "Patterns of Elite Negotiation and Confrontation in Argentina and Chile," *Elites and Democratic Consolidation in Latin American and Southern Europe*, 208-236.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 224-225.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

excluded from this broad, moderate alliance- the extreme Right and the far Left. The influence of the parties representing these sectors (the UDI and the PC) has been significantly reduced as a result of their absence from the negotiations prior to and since the transition.

Overall, the moderation of the Left and its alliance with the PDC has reinforced the exclusion of the popular sectors. The PC has been left with little influence and the Socialists and the Christian Democrats which would both normally try to mobilize support among the popular sectors and employ popular mobilization to pressure governments now *are* the government. As Garretón points out, this creates an absence of *social* opposition to the government. That is, the parties which would historically pressure the government for social reforms promoting popular sector interests now constitute the government and this leaves the popular sectors with inadequate means of representation given the moderate policies of the Centre-Left coalition. Garretón explains that, "[t]he political sectors that traditionally represented and mediated social conflict in civil society and who articulated projects of social change are now part of the governing coalition."⁸⁵ It is not surprising, then, that criticisms of the governing coalition highlight the problem of the growing distance between the government and its

⁸⁵ Garretón, "The Political Dimension of Processes of Transformation in Chile," *Democracy, Markets, and Structural Reform in Latin America*. 228.

social bases. This is especially relevant for the Socialist Party which now has to “divide its loyalties between its working class base and the demands of a governing coalition of parties,” and has to answer the criticism that the “perspective advocated by the party leadership does not seem to be supported at the grassroots level.”⁸⁶

In sum, the broadness of these alliances (the PS and the PDC within the Concertación), and the RN’s willingness to support democratic “rules of the game” and negotiate with the *Concertación*, has allowed the new democratic government to pursue elite-level, behind-the-scenes bargaining rather than engage the broader public in the process of democratic consolidation. One analyst observes,

ever wary of political instability and military intentions, the *Concertación* has not risked the mobilization of its grassroots supporters who might demand more significant departures from the authoritarian legacy....The domination of the political process by an elite political class is as striking as its mirror image, the demobilization and depoliticization of grassroots actors.⁸⁷

The changes within the party system reinforce this tendency. A centrist shift in the electorate may be detected which alters the nature of party competition. The overall result is that the conditions under which popular sector incorporation occurred previously do not exist presently and hence, policies aimed at promoting popular sector interests would not be in the interest of the *Concertación* given the

⁸⁶ CHIP News, *La Epoca*, June 18, 1996.

⁸⁷ Robert, “From the Barricades to the Ballot Box,” 514.

electorate to which they are trying to appeal. This condition is connected to the social and economic changes which transpired during authoritarian rule.

The Popular Sectors and Changes under Authoritarian Rule

Chile's process of industrialization through import-substitution which began in the 1930s had resulted in the steady growth of an urban working class and a corresponding growth in the strength of labour organizations. It was through this process of industrialization, and a highly interventionist state, that the popular sectors were incorporated into the Chilean political process.⁸⁸ The model of development, the system of political parties and their fusion with social organizations (especially within the labour movement), and the steady incorporation of new social groups into the political process were all tightly connected.⁸⁹ The process by which the urban popular sectors were finally incorporated is one which Oxhorn terms "controlled inclusion".⁹⁰ That is, state

⁸⁸ See Manuel Garretón, *The Chilean Political Process*.

⁸⁹ Garretón, *The Chilean Political Process*, and Marcelo Cavarozzi, "Beyond Transitions to Democracy in Latin America," *Journal of Latin American Studies* 24, (1992), 665-684.

⁹⁰ Oxhorn, "From Controlled Inclusion to Coerced Marginalization: The Struggle For Civil Society in Latin America," in *Civil Society*, 250-277.

elites and party elites utilized their control over state resources to build channels of clientelism and populism.⁹¹ The popular sectors became more organized through the growth of unions and large labour confederations as well as the growth of popular organizations within the *poblaciones*. These organizations were firmly connected to political parties, however, with the result that the union movement and the urban popular movement emerging out of the *poblaciones* were often divided along partisan lines. As party polarization increased in the late 1960s and early 1970s, so too did conflict within the popular sectors. Consequently, as the mobilization of the popular sectors during the UP's term grew, conflict and polarization spread through these sectors as well, as the cooperation among political parties broke down and increasingly threatened the political system. The final breakdown of democracy in 1973 began the process of reversing the incorporation of the popular sectors as well as the conditions through which their inclusion into the system had been facilitated.

O'Donnell's theory of the emergence of the bureaucratic-authoritarian state argues that the contradictions within the ISI development model and its political corollaries- such as the mobilization of the popular sectors- creates the conditions for the emergence of a "coup coalition" among the capitalist classes, the

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 257.

technocratic elite within the state, the middle classes, and of course, the military.⁹² One of the primary goals of the bureaucratic-authoritarian state is to demobilize the popular sectors in order for a new economic model to be put in place. The capacity for the popular sectors to resist the necessary downward pressure on their wages and consumption must be removed and this can only be realized through an authoritarian state. This process began in Chile after 1973. Oxfhorn terms this phase "coerced marginalization". It consisted of a process of denying subordinate classes basic citizenship rights as well as substantive economic and social rights.⁹³

The transformation of the Chilean state, economy, and society had its most negative effects on the popular sectors and the institutions through which they had previously articulated their needs in the political system. Leftist parties were most heavily damaged, and labour organization sharply curtailed. Moreover, the nature of the economic model which replaced ISI had extremely negative implications for the popular sectors. As traditional industry collapsed under intense international competition in a virtually open economy, unemployment soared. Poverty increased more than twofold between 1970 and 1989.⁹⁴ Finally, the state retreated not only from directing and regulating economic activity, but also withdrew from

⁹² See David Collier, editor, *The New Authoritarianism in Latin America*, (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1979).

⁹³ Oxfhorn, "From Controlled Inclusion to Coerced Marginalization," 257.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 258.

the provision of social services. A program of "social modernization" transferred social programs to the sphere of the market. Health care, social security, pensions, housing policy, and large portions of the system of education were all transferred to the market and the private sector. The result was that those with financial resources had access to high quality services and the state provided only for those with inadequate means.⁹⁵ The popular sectors largely fell into the latter category, and hence became excluded from participating in the market driven system by their economic marginalization. Once the state retreated from the social sphere and only provided for those excluded from participation in the market, the quality of services provided to the popular sectors significantly declined because state programs were badly underfinanced.⁹⁶ The popular sectors under authoritarian rule were ultimately socially and economically, as well as politically, excluded.

The social structure within the Chilean population and the relationship between the various classes and the state changed considerably during the dictatorship. Because the growth of a middle class in Chile was intimately connected to the growth of the public sector, the middle classes did not initially

⁹⁵ Pilar Vergara, "Market Economy, Social Welfare, and Democratic Consolidation in Chile". See also Joseph Collins and John Lear, *Chile's Free-Market Miracle: A Second Look*, (Oakland: The Institute for Food and Development Policy, 1995).

⁹⁶ Vergara, "Market Economy, Social Welfare, and Democratic Consolidation in Chile".

fare well in the wake of Pinochet's economic reforms. However, subsequent economic growth after the 1982 crisis has significantly benefited the middle classes which are no longer synonymous with the public sector.⁹⁷ While employment in the public sector has decreased, white-collar employment in the service sectors, financial, and commercial sectors has increased and the middle classes have been growing steadily.

The middle classes, who withdrew their support for democracy in 1973, have, on the whole, benefited from the neoliberal model imposed by Pinochet. While they did ally temporarily with the popular sectors to engage in protests demanding a return to democracy, their support for the continuation of democracy may very well rest on the government's capacity to continue to deliver economic policies favourable to this group. Since the return of democracy, evidence shows that the middle classes have been the primary beneficiaries of government and social policies. The middle-income quintiles have actually expanded their share of income at the expense of both the bottom segment and the wealthiest segment.⁹⁸ David Hojman explains that, "[u]nder democratic conditions after 1990, the

⁹⁷ In fact, the public sector has remained hostile to many aspects of the neoliberal economic model due to the continual threat it presents to their position. Since the return of democracy much resistance to the government has come from public sector workers such as teachers, health care workers, and the like. These groups have been engaged in many labour disputes with the government and many strikes have occurred.

⁹⁸ Hojman, "Poverty and Inequality in Chile," 74.

middle sectors, who are both more articulate than the poor and better connected, had the power to influence political decisions in their own favour.”⁹⁹ Consequently, “it may be difficult to prevent the middle sectors from getting what they want.”¹⁰⁰ This puts limits on the government’s capacity to promote the type of policies which could relieve the economic marginalization of the popular sectors.

The Chilean economic and social structure has not only undergone internal changes, but has been transformed from a closed, inward-looking economy to one which is increasingly integrated into the international economy. Tariffs are low, foreign investment is high, and trade agreements have institutionalized liberalization. Moreover, these moves have garnered high praise in international circles and Chile’s model of economic development is being hailed as a model for other Latin American states to follow. Oppenheim explains that deviating from the model would consequently meet with international as well as domestic disapproval.¹⁰¹ Overall, increased reliance on international markets and foreign investment means that the *Concertación* is unwilling to stray from the course implemented under Pinochet. One analyst explains:

The international financial system doesn’t have a great deal of interest in the

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 83.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁰¹ Oppenheim, *Politics in Chile*, 209.

social and political needs of Chile....So the degree to which the performance of the economic team in Chile is able to convince needed investors, financiers, and others that the model has been maintained or has been shaded to a degree that is acceptable will, to a large extent, predict and determine the way in which the economy will get through the short fall from 1991 to 1994, the degree to which new investment flows will reach Chile, and the degree to which Chile's exports will find comparable or continued access to the industrialized countries' markets.¹⁰²

The transformation of the Chilean state and society reinforces the exclusion of the popular sectors. First, Aylwin and his successor, Eduardo Frei, have both responded to the need for social reform with rhetoric stressing the importance of integrating the urban poor into the market system while remaining hesitant to appear fiscally irresponsible. Therefore they have not really addressed popular sector needs with concrete economic or social policy reform to the benefit of the poor. While spending has increased it is *not* being distributed in such a way as to benefit the poor. Studies indicate that increased expenditures have not been directed at alleviating poverty or redistributing income towards the poorest sectors. Hojman observes that, "[g]iven the current economic and political economy conditions, Chilean development benefits the upper-middle quintile first, and then the middle-middle and lower-middle ones. Trickle-down towards the bottom of the income pyramid is minimal."¹⁰³ Finally, because so much more of the Chilean

¹⁰² Riordan Roett, "Commentary," *From Dictatorship to Democracy: Rebuilding Political Consensus in Chile*, 47.

¹⁰³ Hojman, "Poverty and Inequality in Chile," 89.

economy is now under the control of the private sector, the risk of government actions inspiring uncertainty in the capitalist classes and subsequent capital flight or disinvestment is quite high.

These changes in Chilean society have also affected the nature of political party competition. Because a transition to democracy was unfolding in the midst of sustained economic growth, the parties of the *Concertación*, even those on the Left, emphasized that they would not change economic policy. This allowed them to appeal to the broadest possible segment of Chilean society. While the popular sectors continue to support the parties of the *Concertación*, it is clear that these parties are not yet promoting the sorts of policies aimed at a genuine incorporation of these sectors into the political system. The criticism is still raised that the distance between party elites and their social bases within the popular sectors (i.e., labour organizations and popular organizations within the *poblaciones*) has not diminished since the transition. In fact, it is this very distance which allows the parties within the coalition to continue to put off the satisfaction of popular sector needs in favour of promoting economic growth to satisfy the middle sectors and capitalist classes. As Kenneth Roberts explains, “[i]t is precisely the demobilization of popular sectors which has granted socialist leaders the political

autonomy needed for their tactical shifts and political alliances.”¹⁰⁴

Conclusion

It is interesting to note that the parties with the greatest appeal since the transition are those which are either the most moderate- such as the Christian Democrats, or those parties on the Left and the Right which are “new” or “renovated”. The *Partido Por Democracia* (PPD) is a “new” party which was intended to be temporary and yet has grown into the second largest party within the governing coalition. The “new” party of the Centre-Right- *Renovación Nacional* (RN)- has gained more support than the traditional parties of the Right. The parties that still approach the electorate with more traditional appeals, such as the Communist Party (PC), are increasingly marginalized. The PC failed to obtain any representation in the Chamber of Deputies in the 1989 and 1993 elections.

Given these tendencies the failure of the *Concertación* to promote popular sector interests is less surprising. More important, however, are the constraints on new democratic governments with respect to incorporating the popular sectors. I argued in this chapter that transitional governments are overwhelmingly concerned

¹⁰⁴ Roberts, “From the Barricades to the Ballot Box,” 514.

with ensuring that authoritarian and capitalist elites not be threatened by a return to democracy. In the Chilean case this tendency is further reinforced because of the benefits the neoliberal economic and social model conferred to the middle and dominant classes. This places a priority on policy continuity and promoting economic growth. Both of these conditions are in contradiction to promoting the needs of disadvantaged social groups. This would require a shift in policy orientation away from strict adherence to market principles as well as an increase in state spending on social services. The fear remains that doing so would provoke economic instability and therefore meet with hostility from authoritarian and capitalist elites. Given the overwhelming power preserved by the military and the political Right in the Chilean transition, maintaining their approval is paramount.

Political elites in Chile believe that greater equality and the amelioration of poverty can only occur within an economic model that can sustain high levels of growth. Because of the failure of state-directed growth and the recent success of the neoliberal, outward-oriented development model, no change in economic policy is likely to find favour with political elites. Within this model any increased responsiveness to popular sector needs is considered populist and hence, irresponsible. Given this belief, the *Concertación* will not be inclined to create channels through which the popular sectors can express their interests because it is already assumed that responding to these interests would create instability.

CHAPTER 4

Conclusion: Some Implications of Popular Sector Exclusion for Democratic Consolidation

What lessons can be drawn from the Chilean case? I have argued that the causes for popular sector exclusion are derived from the dynamics of the transition from authoritarian rule and further, from the nature of the changes brought about by the authoritarian regime. The theoretical framework I employed in this thesis reconnects socio-economic factors to the political process model of transitions advanced by O'Donnell and Schmitter. In achieving transitions to democracy, I argued, formal political equality came at the price of maintaining unequal power relations in the economic and social sphere. I also focused on the way conditions emerging from an economic, rather than merely political, logic perpetuate popular sector exclusion once a transition to democracy has been secured. Unequal power relations in the social and economic realms, and the popular sector exclusion it engenders, are perpetuated by the new democratic government's fear of provoking economic uncertainty and instability. If democracy can only emerge out of a class compromise- one that favours capitalist classes because of their primacy in providing the necessary conditions for economic growth and stability- then, as Przeworski explains, "[w]e cannot avoid the possibility that a transition to democracy can be made only at the cost of leaving economic relations intact, not

only the structure of production but even the distribution of income.”¹

Because the new democratic governments must guarantee the maintenance of the current productive and distributive relations their responsiveness to disadvantaged social groups is undermined. Consequently new democratic governments will not attempt to build channels through which the popular sectors can voice their needs. Responding to these needs would break with the compromise and, according to party elites and government leaders, responding to popular sector demands is akin to populism. Consequently, political elites attempt to restrict, rather than expand, the potential for the popular sectors to participate and articulate demands which are viewed as destabilizing.

The dominant literature on transitions to democracy minimizes the importance of social and economic conditions for democratization. A consensus in the literature on “polyarchy” has led to a preoccupation with political variables, and thus the main threats to democracy in Latin America have been seen as coming from the military and authoritarian elites. As I argued in Chapter 1, this preoccupation compels most contemporary analysts of transitions to concentrate on elites as the key actors in processes of transition and consolidation. There is, therefore, a gap in the literature with respect to the importance of the way

¹ Adam Przeworski, “Some Problems in the Study of Transitions to Democracy,” *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Comparative Perspectives*, 63.

connections between elites and mass actors shape processes of regime transition and consolidation. In Chapter 2 I pointed out the way a close relationship between political parties in Chile and social organizations allowed political elites to exert a demobilizing pressure over the popular sectors in the democratic opposition. This relationship is changing somewhat, and while political parties are the dominant actors in the Chilean system of representation, I argued in Chapter 3 that there is a growing distance emerging between party elites and their social bases, especially with respect to the popular sectors. The absence of alternative channels of representation for the popular sectors is an important aspect of their continued exclusion.

My approach in this thesis has been to employ a broader understanding of democratization than is common in the dominant literature. In my view, the criteria for polyarchy are too minimalist and the exclusion of the popular sectors is rendered invisible by adopting a narrow procedural definition of democracy. Most importantly, the definition advanced by most writers today fails to problematize the absence of channels for the participation of disadvantaged groups within the popular sectors. This absence largely results from the incompatibility between the styles of participation embodied in smaller grassroots organizations, often initiated by and comprised of women, and the hierarchical representative institutions associated with liberal democracy. These problems are, however, overlooked by

dominant accounts of democratization which focus more exclusively on elites in a highly circumscribed political realm. One of the most serious implications which emerges from this gap in the literature is that the threat to democracy posed by the continued exclusion of the popular sectors will not be apprehended.

Therefore, in this concluding chapter my goal is to draw out the implications of this problem. That is, how might popular sector exclusion undermine the process of democratic consolidation going on in the region? While I will draw most of my examples and discussion from the case of Chile, I believe the findings have broader applicability, although, where necessary I will point out the uniqueness of Chile's experiences with respect to other democratizing countries in the region. My argument is that, first, the consolidation of democratic regimes will be elusive until the popular sectors begin to be incorporated and channels for their participation developed. Secondly, the failure to do so will not only perpetuate "unconsolidated" democracies and the practice of what O'Donnell has termed "low intensity citizenship,"² but the disillusionment and apathy generated by the perpetuation of these conditions warn against overstating the commitment of the region and its citizens to the value of democracy. However,

² O'Donnell, "On the State, Democratization and Some Conceptual Problems: A Latin American View with Glances at Some Postcommunist Countries," *World Development* 21,8(1993), 1355-1369.

my final conclusion is more positive. That is, despite the threats posed by *desencanto* (disenchantment) and apathy, the experiences of the popular sectors of collectively organizing and mobilizing to achieve a particular outcome (democracy) will likely have a beneficial lasting impact on those who participated.

Causes for Pessimism: "Unconsolidated" Democracies and Political Apathy

Many authors agree that as long as the transitional features of new democracies persist, such as the undemocratic pacts and the requirement of moderation, then democracy has not been consolidated. There is an enormous paradox here: the very conditions necessary for providing mutual security among elites which allow a regime change to occur may undermine the necessary conditions for successful consolidation of the new democratic regime. The compromises and pacts which have decisive effects on who will "win" and who will "lose" under democracy reduce the uncertainty that, according to Przeworski, is a defining feature of democracy. As Terry Karl points out, "the very modes of transition that appear to enhance initial survivability by limiting unpredictability may preclude the future democratic self-transformation of the economy or polity further down the road."³

³ Karl, "Dilemmas of Democratization in Latin America," 13.

In brief, the trade-off between political democracy and maintaining a particular set of economic and social relations will result in "frozen democracies" which remain unconsolidated.⁴

As long as the leaders of the new democracies perceive that the capitalist elites and the military represent a threat to democracy if their interests are undermined then the popular sectors will remain excluded. In the Chilean case, as I demonstrated in Chapter 3, the armed forces have yet to be subordinated to civilian authorities. Consequently, policy shifts which deviate too far from the model implemented under Pinochet are perceived by the armed forces, principally Pinochet himself, as threatening and hostile to the beneficial legacy which the dictatorship conferred to Chilean citizens. Given the lack of progress on constitutional reforms in Chile, Pinochet's vision of a "protected democracy" has not yet been eradicated. Crucial democratic principles such as freedom of speech do not yet exist.⁵

Aside from the threat which the military may represent, new democratic governments are wary of losing the support of capitalist elites- both domestic and

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ A glaring example is the recent arrest of Gladys Marin, leader of the Communist Party, for making statements on the anniversary of the September 11, 1973 coup which were critical of General Pinochet. Although the *Concertación* has been trying to reform the Constitution to rid it of provisions which would allow this sort of thing to occur, they have yet to be successful without the support of the political Right in congress

international. Chile exhibits perhaps the greatest degree of economic policy continuity with the previous authoritarian regime, but today nearly all governments in the region are committed to neoliberal economic and social models. This places a premium on macroeconomic stability and on allowing the market rather than the state to solve persistent social problems. The failure of the market to solve problems of poverty and serious inequality has not yet produced sufficient skepticism among political elites to persuade them that the state, rather than the market, should intervene to resolve social problems. Thus, even though this skepticism exists amongst the popular sectors, their capacity to influence governments to alter course has been low to non-existent. Given that governments are unwilling to appear fiscally irresponsible and risk the disfavour of business elites, they will not be responsive to calls by the popular sectors for an expanded state role in alleviating poverty. Thus, popular sector participation in new democratic regimes is likely to be limited to electoral mechanisms in which they choose among political elites, none of whom are willing to risk instability by promoting popular sector interests. As one author comments,

It is ironic that, at a time when memories of dictatorship are still clear and the fear and threat of authoritarian regression remain foremost in the thoughts of political leaders, democratization has been based on the patience of those who can least afford it- the poor.⁶

⁶ Patricia Hipsher, "Democratization and the Decline of Urban Social Movements (continued...)"

This tendency, prominent in both Chile and Brazil, illustrates what O'Donnell has termed the "paradox of success".⁷ That is, a relatively economically successful dictatorship, which negotiated its withdrawal from power, has managed to retain reserved domains of power, and, because of its success, has not necessarily incurred the enmity of the capitalist elites or even the middle classes. This makes the "slow death" of democracy a possibility.⁸ In these cases, consolidation remains elusive because the bourgeoisie and the middle classes may be less hostile to successive authoritarian advances if they perceive their interests to be threatened by the democratic regime. The only consistent opponents to authoritarianism may be those associated with the sectors that were harmed most by the dictatorships- the popular sectors. However, given their exclusion from the new democracies they are the least likely to be capable of preventing the "slow death" by authoritarian encroachments on democratic institutions.

Given the failure of new democratic governments to incorporate the popular sectors, increased levels of apathy and *desencanto* are not very surprising.⁹ Oxhorn finds evidence of apathy emerging out of the Chilean transition because of

in Chile and Spain," 293.

⁷ O'Donnell, "Transitions, Continuities, and Paradoxes," *Issues in Democratic Consolidation*.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ See Ronaldo Munck, "After the Transition: Democratic Disenchantment in Latin America," *European Review of Latin American and Caribbean Studies* 55 (1993), 7-19.

the early demobilization of the popular sectors and a transition strategy favouring the role of elites. A mass rally called by the government in order to celebrate the swearing in of the first democratic president since 1970 was very poorly attended. A minister in Aylwin's government said, "We have lost the capacity to mobilize [people]...and the government has been preoccupied with its tasks in its offices, and we have distanced ourselves from our social bases."¹⁰

More significant is the fact that while popular organizations concerned with subsistence needs and material well-being are still growing, indicating very limited gains in alleviating poverty and social marginalization, popular organizations of a political nature have not resurfaced.¹¹ Oxhorn claims that most members of the popular sectors are unsure of how to organize opposition to a *democratic* government. In other words, while the mobilization of opposition to the authoritarian regime was partially orchestrated by political party elites, these very elites are now part of the democratic government which has yet to promote the popular sectors' interests. Hence, the members of the popular sectors are not only disillusioned with their leaders for not adequately representing them, but they do not really know how to respond to these frustrations. Oxhorn explains that, "most members of popular organizations are happy that there has been a return to civilian

¹⁰ Quoted in Oxhorn, *Organizing Civil Society*, 271.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 272-273.

rule and appear to be worried about the possibility of destabilizing the situation by applying excessive pressure on the government."¹² The prevalence of this problem would point to the improbability of a renewed social movement emerging from within the popular sectors.

Apathy and "depoliticization" appear to be increasing as the new democracies settle into their "unconsolidated" patterns. In Chile, a recent poll indicates that despite highly political debates and issues among elites- such as constitutional reform and leadership struggles within the ruling coalition- Chilean society is becoming less politicized. Forty percent of the population does not believe that it makes any difference which of the two coalitions (the Centre-Left *Concertación*, or the Rightist *Unión por Chile*) is in power.¹³ Analysts say this poll indicates that "political apathy reflects the growing conviction that parties are not addressing the people's most pressing concerns."¹⁴ Also telling is the finding that apathy is much greater among the poor, while the more affluent tend to be more politicized.¹⁵

Indifference to which party or coalition governs the country may indicate that Latin Americans understand the numerous constraints placed on their

¹² *Ibid.*, 277.

¹³ *Latin American Weekly Report*, January 25, 1996, 30-31.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

governments as they attempt to achieve economic growth and stability in a globalizing economy. Of greater concern, however, are recent findings that *regime type* is deemed unimportant by many Latin Americans. The problem of *desencanto* in the region as a whole is truly distressing. A poll of seventeen Latin American countries "indicates that more than a third of Latin Americans either openly support the return of authoritarian rule or don't care whether they live in a democracy."¹⁶ Even in Chile, where the prospects for consolidation of democracy are considered most favourable, the level of support for democracy appears to be declining. A poll indicates that the percentage of Chileans who believe that democracy is the best form of government has dropped from 73 per cent in 1989 to 54 per cent in 1996.¹⁷

These findings indicate that the citizens of new Latin American democracies are not confident that the institutions of liberal, representative democracy are very meaningful. A key principle of representative democracy is that citizens, through their representatives, are able to exercise a degree of control over their collective futures. As Susan Stokes explains, "[r]epresentation, the making present of one who is absent, allowed the interests and preferences of the

¹⁶ "Poll rates views on democracy," *The Globe and Mail* [Toronto], October 19, 1996, A10.

¹⁷ "Chilean leader confident of rule," *The Globe and Mail*, November 21, 1996, A11.

demos, though literally absent, to be made present in collective decision-making."¹⁸ But, because citizens are indicating that it does not matter who is in power, or worse, what kind of regime exists, one can deduce that citizens do not feel that they are able to exercise this collective control over their futures. Stokes explains that the electoral mechanism through which representation operates has two functions, a backward looking dimension as well as a forward looking one. The backward looking aspect can legitimate leaders by re-electing them or can repudiate them by failing to give them a second term in office. This function exists in Latin America to the extent that electoral processes are generally respected and conducted relatively free of fraud. It is the forward looking dimension of representative democracy which seems to be absent.¹⁹ This function is absent to the extent that political representatives do not offer meaningful alternatives to the electorate, thus minimizing the potential for citizens to effect outcomes by choosing among competing alternatives. Most of the transitional democracies have settled into promoting similar types of (neoliberal) policies for social and economic development. The lack of viable alternatives is exacerbated by the moderation of the political Left and their acceptance and promotion of the

¹⁸ Susan Stokes, "Democracy and the Limits of Popular Sovereignty in South America," *The Consolidation of Democracy in Latin America*, 60.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 61.

neoliberal agenda.

The continual exclusion of the popular sectors has been responsible for an increase in apathy and the perception that a transition to democracy has failed to give citizens the capacity to determine their futures. The most serious threat that this may pose to the future of democracy in the region is the potential for a growing portion of Latin Americans to be indifferent and ambivalent towards democracy. In the past, democracy was viewed by many scholars and activists as merely an instrumental good to be employed in order to achieve societal transformations (e.g., to socialism), and this condition produced fewer defenders of democracy as its principles were violated in the attempts to bring these projects about. However, after the horrors of the authoritarian regimes a new-found consensus emerged celebrating democracy as a value in itself. However, the value of democracy must be perceived by its citizens as well as its scholarly and activist defenders. In order to prevent the "slow death" of democracies citizens need to defend themselves and their societies against their erosion. If the majority of citizens do not believe that regime type matters then democracy as a valuable regime as an end in itself will lack the necessary defenders and the "slow death" will be more likely.

Are There Causes for Optimism?

Laurence Whitehead argues that there are presently no alternatives to liberal democracy and although "democratization was the result of a stalemate," the absence of alternatives bodes well for its future success.²⁰ He admits that there is a certain paradox because democratic consolidation is being attempted alongside neoliberal economic reforms. The neoliberal route to democratic consolidation is problematic precisely because it excludes many of the defining characteristics of democracy such as, "high participation, authentic political choice, [and] extensive citizenship rights".²¹ Consequently, many of the new democracies may continue as "unconsolidated" or worse- "façade" democracies- where only the most formal mechanisms of elections and a loose sort of accountability (i.e., the ability to refuse a second term to individuals or governments) actually exist. However, despite this "curtailment of political choice by market mechanisms; [and] 'façade' arrangements intended to project an external image of pluralism without disturbing traditional power relations," a reversion to authoritarian rule is unlikely.²²

²⁰ Laurence Whitehead, "The Alternatives to Liberal Democracy: A Latin American Perspective," *Prospects for Democracy: North, South, East, West*, edited by David Held, (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1993), 314-316.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 321.

²² *Ibid.*, 325.

Whitehead argues that the "national security" ideologies which supported the dictatorships of Latin America will not be able to generate support in the contemporary era where a global consensus regarding liberal democracy prevails. He concludes that while consolidation may be slow in arriving- and may take a generation or more- citizen pressure and the perseverance of representative institutions will eventually lead to the consolidation of liberal democracy.

A second cause for optimism can be detected by questioning the importance of the decline of social movements. That is, what does a decline in social movement activity and a less active civil society indicate? In the Latin American cases increasing levels of social protest and a "rebirth" of civil society emerged against the background of authoritarian political systems. The normal channels through which society expresses itself politically were closed and thus, activity assumed less conventional forms- such as social movements and popular protest. The goal of many of these movements was the return of democracy and the rights to participation and expression that go along with it. Thus, when democracy was restored the demobilization of popular movements should not have come as a surprise. That is, the overarching goal of the popular protests was realized. Once democracy was returned, citizens then had institutionalized mechanisms through which to act politically. Thus, in principle, a shift from mass protests to party politics entails an overall decrease in social movement activity and a

demobilization of civil society as people express themselves through more institutionalized mechanisms of representative democracy.

This occurrence alone does not pose a problem for democratic consolidation in Latin America. In fact, at first glance one might say that the lack of open protest activity indicates that people's needs are being satisfied by a return to political democracy. The problem emerges when we consider the inadequacies of the institutional channels through which certain segments of civil society can express themselves, especially when viewed alongside the continuation of high levels of inequality and poverty. As I have argued in this thesis, the popular sectors, those with perhaps the most serious needs, have been excluded from participating fully in the new democratic political systems. In light of the threats to democracy posed by *desencanto* that I discussed in the previous section, the problem posed by the decline of movements is the absence of significant pressure on new democracies to incorporate the popular sectors. Given the unwillingness of political elites to risk instability by addressing the concerns of the popular sectors the lack of popular pressure on governments seems to reinforce the popular sectors' exclusion.

Despite the fact the new democratic governments in Latin America have not gone very far in incorporating the popular sectors or in addressing pressing problems of inequality and poverty, many authors still point to the positive

experiences gained by members of the popular sectors in their struggles for democracy. Mainwaring argues that popular movements, at the very least, have "redefine[d] the parameters of the political struggle" by putting the interests of the popular sectors and their claim to citizenship rights on the agenda for democratization.²³ In other words, even though the demands of the popular movements have not been addressed by democratic governments, there is now a greater sense that the popular sectors, as a collective category with a specific set of demands, constitute a legitimate social group capable of acting collectively and deserving of citizenship rights. Sonia Alvarez and Arturo Escobar similarly write that movements have, "placed previously suppressed or marginalized demands on the political agenda- claiming rights to better urban services and land, as well as to increased popular participation and more meaningful democratic citizenship."²⁴

A more critical legacy of the popular protests and social movements may be the experiences gained by the members themselves and the individual and collective memory of achieving at least a certain degree of success in demanding change. Eduardo Canel, assessing the decline of social movements in Uruguay's

²³ Mainwaring, "Urban Popular Movements, Identity, and Democratization in Brazil," 153.

²⁴ Sonia E. Alvarez and Arturo Escobar, "Conclusion. Theoretical and Political Horizons of Change in Contemporary Latin American Social Movements," *The Making of Social Movements in Latin America*, 326.

transition, explains that,

even in cases when a movement does not achieve its stated goals, its activities might bring about other positive outcomes, like the constitution of new identities or the development of a sense of empowerment among social movement participants.²⁵

Likewise, David Lehmann highlights the potential for the grassroots movements throughout Latin America to generate future struggles for democratization: "[t]he movements will not fade away: they may become less prominent politically, but the practice of organizing and pressuring will be communicated to other people and other issues."²⁶

It is possible, then, that the legacy of popular movements may counter some of the dangers posed by the growing apathy and indifference to democracy in the region. People who participated in the struggles for democracy and formal citizenship rights may not be content to watch passively as the institutions and practice of democracy are slowly eroded or reversed by authoritarian elites. One might even be hopeful that groups that were able to organize collectively under harsh conditions of authoritarianism may do so again and reiterate their demands for a more meaningful and fuller process of democratization. If so, then Albert Hirschman's findings regarding the emergence of collective action give us cause

²⁵ Canel, "Democratization and the Decline of Social Movements in Uruguay," *The Making of Social Movements in Latin America*, 287.

²⁶ Lehmann, *Democracy and Development in Latin America*, 186.

for optimism. Hirschman finds evidence that collective action tends to emerge in locations where participants have had experience with radical or collective protest activity.²⁷ He terms this phenomenon "the principle of conservation and mutation of social energy":

It is as though the protagonists' earlier aspirations for social change, their bent for collective action, had not really left them even though the movements in which they had participated may have aborted or petered out. Later on, this 'social energy' becomes active again but it is likely to take some very different form.²⁸

In sum, then, the future of democratization in Latin America may still be open-ended. The continued exclusion of the popular sectors from participating in the new democracies under construction may eventually give rise to a resurgence in popular movements demanding social and political change.

²⁷ Albert O. Hirschman, *Getting Ahead Collectively*, (New York: Pergamon Press, 1984), 43.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

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