CONCLUSION

POLITICAL IDENTITY, POSTAUTHORITARIANISM IN THE 1990S, AND THE POLITICS OF THE POSSIBLE

■ The contrasts between the Chile of the 1960s and the Chile of today are apparent. Gone are the mass mobilizations in the streets and the calls for revolutionary change. Polling, focus groups, "spins," and sound bites have overtaken grandstanding, hand-pumping, and rallying militants as valued political party talents and resources.[1] While the Chilean Communist Party has by no means disappeared, it is no longer a major force in national politics. The military continues to be a significant factor, and for the past nine years, the Christian Democratic Party, the Chilean Socialist Party, and the Party for Democracy have been the leading partners in a governing alliance for democratization and peace. The Chilean executive branch and the legislature have engaged in consensus-based politics, the "politics of gentlemen."[2]

In contrast to the 1960s, brazen insularity has characterized 1990s Chilean politics. This insularity is marked by what has often been termed the "cupola politics" of the Chilean political parties and by what political thinker Luis Maira first termed an "encapsulation" of political decision making within the executive branch. Sociologist Tomás Moulián asserts that "an exaggerated political elitism" best describes contemporary Chilean politics.[3] Certainly this is not atypical of regime transitions.[4] And in Chile, where political and ideological divides ran deep and the repression of politics was so prolonged, it should not be surprising that throughout the 1990s, the *process* of consensus-building within the political elite appears to have dominated politics as much as program itself.

Underlying this elite insularity and consensus are complex and instructive realities. First, in addition to the institutional parameters of the 1980 constitution, a crucial source of the encapsulation and consensus of the past decade has been latent fear. This fear has been based on memories of the political chaos and traumas of the past, memories that have limited the political imagination and that may not prove a sound long-term basis for

consensus. As the 1990s draw to a close and the December 1999 presidential elections loom large, renewed sectarianism is publicly resurfacing, playing upon the very fears that served as the basis for transitional government unity. For those political leaders vested in sustaining the Concertación alliance, it has become a worrisome political moment.

Second, in spite of (or even as a result of) memories of political trauma, there are those political elites who remain committed to totalizing ideologies that are virtually frozen in a past, as well as those who place tremendous value on mass mobilization and on militant party recruitment. Since the December 1997 congressional elections, such leaders are reemerging as prominent figures.

Finally, in light of the results of the 1997 elections and the upcoming presidential elections, innovative political thinking is taking place with regard to a progressive agenda. Though inspired by past visions and memories, this thinking is cognizant of dramatic political changes and a new political moment. Much of it centers on "repoliticizing the political," that is, empowering citizens to feel vested in Chile's future through their participation in local political discussion and debate.

This book centers on how individual elite political identities are formed and internalized, as well as how such identities both respond to and are privileged by particular political moments. The study advances a model to address these questions, to explore how individual elites have conceptualized their political visions, practices, and the meanings they derive from their participation in this political process. Intensive exploration of the leaders presented here reveals a broad panorama of identities on the Chilean left. Within that context, this study has arrived at a model of cognitive ideal-types, types whose members vary in their preoccupation with ideas and organizational forms and in their responses to traumatic political experiences. While individual human beings are clearly quite complex and multidimensional, I argue here that individuals possess core political identities, which form early in life and which continue to shape their political behaviors and approaches.

This concluding chapter will take a final look at contemporary Chilean politics and debates through the lens of the individual cognitive types. It will focus on political understandings and roles among different cognitive types today, including individual perspectives on the relationships among democracy, socialism, and modernization. I suggest here that the study of individual political identity is a useful approach for uncovering the politi-

cal culture of a society itself, the patterns of doing politics that are cast and recast, at play with the historical moment.

For those who have been designated political party loyalists, the party as organization is paramount to conceptualizations of their visions and roles in politics. Party loyalists sustain ideologies and images from the past, working to assure their parties' popular bases and solid cadres. Based on my examination of the lives and texts of the party loyalists of this study, as well as other research, I suggest that party loyalists in general enjoyed positions of greatest prominence in the 1960s mobilizations and the victory of Salvador Allende, where their priorities and skills were most valued and where largely working class–based sectors experienced comparative visibility and power. Party loyalists also worked to sustain their parties organizationally during the trauma of the dictatorship's early years, when many were repressed or withdrew from politics altogether.

The images and representations of the 1960s and the Popular Unity period continue to be the dominant referents in the ideological and activist formulations of party loyalists today. In moments of traumatic political crisis, such as the 1973 coup d'état, party loyalists fight for their parties' survival. Their memories of such trauma bind them to their parties, even as those parties ebb in prominence and/or viability.

Current Communist Party leader Jorge Insunza, who best fits the party loyalist ideal-type, has evidenced no visible ideological transformation from his identity of the 1960s to his identity of today. He remains frozen in Leninist conceptualizations of internal party structure and the role of the political party in society. Memories of traumatic political experiences have served to affirm his ideological convictions and political actions. Despite his defensiveness regarding the PCCH's relationship to liberal democracy in Chile, Insunza continues to view socialism as an end signifying society's redistribution of wealth and some form of public ownership of the means of production. He continues to believe in the need for a vanguard party representing the popular sectors, albeit not limited to the working class.

Today Insunza struggles to reassert the PCCH as a voice for the popular sectors. As a "preacher," he acts as a "moral conscience" for today's left. He and the Communist Party protest Chile's neoliberal economic policies, pointing to the greatest disparities between rich and poor that the country has ever known and to the lack of popular participation in everyday political practice. While there has been a tendency to dismiss the PCCH as inconsequential, the party garnered a surprising 4.98 percent of the nation-

al vote in the December 1993 elections and 7.5 percent of the vote in the December 1997 elections, making it an important ally or foe in any potential reconfiguration of a left coalition. Inspired by his early ideological convictions, Insunza continues to concentrate on organizing the Communist Party as a vehicle for the disenfranchised and disillusioned.

The Allendistas—the personal loyalists of this study—represent a different kind of moral conscience. Personal loyalists Aníbal Palma, Hernán Del Canto, and Eduardo Reyes invoke the memory of Allende as a political and ideological symbol of socialist commitment to a progressive, nationalist agenda and to formal democratic institutions. Like party loyalists, personal loyalists are party organizers. In moments of political crisis, they cling to their leaders, seeking political identity in the public attributes for which their leaders are recognized or remembered.

It is no coincidence that personal and political party loyalists are embedded largely within the Chilean working class and the lower middle class. Their structure of opportunities, or access to important alternative professional and political networks, such as educational elite networks, is limited. Historical working-class networks, such as the trade union movement, have been considerably weakened and now no longer represent the political force they once were in Chilean politics. Personal and political party loyalists have a strong tendency to elevate the 1960s period, in which working-class movements enjoyed perceptibly greater social and political power and could be greater sources of mobility than they are today. This would suggest that class embeddedness powerfully shapes political identity.

Personal and political party loyalists represent continuity within contemporary Chilean political culture. Compared with the Popular Unity period, the immediate aftermath of the coup, and even the 1983–1986 mobilizations against Pinochet, the personal and political party loyalists were seemingly invisible in postauthoritarian transition politics. This reflected a larger contemporary Chilean phenomenon: a civil society that was politically silent during the 1990s. Personal and party loyalists, though effective organizers, still lack the professional and political networks and the political imagination that might spark renewed interest in political participation. Resources and imagination are particularly important in a society deeply wounded by ideological polarization and repressive authoritarian rule.[5]

Nevertheless, one party loyalist who also possesses political imagination is Patricio Rivas, whose cognitive framework tends to approach that of a political thinker. Rivas seeks to rebuild a collective inspired by his subjective image of his former party, the Revolutionary Left Movement, the MIR. For

Rivas, the MIR was a serious, ethical, idealistic, youthful party, impervious to the institutional parameters of traditional Chilean political society. Chided for his insistence that the Brazilian Workers Party (PT) was a useful model for the Chilean left, Rivas actively denied the conventional wisdom that such a collective no longer exists. Rivas does admit that a democratic socialist project linking civil and political society has yet to be formulated:

> What I've come to conclude is that the construction of a revolutionary leadership, in the strictest sense of being anticapitalist, is of such complexity that we don't really understand it well. To construct a leadership of men and women who are capable of launching an anticapitalist program, of having a concrete national strategy to meet each challenge . . . we don't know how to do that yet. . . .
>
> The Chilean social structure has clearly changed dramatically, and it has significant meaning for what has been the historic class base for Chilean left parties. I don't believe that the working class has gone away, as many have suggested. In fact, the working class has increased. But, yes, it is far more disaggregated. It is no longer a working class with its great centers, "locatable," you know what I mean? Second, this whole capitalist consciousness, oriented around competition, individualism, is the product of the destruction of cultural links that had existed for decades prior to the dictatorship. And third, in psychosocial terms, this capitalist consciousness, a product of both the dictatorship and the defeat of the left, means that people today require success and they require new things. It can't be like the sixties, where you evoke images of the great utopias, although certainly the utopian aspect remains a part of your reflections politically. . . .
>
> I think we must distance ourselves, in a solidaristic way, from the "real socialist" models, proposing a project that is democratic, socialist, anticapitalist. We have to recuperate our sense of adventure and launch, rather than a revolutionary socialist project of armed struggle of the sixties, a democratic socialist project today. . . .
>
> I really think that what is happening in the world, I really believe this, is that the conditions are being created to create a society that is enormously just. They already exist. What was once a highly utopian discourse, today is much more possible to achieve. I think it is possible to design a project that draws from the classic republican discourse on the citizen, who has the right to decide and to be involved, together with a new socialism, emerging from civil society.

In contrast to the political party loyalists, the political thinkers of this study are idea-focused rather than organization-focused. While personal and political party loyalists have been agents of survival and continuity, Chilean political thinkers have been agents of change. Political thinkers played crucial roles in their parties during the late 1970s, a period of political reflection and reassessment that produced radically new visions regarding the role of the political party and social transformation. The best fit within this ideal-type is former Communist Party leader Fernando Contreras, who, unlike Patricio Rivas, feels little loyalty for his past affiliation. Contreras's architectural role in conceiving the PCCH's armed rebellion strategy during the dictatorship reflected an individual completely uninhibited by his country's objective conditions and his party's organizational limits. The Leipzig Group's promotion of arming and training young militants to combat the Pinochet regime was inspired by Guevarist notions of the revolutionary socialist man, whose combative energies were matched by his ethics and sense of sacrifice for the common good. Such a strategy proved suicidal and, in fact, sacrificed a significant number of young people. Contreras now ponders the psychosocial dimensions of political action, uncertain of his organizational fit. He, I would argue, is representative of a larger group of former revolutionary intellectuals and activists who have been alienated from the entrepreneurial politics characteristic of the better part of the 1990s.[6]

Political entrepreneurs represent those who tightly link ideas with the organizational expressions necessary to carry them out. As consummate strategists, political entrepreneurs attempt to realize their visions by drawing together strands of key networks. Major political experiences sharply influence political entrepreneurs, and they are skillful at adapting to changed political conditions, reworking ideas and organizational forms. Political entrepreneurs have the capacity to draw from and organize resources and political imagination. Based on my study of those whom I term entrepreneurs, I would argue that while entrepreneurs have always played prominent roles in Chilean politics, the 1990s have favored their hierarchy of values and skills unlike any other type.

In Chile today, it is the political entrepreneurs who have championed a political discourse of "modernization." For former Communist Party youth leader Raúl Oliva, modernization requires that the left understand "a world where individuality has become so pronounced," and where the "eight hundred thousand businessmen" of the country are confident regarding Chile's economic direction. For Clarisa Hardy, the Chilean Socialist Party

must at least project a "modern image" in whatever way it can if it is to sustain popular support. Precisely what modernization means or looks like for these political entrepreneurs remains vague, however.

José Antonio Viera-Gallo argues that the Chilean modernization process is making politics less central for important sectors of society's citizenry:

> Chilean citizens are more modern today. Politics have become relativized, and while still influential, politics has little probability of touching the world of the economy. Here businessmen couldn't care less about politics. They go on with their businesses, they export, et cetera, it's not an issue, and many people, whether they're professionals or well-paid workers, why should they care? Now the problem is that there are many in Chilean society who are poor, who can only emerge and have their demands felt through politics, so parties are somewhat the expression of that part of society, the more backward part of society, not the modern part, because the modern part doesn't need parties.

Viera-Gallo makes a provocative distinction between those in society whom he terms "modern," and the "more backward party of society," Chile's poor. His comments allude to contemporary intellectual debates on the meaning of modernity for Latin America, in which Latin Americans see a hybridization of the modernization process in their societies.[7] "Modern" lifestyles, practices, and technologies are juxtaposed against "backward" living conditions of abject poverty and the lack of basic amenities. Viera-Gallo suggests that modern man can be free of politics, while the poor require representation to have their needs expressed. He downplays the importance of political participation or ethics in the course of modernization.

Political entrepreneur Enrique Correa has elevated the discourse of modernization to new heights. In a 1995 opinion editorial, Correa argued that the Chilean modernization process required not only primary and secondary school educational reform but also the development of Chile's capacity to "export intelligence, creativity, [and] knowledge" as one of its potential comparative advantages in the world market.[8] "The struggle to be competitive on the world market is not only nor principally a question of material production, but rather an intelligence contest in which knowledge and information are a key factor."[9] Correa views modernization as a process of acquiring knowledge.

What appears to be absent from the entrepreneurs' adoption of modernization into contemporary political discourse is any questioning or cri-

tique of modernization itself. It is as if modernization has become the new ideology for a future Chile. The discourse of modernization is widely accepted and is also employed by the political right. There is something self-assured and safe about the images that modernity conveys—access to material desires, market freedoms, educational excellence, freedom from the state, and so forth. For political entrepreneurs, ideas of modernization can be ably expressed in their political party caucuses and coalitions without provoking protest or backlash.

I would argue that underneath the entrepreneurs' use of a consensus-based language of modernization has been an exaggerated fear of political conflict, stemming from a political legacy that continues to haunt protagonists of the Chilean left. Enrique Correa recognized that his fellow members of the left political class have little taste for political conflict today:

> There was indeed a loss of control before 1973. I think none of us really had experienced the degree of political conflict like that under Allende. We are extremely uncomfortable with conflict. The president of the country was always considered like a kind of father figure, authoritative, his hand conferred the blessing or not. . . . It is really too much fear of conflict, and too much fear of freedom, to put it another way. . . .
>
> I think there is also a great deal of fear in this country regarding institutional conflicts. If you look, for example, at the recent moves concerning constitutional reform and at the supreme control that the executive has been able to exercise over the nature of the reform, that there was fear over the creation of a mixed committee of congressmen and senators, something perfectly democratic, that the socialists would constitute one front, the right the other, et cetera, it was clear that the memories of legislative battles over the constitution under Allende were still fresh and still scare us.

There is no question that memories of the political conflicts and traumas of the past have deeply influenced all of Chile's political protagonists. Throughout the texts of my interviewees is the message that their own sense of failure has led to their determination not to fail again. Nevertheless, how "not to fail" holds different meanings for distinct cognitive types. Party loyalists concentrate their efforts on stronger, more disciplined, and better organized political parties. Allendistas promote the man they feel embodied love for Chile and its democratic institutions.

Political entrepreneurs have championed a "politics of consensus" political style at the expense of bolder political projects. Translated into the politics of transition from authoritarianism, this has meant a gradual, careful promotion of social, political, and electoral policy reforms within an extremely presidentialist constitutional framework and virtual autonomy for Chile's armed forces. Political entrepreneurs have shrunk from the challenge of a comprehensive political vision for Chile's future, or even a more nuanced adaptation of the ideology of modernization.

Political thinkers have tended to be more critical of consensus politics and the new ideology of modernization, though their critiques have not been accompanied by proposals for alternative policy directions. Drawing from modernization and dependency debates of the 1960s, many (though not all) thinkers question the notion that a society in which politics becomes irrelevant and individuals are viewed primarily as producers and consumers is a meaningful or even viable basis for the common good.[10]

Socialist Party leader and current ambassador to Austria Osvaldo Puccio, who argued that the very concept of modernization came from the world's left, challenged fellow socialists to "repoliticize" their politics by moving away from consensus politics and adopting an explicit democratic socialist program for the Socialist Party. Unlike Viera-Gallo's version, Puccio's conceptualization of modernization emphasizes an "ethical, utopian content." Modernization would be led by "secular man," striving for a socially just society of citizens. Puccio continues to be inspired by 1960s globalizing visions, though he recognizes a global left teleological crisis.[11] In ways analogous to the views of political thinker and Chilean ambassador to Mexico Luis Maira, Puccio observes Chilean politics largely from abroad, engrossed in Austrian civil society movements and intellectual currents.

Like Patricio Rivas and Osvaldo Puccio, former Communist Party youth leader and political thinker Antonio Leal also links a future socialist agenda to the discourse of citizenship, couched in the language of modernization. Unlike Rivas, however, Leal does not believe it necessary that a radical democratic project be anticapitalist. In a 1994 opinion editorial on ideological debates taking place within the Socialist Party, Leal challenged the left to abandon both the idea of revolution and the doctrine of Marxism. He urged the left to concentrate on deepening democracy and elaborating a "democratic politics of the market":

> Today we can talk of socialist ideals and action as the way toward a broader form of democracy and, as such, the way toward configuring a

> new map of social rights, of citizenship rights and of those rights linked to a new planetary structure of the world and to an overcoming of the world's great contradictions. . . .
>
> [We need] a left which grasps the critiques of the present, broadening the practice of democracy to all those who inhabit a pluralist society capable of generating a democratic project for a modern society. This, without the need to insist on the overcoming of the confines of capitalism, in favor of a communitarian and solidaristic society more humane than the present. . . .
>
> This is the alternative: Either a neoconservative individualism in a totally exclusionary society, or a democratic individuality that does not relegate the responsibility of one's fate to the state, but instead demands that the state guarantee the conditions in which all can be free and responsible, without baseline conditions of inferiority.[12]

For Leal, socialism is no longer an end but a process. Socialism is a means to deepen democracy, which he understands as the recognition of a broad range of rights in a diverse, tolerant, pluralistic society. This echoes much of the renovationist thinking that took place in the Chilean left during the late 1970s and early 1980s—a newfound appreciation of civil and political as well as social and economic rights.

The political thinkers are embedded in a dynamic relationship with their political parties and their government, constrained by their institutions yet challenging them to reinvigorate the left programmatically. In June 1998 Leal was a key drafter of "The People Are Right," a document signed by prominent party leaders and policy makers. "The People Are Right" was a response to a document produced the previous month by high government officials, titled "Renovating the Concertación: The Force of Our Ideas." Leal's group found the previous document too self-congratulatory regarding the 1990s Concertación record. Leal himself maintained that "The Force of Our Ideas" was "an institutional interpretation," not "from civil society" but rather from the "debatable premise that Chileans are already integrated into the fruits of modernization without recognizing sufficiently that an essential part of the country is still excluded and lives in a Chile far from it." Leal criticized the previous document as "elitist," as coming from a "technocratic efficiency camp," rather than from a dimension inclusionary of "political values" and "citizen's rights."[13]

José Antonio Viera-Gallo apears to represent the "elitist" sector to whom Leal is referring:

> I feel my views are very well represented by the "Renovating the Concertación" document, in terms of very basic things. I feel we're on a good road as a country, we live the contradictions of a very accelerated modernization, transformation process, to which there is a demand to imprint upon it a more humane, more just, more solidaristic sense. Not to deny we are in a progressive mode already, but there is a demand for a more human progress. As this document says, however, perhaps the most complicated challenge of where we are is that there is a serious part of the political elite which has lost confidence in this project, because they have a wrong diagnosis, in my view, of where the country is. . . . There is a confusion of ideas, and of feelings about what's going on, which we try to take on in this document.
>
> So my feeling is that the most important thing is that we persevere with our project, recognizing that there are problems we have to take on, things we must do, for example in terms of health, in terms of the university system, in terms of unemployment questions.
>
> I feel that the confusion comes when people expect from politics what politics can't give. So that when someone says, "Look, what's going on is that people are less happy. People feel more insecure." Politics is lost here. Politics can't give this. It produces a great deal of dissatisfaction. The public sector cannot be expected to resolve many problems that are, on the one hand, individual problems, or, on the other hand, conditions of the society that are universal ones! We can't be expected to be this great idyllic Chile that at the same time is growing, exporting, that people live better, but they're not consumerist, or whatever, I just don't see how we can do that.

Thus, public differences over programmatic emphasis and discourse have now begun to appear in earnest. How this will translate into programmatic policy, however, is not clear. Election campaigns for the Chilean president who will launch his country into the new millennium have begun in earnest. The first half of 1999 was marked by a very public struggle between Christian Democratic presidential hopeful Andrés Zaldívar and Party for Democracy–Socialist Party candidate Ricardo Lagos over who would represent the Concertación alliance on the December 1999 ballot. The struggle between the two men, interestingly enough, indicates little in the way of programmatic differences. Rather, it focused on personality differences, party loyalties and affiliations, and, last but certainly not least, allusions to Socialist Party performance in the executive during the Popular

Unity years. In many ways, the Zaldívar-Lagos rivalry has been about proving and disproving claims regarding continuities with the past, including bitter memories of pre-1973 partisan struggles.

Few would deny that this has been the most interesting period in Chilean politics since the return to democratic rule in 1990. The arrest of Pinochet in London colors all current analysis of Chilean politics, society, and culture, particularly as the country has firmly initiated presidential campaign politics for the 1999 elections. Yet important shifts in the political current were evident before Pinochet's October 16 arrest, symbolized best by the December 1997 elections, the increasingly tense political rivalry between Andrés Zaldívar and Ricardo Lagos, and the acts, reflections, and debates surrounding the twenty-fifth anniversary of the 1973 military coup d'état. The "*política de acuerdos,*" the "cupola" politics, the "politics among gentlemen" that have marked the past decade have been shaken, challenged by political discord and by the deep-rooted and inescapable conflicts of the past, which continue to "presence" themselves in uncomfortable ways.

In a paradoxical sense, the Chilean political class is now immersed in a battle it had very much hoped to avoid: all must confront, albeit through a polarized set of interpretive lenses, the political past. Until recently political elites had engaged in a kind of "forgetting," or silence, about the past thirty or more years. For members of the left political class, memories of the past were too painful and guilt-ridden, and left leaders in government felt they had already expressed remorse for past mistakes.

Members of the left political class have often dismissed calls to examine the past by claiming that society is uninterested in such revisiting. They point to surveys that indicate that Chileans are most preoccupied with personal security, a stable and healthy economy, education for their children, and so forth. They point to the low turnouts to commemorations of the past, to dedications attended only by families directly affected by the violence or by Communist Party activists. This is certainly true at one level. Yet there are other indicators that suggest that Chileans are strongly interested in—even obsessed with, though publicly repressing such obsession—the past. Over the past two years, for example, books about the Allende period, the military coup, the years of repression, and the broad question of reconciliation have topped best-seller lists in Chile.[14] Television networks record all-time-high public viewership of special television documentaries or debates on the 1960s, the Popular Unity years, the coup, the Letelier case. Citizens' preoccupations with the past have been expressed

over the last decade in much the same ways that political debate itself has taken place in Chile in the 1990s (and for much of the past twenty-five years, for that matter)—behind closed doors, within the family, and in private meetings.

In spite of political class desires to "forget" the past, to move on, to avoid tense and unresolvable disagreements over who was wrong and why "it" happened, political "irruptions" have become closer and closer together, and the unanticipated arrest of Pinochet (who is termed in *all* the major Chilean press as the senator and "former President of the Republic," as opposed to the international press's terming him "the former dictator") has forced political memories, for better or for worse, into full view of Chile and the world.

A recent national survey found that only 41 percent of the Chilean population believes that national reconciliation about the past is possible.[15] Divides run very deep. The politically charged generations that lived through the late 1960s, the Popular Unity government, the dictatorship and redemocratization can readily recall traumatic political memories, and perspectives regarding the roots of such trauma are well formulated and unchanging.

Close attention to individual leaders of the left reveals a broad ideological mosaic that includes major transformations as well as continuities in left thinking concerning means and visions of the common good. Nevertheless, despite traumatic political events and historic changes, individuals' basic approaches to politics—that is, individual cognitive frameworks—do not change, from their early activism in politics to the present. Political identity represents the often fitful product of individual cognitive frameworks that deliberate and act amid such trauma and change.