INTRODUCTION

■ In 1973 Chile experienced the most cataclysmic event in her history, a violent military coup d'état that abruptly ended decades of democratic rule. The military strafed and bombed the presidential palace, and amid the shelling and flames Chilean president Salvador Allende ended his life. Over the next several years the military junta led by General Augusto Pinochet imprisoned, tortured, exiled, and disappeared thousands of Chilean citizens. The dictatorship lasted for seventeen years. During the final years, cracks began to appear in the regime, and the military oversaw a gradual, controlled transition to democracy. In the 1989 national elections, leaders of the opposition movement, many of whom had been in the Allende government that the military had overthrown, emerged euphoric in their victory yet haunted by a painful past. Out of the disaster of dictatorship came a democratic rebirth not unlike many of the democratization movements that have taken place or are taking place internationally.

It has now been ten years since the passing of the presidential sash from Pinochet to a democratically elected civilian, Patricio Aylwin, and a good twenty-five years since the coup. Yet arguably only today have Chileans truly begun to engage in a public, collective—albeit divided—remembrance of the tragedy and brutality of the overthrow of Allende and the Popular Unity government. The unanticipated October 16, 1998, arrest of Pinochet in London most forcefully contributed to what began with the twenty-fifth anniversary of the September 11 coup: a steadily increasing series of explorations, interviews, and images in the popular press and media unearthing the horrors of the dictatorship and those who defended it. With Pinochet's arrest, debates about the past have moved quite perceptibly beyond the private spaces of homes and gatherings of close friends to the public sphere and the streets.

As the Chilean political class engages in the 1999–2000 presidential campaign and pending change of administration, such revelations and de-

bates have made for a tense political scenario. The arrest of Pinochet has placed many members of the political left who are government officials in a strange position: several of today's left leaders are now defending the right to sovereign immunity from prosecution of the man who led their overthrow and persecution twenty-five years ago. Moreover, the Pinochet arrest came at a time when a popular Socialist Party leader, Ricardo Lagos, was attempting to run for the presidency with a focus on the future rather than the past. Lagos was trying to avoid the bitter and well-worn debates over the responsibilities and errors of his party's leadership in the early 1970s, including the governing Socialist Party's role in the tremendous economic and political turmoil that preceded the coup.

This book is about a unique group of young sixties-generation national leaders of the left who came to power with Allende's 1970 election, who were proponents of a program for revolutionary social transformation, and who were part of the short-lived experiment that failed. Within this group, many experienced imprisonment and torture, and all of those on whom this book focuses spent years in exile. During their exile, they played a crucial role in defining opposition politics at home. In addition to raising funds and fomenting international opposition to the regime, the exiled leadership developed both doctrine and strategy to fight the dictatorship and effect the return to democracy in Chile. They are currently involved in the rebuilding and consolidation of Chile's democratic institutions. The purpose of this book is to examine what happens to the political identities of leaders such as these in a context of traumatic political upheaval and change.

During the political transition of the mid- to late 1980s and the first year of return to democratic rule, the Chilean press often referred to some formerly exiled politicians as "the Europeans," because they had spent much of their exile in Rome, Paris, London, and Madrid; others were categorized as the "Bolches," or "Bolsheviks," an allusion not only to their Stalinist politics but also to their place of exile—Moscow. Such labeling connoted, first, that these political actors had lived in and experienced distinct political as well as geographic arenas of the world and, second, that they brought back the influences of these arenas to their postexile politics. I was intrigued by the notion of tracing and differentiating these influences, examining how exile in Rome carried a different set of political influences and experiences than did exile in East Berlin or Mexico City, for example. Thus my empirical sample, those men and women who became the basis of my study, are all former exiles who returned from different regions of the world to Chile to play important roles in politics.

When I began interviewing, however, it quickly became apparent that while exile was often an important influence on the political thinking and behavior of my subjects, to focus on exile was far too limiting if my objective was to understand how this group's politics had evolved and been transformed. The point of departure became not exile but home and family, childhood, and peers. It involved early exposure to politics at the kitchen table, in the neighborhood, in the workplace, in school, and, particularly for the 1960s generation, in the streets. For the men and women whose lives are the focus of this book, I found, the most salient indicators of political identity were their early experiences in national politics, experiences that seared their memories and defined their political priorities and relationships to politics in unique ways. Such defining experiences also reflected individual community, class, and educational backgrounds.

Through the 1990s I conducted many interviews with Chilean leaders, including a significant portion of the exiled political leadership who had returned to Chile, and I conducted intensive life history interviews with twenty-five political leaders in that group. The texts of the intensive interviews form the basis of my conceptualization of individual political identity and its relationship to political process, and the experiences of fifteen of the twenty-five interviewees are used extensively in this book.

The most striking thing to emerge from my interviews, observations, and analysis was how little political leaders' cognitive understandings and approaches to politics change, even in the face of traumatic political experiences. I expected to see fundamental change not only in their ideologies from the 1960s to the 1990s but also in the ways they approached political practice. I did not. Instead, distinct patterns for processing politics, what I call "cognitive frameworks," seemed to remain constant through the course of these individuals' political lives. Cognitive frameworks are understood as basic approaches to ideas, organization, and relationships to fellow political leaders and activists.[1] I propose four cognitive orientations: political party loyalist, personal loyalist, political thinker, and political entrepreneur. The four cognitive types form a basis for predicting the patterns and dynamics of changes and continuities in individual political thinking and action. In addition, I have found that over the decades, from the 1960s through the 1990s, each of the four cognitive types proposed here has flourished at particular historical and political moments.

I examine herein how the four types are embedded in particular social and political structures and institutions. As network theorists argue and as this study suggests, individuals' identities are very much shaped by their

early and intense relationships to the predominant groups and structures of their lives.[2] Following Karl Mannheim's claim that ideological identity "is always bound up with the existing life situation of the thinker," this book examines the individual political identities of leaders as framed by their family, class, generation, and political party, by their major political experiences of victory and defeat, and by their own understandings of their contributions to a political project.[3] For this study, family, class, generational, and political party identification emerged as the most important forms of embeddedness. Family and class embeddedness shapes individuals' cognitive frameworks. Generational status situates the individuals of this study as young people in an ideologically charged moment that had lasting repercussions throughout their political lives. And individual political leaders both shape and are shaped by their affiliations with political parties, the central political institution for those in this study.

Finally, this book examines the relationships between cognitive frameworks and traumatic political experiences. Traumatic life experiences, such as political victory and defeat, imprisonment and exile, and the collapse of the international left, are catalysts for ideological and role transformation. Such experiences also serve to affirm ideological and role convictions, depending on the types of cognitive frameworks individuals possess. I conclude with the argument that despite heart-wrenching experiences, the political identities of these highly political, sixties-generation individuals—including their fundamental approaches to politics, to their immediate political communities, and to their understandings of their own images and roles in politics—have changed very little.

The categories of cognitive orientation that I have developed come from intense engagement with each of the individuals in this book and represent interpretation of the patterns that emerged from this engagement. Given that many of the Chileans in this book are well-known political figures, I have no doubt that there will be vehement disagreement with my categorizations, even from the interviewees themselves. No theoretical modeling can explain all political behavior. Indeed, this book challenges rational-choice attempts to do just that. Nevertheless, the categorizations developed here serve as a powerful heuristic device for understanding political leader identity and political process amid political trauma and change.

Political identity studies are booming in academia, as vastly distinct groups across the globe struggle to redefine themselves. The issues of gender, ethnic, racial, religious, national, and even transnational identity have emerged with explosive force. Clearly, many of the conflicts over identity

have endured for centuries. Yet the combination of the recent collapses of regimes and a technology that has contributed to heightened global awareness and involvement in conflicts has created a series of new challenges, for scholars, policy makers, and the world citizenry.

Within the scholarly community, formulations of the question of identity span the disciplines, from more established traditions in psychology, comparative literature, and anthropology to a fairly recent range of explorations in political science. Psychologist Erik Erikson's works on individual identity, for example, are major references for students in several fields.[4] In comparative literature, a significant body of theoretical work has emerged on individual, ethnic, and racial identity in the United States and elsewhere. Within the field of anthropology, such thinkers as Clifford Geertz, Virginia Domínguez, Kay Warren, and others have played decisive roles in inspiring a literature on ethnic identity in regions around the world, from Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and northern Africa to the Central American and Andean countries of Latin America.[5] The literature explores such interrelated questions as the relationships among ethnic, religious, and national identity, the subordination of ethnic groups to dominant societies that are not ethnically defined, and the gradual yet steady transformation of ethnic identities.

Political scientists such as David Laitin, Juan Linz, and Alfred Stepan have pioneered new terrain in the field regarding the conceptualization of political identity as it is associated with national identity struggles in Africa, Southern Europe, and the former Soviet Union.[6] Apparent in much of this literature is a clear normative concern, as well as a deliberate search for workable political solutions in these regions. The questions that orient the literature include the following: Are identities fixed and primordial, or do members of the citizenry possess and internalize multiple identities that can accommodate greater flexibility regarding territorial boundaries? What kind of statecrafting is required to incorporate competing national identities? In yet another vein, scholars across the disciplines are exploring the question of transnational identity.[7] Such literature examines how communities are defined and constructed when the concept of sovereignty is of little meaning to the definition, as when tight networks of families and governing bodies extend across national boundaries.

This book is about the formation and transformation of individual political identity, with a focus on ideology and political roles. Such a focus raises questions that are distinct from those of literatures on national, ethnic, and transnational identity. Based on intensive interviews and the study

of a generation of leaders of the Chilean left, it closely examines how individual political leaders conceptualize their politics and the meanings they derive from their political practices. It explores the process of identity formation and the transformation and reformulation of political identity. Competing national visions of polity and society play a central role in this process, including individual leaders' understandings of democracy and participation, social justice, the roles of parties and party leaders, and what is possible in their given societies.

This book is meant to deepen our understanding of political identity, leadership, and change in three ways. First, by focusing on the identity formation and transformation of Chilean political leaders, it will offer a lens through which the transformation of Chilean political culture itself can be more carefully examined and analyzed. As many classic studies of leading thinkers and politicians have demonstrated, there is a powerful dynamic between elite thought and action and the political culture of which elites are a part.[8]

Second, the study will contribute to our understanding of the transformations on the left universally. Debates within the international left heavily influenced leaders of the Chilean left in a variety of ways, and the Chilean socialist experience (1970–1973) had an important impact on the thinking and strategy of the international left. Insight into the sixties generation of Chilean left leaders will contribute in comparative terms to analysis of a series of broader, global transformations on the left, from European left intellectual currents to contemporary debates on modernization and the left in Latin America. Just as the Chilean left acts within a political culture wounded by authoritarianism, the left internationally has yet to emerge in any clear way from deep-rooted crises and from tremendous challenges to left models. Yet this study will challenge "end of ideology" claims and will assert that while the left continues to be engaged in soul-searching processes, left thinkers and politicians have not abandoned democratic socialist visions.

Third, the book will argue that the conceptualization of individual political identity is a powerful explanatory framework for understanding the formulation and reformulation of political thinking and action, particularly during periods when political institutions are in a state of flux or crisis. Political leaders are the protagonists of both the breakdowns and the recompositions of the major political institutions of their countries, and it is therefore important that we understand how such leaders define their visions and roles. Yet one cannot understand contemporary Chilean political history without understanding the influence of distinct ideologies on its

political leaders, and I argue that this is also true for understanding political dynamics across the globe. This study has found that for those whose identities have been strongly defined by ideological beliefs and political activism, cognitive frameworks do not disappear in the process of dramatic political transformations. Yet traumatic experience does bring about identity change. New contexts bring about new adaptations, as rational-choice theorists assert. There is a dialectical tension between one's political identity and changing social and political demands. The individuals studied here fall along a continuum between the pole of strong attachment to initial ideologies and roles and the abandonment of ideologies once held to be universal, particularly Leninism. The model of individual political identity forwarded in this study offers a lens through which to examine larger political processes, where identities are aggregated and distributed in positions of formal political power, shaping the institutions and the very political cultures in which they are embedded.

POLITICAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY AS METHOD

From 1990 to 1998 I conducted approximately one hundred interviews of Chilean leaders and activists. While they do not represent a random sample, they include approximately one-quarter of the top Chilean left political leadership forced into exile during the Pinochet dictatorship. Between 1991 and 1993, I conducted intensive interviews with the fifteen individuals on whom I focus, and I have continued to follow their political trajectories through correspondence, brief personal contacts, and research since that time. In addition, I formally reinterviewed eight of the fifteen in Chile in 1998.

During the interviews, I asked individuals to recount their life histories and then to discuss their views of democracy, socialism, the role of the party and party leaders in the polity and society, and their visions and concerns for Chile's future. While I used a questionnaire to ensure that basic themes and issues were addressed in the sessions, my questions were primarily open-ended and the sessions were free-flowing.

The objectives of this method were twofold: First, I sought to explore and analyze the individuals' own understandings of their political life trajectories, including why they had come to think about politics and their political roles as they did. Second, I sought to relate their narratives to the broader questions of political identity formation in their historical and political contexts.

This method is quite similar to that used by political scientists Robert Lane and Jennifer Hochschild in their respective works, *Political Ideology* and *What's Fair?* In an attempt to reveal the processes by which the so-called common man comes to formulate ways of thinking about the world in political terms, Lane created fifteen "political autobiographies" based on a series of intensive interviews with fifteen American men.[9] To examine U.S. notions of distributive justice, Hochschild conducted a similar study with a group of twenty-eight men and women.[10]

As Lane and Hochschild argue, this kind of qualitative approach allows for a depth that is difficult, if not impossible, to achieve in vast survey studies. What the method perhaps sacrifices in parsimony, it gains in richness, texture, nuance, and comparative content. It uncovers the silences and surprises, as well as the expected. As Italian social historian Luisa Passerini argues, intensive interviewing for individuals' life histories captures the unique as well as the conventional:

> The request for personal histories, while designed to inquire into everyday life, stimulates references to the exceptional—the things that make one individual different from another. A questionnaire, however, implicitly suggests that it is uniformity that counts, along with numbers and classifications over and above the individual. By encouraging subjects to present themselves as unique and irreplaceable through an autobiographical account, therefore, it induces them to reveal their cultural values, and hence, paradoxically, throws light on stereotypes and shared ideas.[11]

My "autobiographies" of the Chilean political class reveal a great deal of deliberation, ambivalence, and inner conflict over individuals' political choices, trajectories, and ideologies. The research design allowed members of the study to forge their own explanations of their political paths, a clear departure from a research design such as the survey study, which relies exclusively on inferring those links.[12]

For my methodological design, I have also drawn from select works on the question of memory, particularly the works of oral historians Alessandro Portelli and Luisa Passerini. As is the case with all oral historians, Portelli and Passerini rely almost exclusively on individual memories of the past to uncover previously unexplored aspects of history, politics, and culture. They reveal that memory can represent the imaginary as well as the actual, reflecting how an individual wished an event had taken place rather

than how it did take place.[13] In the course of recounting such memories, interpreters such as Passerini uncover memory reconstructions as individuals' attempts to preserve or meld their past and present identities.

As will be evident throughout the book, my approach also relies extensively on memory. I, too, have found an intimate relationship between memory and individual political identity, shown in accounts of participation in student and worker movements, political roles during the Allende years, imprisonment and/or exile, and return. In the texts, I have found both conscious and unconscious efforts by individuals to claim a kind of continuity for their lives, even if their political lives have, in fact, been transformed. Later, I explore the relationships between individual and collective memories and political identity.

ORGANIZATION OF THE BOOK

Chapter 1 elaborates on the notion of individual political identity. It briefly examines rational-choice and identitarian debates concerning political thinking and behavior and asserts that while rational-choice approaches are useful for studies of particular kinds of political behavior, they fail to capture critical aspects of political thinking and behavior, namely, action on behalf of the collective, action that appears contradictory and irrational, as well as action in the face of powerlessness. The chapter argues that the keys to understanding the formation of the individual political identities of the Chilean leaders on whom I focus lie in the stories shared by the individuals themselves, in the meanings that they assign to particular ideas, experiences, and relationships. The chapter also introduces the four cognitive orientations that will be explored through the course of the study.

Chapter 2 provides a context for the individuals covered in this study by examining Chilean political culture and the left's role within it from the 1960s to the postauthoritarian period of the early 1990s, thereby setting the stage for an analysis of the formation and transformation of the political identities of Chilean left leaders over the past thirty years. The chapter also suggests that while valuable contributions have been made to understanding left thought and the trends among left political organizations in Chile, a crucial element of the equation is missing, namely, study of the individuals themselves as central units of analysis.

Chapters 3–6 present the cognitive orientations themselves, highlighting each cognitive type in the context of political moments in which each of the types was of particular political prominence. Chapter 3 focuses on political

party loyalists and their centrality in the pre-1973 period and the early years of the coup. Chapter 4 examines personal loyalists—that is, those loyal to the leader Salvador Allende—and explores the shaping of their political identities during the Popular Unity (1970–1973) period. Chapter 5 is a look at the thinkers discussed in this study, using the lens of their exiles from the mid-1970s to the mid-1980s to examine transformations in political identity and highlight their political roles during that period. Chapter 6 focuses on the study's political entrepreneurs and on the critical roles they have played in Chile's redemocratization process.

The concluding chapter reexamines the four cognitive types and the struggles of people within each type to redefine their individual political identities in Chile today. Focusing on what emerged as the central preoccupation of all those included in this study—the nature and meaning of democracy, as well as democracy's relationship to the processes of modernization—it explores what the model of individual political identity reveals about prospects for the Chilean left and for contemporary Chilean politics in ways that invite comparative case reflections.

One final note: In this book, I quite consciously include extensive excerpts of the interviews I conducted. While I am aware that I am selecting and shaping the narratives that constitute the book, I give the leaders ample space because they have powerful, eloquent voices and this study is at its core theirs. I sense that readers of this book may appreciate the leaders' expressions of their political experiences and beliefs, their sentiments of joy, pain, disappointment, and love for politics, as much as I have.

WHEN THE ROMANCE ENDED