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The Politics of Polarization:
Legitimacy Crises, Left Political Mobilization, and Party System Divergence
in South America

By

Samuel Paltiel Handlin

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Political Science

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Graduate Division

of the

University of California, Berkeley

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Fall 2011

The Politics of Polarization:
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America

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by Samuel Paltiel Handlin

Abstract

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by

Samuel Paltiel Handlin

Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science

University of California, Berkeley

Professor Ruth Berins Collier, Co-Chair

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The rise of the left across much of South America in the aftermath of market reforms catalyzed a major divergence in regional party systems. In some countries, polarizing party systems emerged, marked by conflictual patterns of contestation between major political parties and the politicization of class cleavages in party competition. In other countries, integrative party systems consolidated, characterized by largely consensual patterns of competition and class cleavages that remain unexpressed in party competition. This variation in party systems represents a critical macropolitical legacy to emerge from the tumultuous recent decades and offers fruitful ground for developing and testing theory regarding the causes of political and social polarization in the younger democracies of the highly unequal developing world.

Examining the cases of Venezuela, Brazil, and Chile, this dissertation develops an argument that centers on the avoidance or occurrence of “legitimacy crises”: anti-systemic episodes involving protracted failures of governance and steep erosions of public confidence in state institutions. The presence or absence of legitimacy crisis decisively shaped factional contestation within the partisan left in each country, leading to party system divergence along two dimensions. Whether radical or moderate left coalitions consolidated entailed the establishment of conflictual or consensual patterns of contestation within party systems. Once in office, the radical and moderate left also pursued different strategies of political mobilization – mass-organizational in Venezuela and catchall in Brazil and Chile – that subsequently drove variation in the translation of class cleavages into party competition.

The study relies on a variety of qualitative and quantitative data sources, including those gathered during 11 months of fieldwork in Venezuela, and utilizes both process-tracing and statistical methods (primarily genetic matching) to draw causal inferences. A concluding chapter shows that the argument can also explain variation in party systems in two other countries where the left has taken power (Bolivia and Uruguay), suggesting that the

framework in the study might provide a broader model of macropolitical divergence in the region during the last decades.

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Chapter 1: The Left Turn and Party System Divergence in South America

The new century has seen the left win the presidency across much of South America, sparking a flurry of academic analysis.¹ With the passing of time, it has become increasingly clear that this “Left Turn” in the region has been accompanied by a major crossnational divergence in the characteristics of party systems. In some countries, radical left parties or blocs have consolidated and come to power, establishing highly conflictual patterns of political competition within party systems. In others, moderate left parties or blocs have consolidated and taken office, anchoring or reinforcing consensual patterns of contestation. The tenure of the radical left in office has also been marked by the politicization of class cleavages in party competition, while the tenure of the moderate left has seen class cleavages remain largely unexpressed in party systems. Combining these two points of comparison, polarizing party systems have become entrenched in countries such as Venezuela, Bolivia, and Ecuador, marked by conflictual patterns of programmatic contestation and politicized class cleavages, and integrative party systems have become entrenched in countries such as Brazil, Chile, and Uruguay, marked by much more consensual patterns of contestation and largely unexpressed class cleavages. This striking divergence in regional party systems represents a critically important macropolitical legacy emerging from the tumultuous recent decades. Examining the cases of Venezuela, Brazil, and Chile, the study seeks to explain divergent outcomes and build new theoretical propositions regarding the politics of polarization.

The study thus explores fundamental questions regarding the emergence of political and social polarization under democratic competition. Contemporary Latin America, as well as many other world regions, is marked by the confluence of democratic or semidemocratic regimes, relatively fragile institutions, and massive socioeconomic inequalities. When, why, and how does democratic competition under these conditions spawn highly destabilizing patterns of party competition and the politicization of social cleavages? In addressing this question, the study engages two established lines of inquiry regarding the nature of party systems and the conduct of electoral competition under democracy. The substantive terrain offers an opportunity to build new propositions regarding the emergence of polarizing patterns of programmatic competition, a topic that has been implicit to recent research attempting to explain the “Two Lefts” in Latin America (Weyland 2009; Flores-Macías 2010; Madrid 2010) and which has been long fundamental to the study of party systems (Sartori 1976; Collier and Collier 1991). The emergence of great variation in the politicization of class cleavages, in turn, allows for the development and testing of propositions regarding the nature and dynamics of class-based political mobilization. Exploring this topic is particularly intriguing in a region where class cleavages have often remained surprisingly unexpressed despite deep socioeconomic inequalities and in a post-industrial age supposedly marked by a decline of class in political contestation (Dix 1989; Clark and Lipset 1993; Mainwaring 1999; Roberts 2002; Torcal and Mainwaring 2003).

¹ Some examples include Panizza (2005); Petkoff (2005); Castañeda (2006); Cleary (2006); Schamis (2006); Arnson (2007); Roberts (2007); Rodríguez-Gavarito, Barrett, and Chavez (2008); Weyland, Madrid, and Hunter (2010); Beasley-Murray, Cameron, and Hershberg (2010); and Levitsky and Roberts (2011).

A core argument of the study is that divergence in party system trajectories was originally catalyzed by whether or not countries experienced legitimacy crises during the tumultuous transition to market liberalism. These crises, which are especially likely during periods of significant policy change and uncertainty, involve protracted failures of governance and steep declines in public confidence in basic state institutions. I argue that such crises, which occurred in Venezuela but not in Brazil or Chile, shape party system trajectories in two ways. In direct fashion, legitimacy crises undermine consensual politics and foster conflictual patterns of political contestation because they favor radical parties and party factions while undermining moderates. Both radical and moderate left elements existed in some form within Venezuela, Brazil, and Chile during the 1980s and early 1990s, with major left parties split between moderate and radical factions and other radical fringe groups also active. Where legitimacy crisis occurred, in Venezuela, moderate factions lost power to insurgent radicals, major left parties broke under factional strain, and a new radical alliance emerged to back Hugo Chávez. Where governments were able to maintain legitimacy during the transition to market liberalism, in Brazil and Chile, moderate factions within major left parties won out, radicals bowed to the moderate line, and the left cohered around a moderate orientation.

A second argument is that legitimacy crises indirectly shape the politicization of class cleavages in party systems by establishing conditions conducive to different forms of political mobilization than those that pertain in more stable institutional environments. The ascent to power of the radical and moderate left, in the wake of legitimacy crises or not, were conducive to different strategies of political mobilization, which drove different patterns of politicization of class cleavages. The radical left in Venezuela, operating free of major institutional constraints in the wake of the legitimacy crisis, adopted a mass-organizational strategy, characterized by two features. Major policy initiatives to expand social protection were designed not just to redistribute but also to sponsor social organization and mobilization among the lower class beneficiaries. The left also placed great emphasis on forming and institutionalizing party-organizational linkages, relationships between sponsored social organizations and the parties of the Bolivarian Movement. This mass-organizational strategy led to massive increases in support for left parties among the lower classes, tilting the party system strongly along the class cleavage. The moderate left in Brazil and Chile, operating within a more stable and constraining institutional environment, instead adopted a catchall strategy. New social programs were technocratic and atomizing, providing benefits and services but not incentivizing social organization or mobilization among beneficiaries. Further, the left in each country invested very little energy in building or strengthening party-organizational linkages. Lacking organizational foundations, this catchall strategy produced temporary personal benefits for left presidents but did not spur increases in support for left parties among the poor and a reorientation of party systems along class cleavages.

The rest of this introductory chapter proceeds in the following sequence. An initial section elaborates on divergent party systems in more detail. A subsequent section discusses the limitations of extant scholarship in illuminating the major questions of the study. A third section summarizes the argument of the study, offering more information on key concepts and showing how the explanation builds upon and addresses the limitations of extant scholarship. A final section of the chapter then turns to methodological considerations, elaborating on the

research design, the strategy for causal inference, and the rationale behind the case selection. The chapter then concludes with a brief outline of the empirical chapters to follow.

Divergent Party System Outcomes

The disparate party systems that have emerged out of the Left Turn period in Latin America – polarizing or integrative – are conceptualized along two dimensions that are empirically coterminous and which emerged in temporal sequence. The first part of the study explains the consolidation during the 1990s of a radical or moderate left party or coalition as the main partisan force on the left in Venezuela, Brazil, and Chile, and thus conflictual or consensual patterns of contestation within emergent party systems. The second part of the study then examines the emergence of a second dimension of the outcome, the politicization of class cleavages in party systems. This section provides more detail on these two aspects of the party system outcome, their conceptualization, and their scoring.

Conflictual or Consensual Contestation. A first dimension of party system divergence during the Left Turn regards conflictual or consensual patterns of political contestation. These patterns are scored based on two criteria: Do major partisan actors differ significantly in their macroeconomic policies, or do they share a broad consensus on support for market liberalism? Do major partisan actors differ significantly in their agendas regarding the transformation of basic institutions of liberal democracy, or is there broad consensus on institutional continuity? In theory, these different outcomes might emerge from the activities and orientation of many kinds of parties. In the case universe, however, disparate patterns of contestation have been clearly linked to the nature of the major left party or bloc that has consolidated in each country. The study follows within the extensive line of scholarship that has broadly perceived “Two Lefts” in the region, radical and moderate, which differ greatly in their programmatic agendas regarding macroeconomic policy and institutional transformation (Panizza 2005; Petkoff 2005; Castañeda 2006). Where the radical left has consolidated, conflictual patterns of contestation have marked party systems. Where the moderate left has instead emerged, party system contestation has been largely consensual.

Different patterns of contestation revolve around both economic and political issues. First are the macroeconomic policies left parties have supported in presidential campaigns and pursued in office, especially their willingness to challenge basic tenets of market liberalism (Castañeda 2006; Weyland 2007; Flores-Macías 2010; Levitsky and Roberts 2011). The radical left has adopted a statist or heterodox program. These parties have come to power blasting the inequities of market liberalism, even if they have sometimes toned down these attacks for strategic purposes. In power, the radical left has maintained this rhetorical attack on market liberalism and reversed at least some of the market-oriented policies of their predecessors. The moderate left, despite minor internal variation, has largely adopted an orthodox program. These parties have come to power promising broad continuities with the market-oriented policies of their predecessors and, in office, followed through on these promises, leaving the neoliberal model in place.

The second programmatic dimension underlying conflictual and consensual dynamics is political, capturing whether the left has pursued a post-liberal or liberal agenda with respect to democracy. The radical left has pursued a post-liberal agenda, placing less emphasis on the

institutions and practices of liberal democracy and more on the notion of building institutions and practices to support citizen participation outside the electoral arena and foster the mobilization of collective subjects. The post-liberal agenda, by its nature, has been transformative and conflict producing. If the starting point is a society in which the institutions and practices of liberal representative democracy predominate, then, by definition, pursuit of a post-liberal agenda involves significant institutional change. This agenda has manifested in highly controversial projects to rewrite constitutions and otherwise alter basic institutions of the state. The moderate left, in contrast, has pursued a liberal agenda. Groups within these parties were among the earliest in the Latin American left to theorize a post-liberal agenda and, in some instances, put this agenda into practice in limited form in subnational government. This emphasis on a post-liberal vision, however, faded over time as the moderate left confronted the difficulties of societal and institutional transformation, either disappearing entirely (in the case of Chile) or morphing into an emphasis on “good governance” and supporting limited ways to include civil society in politics that fell far short of original visions (in the case of Brazil). Politicians of the moderate left may still place rhetorical emphasis on increasing citizen participation. But in office, moderate left governments have accepted, and worked within the bounds of, existing institutions of liberal democracy without pursuing significant institutional change in a post-liberal direction.²

The study focuses on three cases that are particularly exemplary of these more general patterns. The Partido Socialista (PS) in Chile and Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT) in Brazil each came to power after presidential campaigns in which their respective candidates, Ricardo Lagos and Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, explicitly promised continuities with the neoliberal policies of their predecessors. In power, the left in each country has maintained macroeconomic policy continuity, an orientation that is not entirely uncontroversial in either case but has been supported not just by administrations but also by dominant internal party factions and congressional leadership. The left in each country has also pursued a liberal agenda in office. While each party, especially the PT, has emphasized the importance of citizen participation, neither has used national power to meaningfully remake state institutions or alter the nature of state-society relations. In Venezuela, Chávez and the Movimiento Quinta República (MVR) came to power after promising to substantially revise the neoliberal model and have subsequently utilized their positions to enact dramatic macroeconomic changes, including nationalizations, price controls on many basic goods, currency interventions, and large-scale land redistribution. The Venezuelan case is also a particularly striking example of the post-liberal transformative agenda, with the Chávez government presiding over the writing of a new constitution and taking many other controversial steps to remake state

² The concept of post-liberalism itself has gained currency in some studies of the left and of new challenges to democratic practices in the region (Yashar 2005; Ardití 2010; McCoy 2010). Other scholars discuss roughly the same ideas but in different terms. For example, Levitsky and Roberts (2011) differentiate cases based on “respect for liberal democratic norms and procedures” and “promotion of popular participation in the political process.” They make the point that these two ideas can be seen as conceptually distinct, such that four different combinations are theoretically possible, but that, in practice, cases have only fallen into groups, a moderate left that respects liberal democratic norms but does not promote popular participation and a radical left that does not always respect liberal democratic norms but promotes popular participation. The post-liberal versus liberal distinction utilized here essentially captures the same idea.

institutions in the interest of creating “protagonistic democracy” in the country. As one observer flatly stated, “The administration is the most polarizing government...in Latin America as a whole since the Sandinistas ruled Nicaragua in the 1980s” (Corrales 2005).

Politicization of Class Cleavages. The second dimension of the party system outcome relates to the politicization of class cleavages. Variation in the expression of class cleavages in party systems emerged only after the moderate and radical left had come to power in each country and spent time in government. As the left entered government in Venezuela, Brazil, and Chile, class cleavages remained largely unexpressed in party systems, the lower classes no more likely than other class groups to support left parties. With the passing of time, however, substantial divergence emerged. The class cleavage came to be strongly reflected in the Venezuelan party system, with the lower classes now disproportionately favoring the PSUV. Yet the class cleavage remained unexpressed in Brazil and Chile, where the lower classes remained no more likely than other class groups to support left parties.

This outcome requires a few notes about conceptualization and measurement, which are elaborated upon in more detail in the relevant empirical sections of the study. In conceptualizing social class, the study adopts a neo-Weberian approach, viewing class in terms of the location of individuals within a hierarchy of socioeconomic inequality. This approach invokes categories such as the poor, the lower classes, the popular sectors, the middle classes, and the upper classes. The alternative approach not utilized, then, is a Marxian conceptualization that would see social class explicitly in terms of the social relations of production, invoking categories such as proletariat, bourgeoisie, blue-collar workers, or white-collar workers. For measurement, the study relies heavily on public opinion surveys, constructing scales that combine indicators of wealth and educational attainment. When examining aggregate data, a variety of available indicators on the socioeconomic level of municipalities or parishes are utilized.

The study conceptualizes the reflection of class cleavages in the party system in terms of the relative support of class groups – particularly that of the lower classes versus that of the upper-middle to upper classes – for the major left party or bloc in the system: the MVR and, subsequently, the Partido Socialista Unido de Venezuela (PSUV) in Venezuela, the PT in Brazil, and the PS in Chile. This approach mirrors the mainstream tradition in the study of class cleavages in comparative politics, both in European and Latin American analysis, which has focused overwhelmingly on differences among class groups in their support for the left.³ Other approaches are certainly possible – for example, examining the relative support of class groups for conservative or Christian Democratic parties. A focus on the left, however, is desirable for several reasons. Perhaps most importantly, this choice allows the study to more explicitly engage extant research on the orientation of party systems around class cleavages and contribute to theory building on the subject. More generally, this study is broadly focused on the ascendance of the left across South America and its political ramifications. Conceptualizing the politicization of class cleavages in terms of support for the left across class the broader set of concerns under examination.

³ A few representative examples include Alford (1962), Inglehart and Rabier (1986), Clark and Lipset (1991), Evans (1999), and Nieuwbeerta and Ultee (1999).

It should be emphasized that, in exploring the expression of class cleavages in party systems, the object of inquiry is support for left parties rather than support for presidential candidates. This distinction has not been that relevant in scholarship on class cleavages in the countries of Western Europe, which mainly possess parliamentary systems. In presidential systems, however, it is not always the case that the class basis of support for presidential candidates and for their parties will be similar. This divergence is particularly likely in multiparty systems, in which pacting usually occurs as multiple parties throw their support behind presidential candidates. It is also particularly likely in countries marked by personalistic politics, in which presidential candidates are often charismatic figures that cultivate their own followings. Given that the study is geared toward exploring divergence in party systems and the dynamics of party system change, then, a clear line must be drawn between the expression of class cleavages in the support for individual left politicians – an interesting topic, but not the focus of inquiry – and that in the support for left parties.

A final caveat is that evaluating the support for left parties across class groups can be tricky due to the nature of coalitional politics and party change. Pacting agreements can raise issues with some measures. For example, the electoral pact between the PS and PPD in Chile makes it difficult to measure PS support alone. More broadly, there is a noteworthy difference in the evolution of party organizations across moderate and radical cases. Major left parties in Brazil and Chile are older and have established organizations, which remained largely unchanged over the course of the Left Turn period. In Venezuela, on the other hand, the partisan expression of the Bolivarian Movement changed substantially over time. The radical left is composed of relatively new parties that have been faced with the task of creating and/or institutionalizing party organizations during the Left Turn period (Levitsky and Roberts 2011). As this study will show, this process has involved aggregating and integrating the various strands of the radical left that came together to back new radical challenges to power while dealing with the “party question” of how to integrate parties into these broader movements. In the Venezuelan case, this has involved moving from a situation in which the principle Bolivarian party was the hastily constructed MVR, but the Polo Patriótico coalition was the broader expression of the movement, to the creation of a new party, the PSUV, encapsulating this entire coalition. These difficulties for analysis and comparison, however, are not insurmountable. Most importantly, by the end of the period considered in this study, when the class cleavage outcome is measured and when variation had consolidated, all three cases were marked by left parties with extensive and at least semi-institutionalized organizations.

Limitations of Extant Research

Hypotheses drawn from extant scholarship are largely unable to explain these aspects of party system outcomes and illuminate the drivers of divergence across cases. A brief review of these limitations can help put the analytic contributions of the study into perspective.

Explaining Conflictual Versus Consensual Competition. We can derive four different hypotheses from extant scholarship regarding the entrenchment of consensual versus conflictual party system dynamics, none of which seem fully satisfying in light of case

evidence. One hypothesis, drawn from the literature on polarization in party systems, highlights the number of relevant parties. In this theory, multiparty systems are prone to “polarized pluralism” (Sartori 1976), marked by greater programmatic distance between major actors and more conflict patterns of competition. When more relevant parties exist, centripetal tendencies decline, parties have incentives to spread out over ideological space, and “irresponsible” anti-systemic parties have opportunities to grow at the extremes. While the logic behind this idea is compelling, the hypothesis offers limited leverage for explaining variation. Venezuela, Brazil, and Chile all possessed multiparty systems during the 1990s. Indeed, Brazil clearly had the greatest number of electorally relevant parties throughout this period, and Venezuela actually had the fewest by some measures.

Three other hypotheses can be specifically drawn from studies attempting to explain the emergence of the radical left in some countries in Latin America but not others. One prominent hypothesis, posed in various forms, holds that popular backlash against market liberalization explains whether a radical or moderate left consolidated. Some studies broadly emphasize social mobilization and popular rejection of neoliberal reforms as attending the consolidation of the radical left (Silva 2009; Roberts forthcoming). A related idea is that the presence of natural resource rents makes societies less likely to accept the constraints on government spending that market liberalism entails, leading to popular reactions against the market model and embrace of radical solutions (Weyland 2009). While differing somewhat in their details, these ideas share an emphasis on demand-side explanation – society is the “first mover” and partisan actors consolidate in response to societal preferences or actions. While intuitively compelling, the hypothesis has trouble explaining outcomes. Perhaps most importantly, public opinion data casts significant doubt on the idea of a backlash against neoliberalism within the Venezuelan electorate. As shown in Chapter 3, Venezuelans were no more likely to oppose market liberalism or support a radical leftist programmatic agenda than Brazilians or Chileans during the 1990s. The hypothesis seems weak even if we focus only on visible acts of social mobilization. The Caracazo of 1989 represented a massive protest against the Pérez administration’s removal of a subsidy on gasoline. However, many later reforms were implemented without significant social resistance or protest activity. Finally, while protest activity in Venezuela was certainly greater than in Chile, it is not clear that more societal mobilization occurred in Venezuela than in Brazil, which became famous for having an extremely active set of social movements involved in protest and mobilization.

Another hypothesis focuses on the stability or institutionalization of party systems, suggesting that the radical left has consolidated in countries where party systems have collapsed or been deinstitutionalized while the moderate left has consolidated in countries marked by party system stability (Schamis 2006; Flores-Macías 2010; Levitsky and Roberts 2011). Some of these studies go further, asserting a causal relationship between the two (Flores-Macías 2010). In this line of thinking, unstable or deinstitutionalized party systems allow radical left outsiders to gain a foothold in electoral politics, while more stable systems induce moderation from the left. This hypothesis also runs into problems when subjected to scrutiny. As numerous critics have shown, it is not clear that the putative cause really preceded the outcomes being explained, nor that a causal relationship would necessarily run in the hypothesized direction. In Venezuela, the steepest decline of the Punto Fijo parties occurred in conjunction with the victory of Chávez and the MVR in 1998 and in its aftermath.

Indeed, only a few years beforehand, the Venezuelan party system was scored as an “institutionalized party system in transition” in Mainwaring and Scully’s (1995) seminal treatment of the concept of party system institutionalization. In Brazil and Chile, the PT and PS did come to power in contexts where party systems had become increasingly stable and institutionalized. However, the programmatic moderation of the PT and PS began concurrently with, and indeed may have abetted, this trend toward party system stabilization. Confusion about causal sequencing is particularly clear in the Brazilian case. The PT began to moderate precisely at a time when Mainwaring and Scully scored the Brazilian party system as one of the most “inchoate” in the region. At best, this hypothesis highlights a variable that is extremely close to the outcome and thus offers little leverage on root causes.

A final hypothesis focuses on whether or not established left parties were parts of the government coalitions implementing market reforms in the 1980s and early 1990s (Madrid 2011). In this version of events, the involvement of the partisan left in market reforms led to the opening of ideological space on the left for new entrants, and thus the radical left emerged. In countries where established left parties were not parts of governments supporting reforms, in contrast, ideological space did not open and there was no room for the emergence of a radical left. Once again, case scrutiny reveals several difficulties, especially regarding whether the cases really align with outcomes. As Madrid acknowledges, the Chilean case is problematic for the theory. The left was in government during the Aylwin and Frei administrations and its leadership was very supportive of the neoliberal model, yet the supposed opening of ideological space did not lead to the emergence and growth of a radical left. The Venezuelan case is just as problematic. Neither of the country’s two major established left parties was clearly supportive of market reforms. The Movimiento al Socialismo (MAS) was initially part of the government of Rafael Caldera and longtime party leader Teodoro Petkoff had a prominent role in the reform agenda. However, Petkoff lost control of MAS, which quickly broke with the reform government and spent most of the Caldera administration in opposition. Even more strikingly, La Causa R, the other established left party in the country, was in opposition throughout the Caldera administration. Claiming that left parties moved to the center, bore the brunt of reforms, and thus opened up ideological space for new radical entrants is a misreading of events in Venezuela during the 1990s. Indeed, MAS and LCR were part of a “triple alliance” opposed to the Caldera administration, analogous to the position of the PT vis-à-vis the Cardoso administration. Yet the radical left consolidated in the country nonetheless.

Explaining the Politicization of Class Cleavages. The study also makes a theoretical contribution to the extensive line of scholarship that has examined how and why class cleavages come to be expressed in party systems. We can think of three prominent hypotheses in extant scholarship, all of which are unable to adequately explain the divergence in cleavage expression that has occurred during the Left Turn.

Perhaps the most famous idea in this line of scholarship is a structural hypothesis that emphasizes social cleavages themselves as independent variables. Lipset and Rokkan’s (1967) foundational work, often referred to as the social cleavage theory of party systems, suggested that party system alignment along cleavages in Europe primarily occurred in response to deep social conflicts attending modernization, with the class cleavage that emerged during industrialization particularly dominant in structuring party systems. In this formulation, social

divisions are the primary independent variable, with political actors playing only secondary roles. Many scholars have subsequently critiqued this theory, especially in its applicability across space and time (Sartori 1976; Mainwaring 1999; Chhibber 2001; Torcal and Mainwaring 2003). For the current question, the explanatory limitations of a structural theory are evident: A hypothesis focused on a largely constant variable such as social structure has difficulty explaining change over a brief period of time in Venezuela. Just as importantly, social structural explanations run into a more general problem. While scholars of Venezuela often point to the country's great social inequities, it is not clear that the class cleavage is actually deeper in Venezuela than in other countries in the region. Income inequality in Venezuela during the 1990s was less than inequality in either Brazil or Chile. While poverty levels rose tremendously in Venezuela during the 1990s, and were greater than those in Chile, they were not substantially higher than those in Brazil.

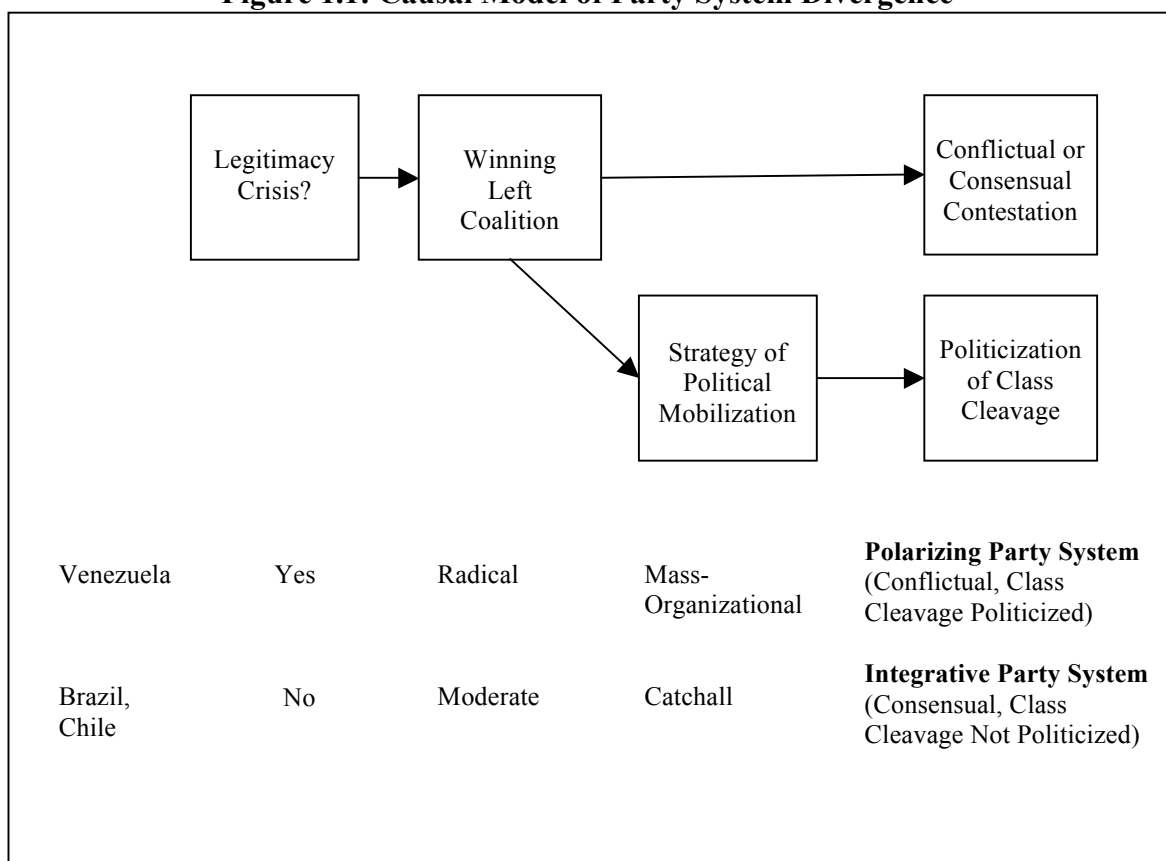
A second hypothesis, developed to both reassess the European experience and to explain the politicization of cleavages in other world areas, has focused on class-based social organizations that emerged during industrialization, especially labor unions, and the affiliation of these organizations to political parties seeking to mobilize support from the working and lower classes (Rokkan 1977; Bartolini and Mair 1990; Collier and Collier 1991; Bartolini 2000). These studies highlight the largely organic growth of a powerful and semi-autonomous labor movement and how pressures "from below" intersected with the actions and interests of political entrepreneurs at the elite level. Rather than the simple existence of class cleavages, then, this hypothesis suggests that class divisions need to be organized or to take organizational expression in order to be reflected in party systems. While a compelling explanation for cleavage dynamics in many industrializing societies, this specific hypothesis has limited explanatory power when applied to contemporary countries in Latin America or elsewhere in the developing world. Deindustrialization, market liberalization, and informalization have undercut the social-structural foundations of the labor movement in Latin America and led to sharp decreases in union density in most countries during the last decades of the 20th century. Indeed, one of the reasons that scholars have questioned the viability of class politics in the contemporary era in Latin America is precisely that labor-organizational foundations no longer seem viable (Roberts 2002). Finally, this explanation simply isn't reflected in the cases under examination. The Bolivarian Movement has had a frequently tendentious relationship with organized labor in Venezuela, and nobody would argue that the MVR or PSUV grew organically out of the working classes.

A third hypothesis instead suggests that policy actions that appeal to class interests can shift electoral contestation along class lines, at least temporarily (Chhibber and Torcal 1997; Chhibber 2001). Specifically critical to this argument is the notion that organizational foundation are not necessary for these policy-induced shifts, which occur as voters respond to redistributive programs and update their assessments of parties and politicians. While compelling in the abstract, this final hypothesis also seems hard to square with the case evidence. Left governments in Brazil, Chile, and Venezuela all made major expansions of social protection to the poor and lower classes the centerpieces of their policy agendas. Yet only in Venezuela did left parties come to have a base among the lower classes, such that the party system actually realigned along the class cleavage.

The Argument

The study develops an argument, a causal model of which is displayed in Figure 1.1, which centers on how the occurrence or avoidance of legitimacy crisis shaped factional contestation within the partisan left and, subsequently, both aspects of party system divergence. A first part of the study makes the argument that legitimacy crises powerfully affected whether moderate or radical coalitions on the left would consolidate, and thus whether party systems would take on consensual or conflictual patterns of contestation. A first step in this part of the argument involves establishing some baseline conditions regarding the common factional structure of the partisan left in each country through the late 1980s or early 1990s. The bulk of the argument then involves tracing how the occurrence or avoidance of legitimacy crisis shaped factional politics and thus, ultimately, consensual or conflictual patterns of competition.

Figure 1.1: Causal Model of Party System Divergence



The second part of the study charts the indirect effect of legitimacy crisis on another dimension of the party system outcome, the politicization of class cleavages. The core of this argument is that the occurrence or not of legitimacy crisis shaped the strategies of political mobilization that the left would pursue in office – a mass-organizational strategy by the

radical left in Venezuela and catchall strategies by the moderate left in Brazil and Chile – and that these strategies would ultimately have different effects on the translation of class cleavages into party systems.

Explaining Conflictual or Consensual Contestation. This study develops a historically grounded explanation that centers on the effect of legitimacy crises on subsequent party system dynamics. Legitimacy crises occur under democracy when substantial proportions of the population come to reject the legitimacy of the status quo regime complex as a source of authority. They do not necessarily entail rejections of democracy in favor of an alternative political regime, but instead represent massive anti-systemic rejections of democracy-as-practiced, with its status quo actors and institutions. Legitimacy crises arise from protracted governance failures and steep erosions of public confidence in core institutions such as the congress, the presidency, and the public administration. From an empirical standpoint, the study considers a legitimacy crisis to occur when two or more consecutive governments fail (as assessed by presidential approval ratings) and public confidence in basic state institutions simultaneously reaches very low levels. This definition and approach to measurement thus distinguishes legitimacy crisis from the run-of-the-mill failure of a single government or even two consecutive such failures that, for whatever reason, still do not produce significant anti-systemic sentiment.

Legitimacy crises are especially likely to occur during times of policy transition and uncertainty, when the capacity of administrations to govern and steer the ship of state is truly put to the test and when citizen confidence in state institutions is particularly likely to erode if needs and demands are not satisfied. The period of market liberalization and macroeconomic transition during the 1980s and 1990s in Latin America represented one such time of policy transition and uncertainty. In most countries, the shift in economic models was fraught with difficulty and incited significant societal backlash, leading to the failure of many governments and the collapse of numerous established political parties (Seawright 2006; Morgan 2007; Roberts forthcoming). The concept of legitimacy crisis attempts to capture the root rejectionist sentiment in deeper and more extended anti-systemic episodes, while also distinguishing these crises from less consequential instances of turmoil that were not as protracted and did not involve such widespread rejection of democracy-as-practiced.

As the 1990s began, legitimacy crisis remained a possibility in all three countries under investigation, although arguably somewhat less likely in Chile. In each case, the preceding government, which had initiated market reforms, had been popularly rejected such that the specter of a protracted failure of governance was theoretically possible. The fate of successor governments – those of Rafael Caldera in Venezuela, Patricio Aylwin in Chile, and the combination of that of Itamar Franco and Fernando Henrique Cardoso's first term in Brazil – would thus prove particularly critical, either providing a bulwark that would boost public confidence or continuing the slide into a protracted failure of governance. These governments met widely different degrees of success or failures. In Brazil and Chile, governments presided over economic growth and/or tamed severe economic problems, and ended their terms with high approval ratings. The success of the Aylwin and Cardoso administrations thus bolstered public confidence in the state and its capacity to govern in the new neoliberal era, warding off the possibility of legitimacy crisis. The disastrously failed government of Rafael Caldera in Venezuela, in contrast, exacerbated anti-systemic and

rejectionist sentiment among Venezuelans that had already been brewing for some time, leading to the onset of a legitimacy crisis.

The core argument of this part of the study is that the occurrence or not of legitimacy crisis had a decisive impact on factional contestation within the partisan left, such that either radical or moderate left coalitions consolidated and party systems would take on conflictual or consensual patterns of competition. Two mechanisms are critical to the argument. First, the occurrence or avoidance of legitimacy crisis powerfully shaped the balance and conduct of factional contestation among the left in the each country, especially with respect to the relative power of moderate and radical groups. Second, the occurrence of legitimacy crisis in Venezuela also helped Chávez and the Polo Patriótico coalition win the 1998 elections despite a macroeconomic agenda out of step with the electorate, as they could benefit from their anti-systemic credentials to make up for debilities related to extremist programs.

This part of the argument requires establishing a set of baseline conditions with respect to the development and factional structure of the partisan left in all three countries, which evolved over the course of the 1970s and 1980s on substantially parallel tracks and facing common challenges. In each country, major left parties emerged during this period – the PT in Brazil, the PS in Chile, and MAS and LCR in Venezuela – that took up a generational challenge of reinventing what it meant to be a left or socialist party. One aspect of this process involved the search for a new macroeconomic course. A second aspect of adjustment involved a new pro-democratic orientation and the theorization of what that should mean for the left – whether support for liberal democracy was sufficient, or whether and to what degree the left should also lionize a transformative post-liberal of deepening democracy through popular mobilization and citizen participation. For each party, the process of adaptation and reinvention proved deeply wrenching and controversial, such that moderate and radical factions crystallized, with moderates in leadership.⁴ In each country, a variety of very minor parties and movements of the “fringe” left also existed, which had gained little traction in electoral politics and generally held even more radical views.

By the end of the 1980s or early 1990s, the partisan left in each country as a whole could thus be characterized in a tripartite schema (moderates within major left parties, radicals within those parties, and the radical fringe), with moderate and radical groups distinguished by two coterminous dimensions: their willingness to compromise with market liberalism (or at least entertain compromise) and their willingness to forsake or sharply scale back a transformative post-liberal agenda. This tripartite division was unstable by its nature, with major left parties under serious strain as factions clashed. Given the tripartite structure of the left, contestation was likely to be resolved in one of two ways. Moderate leaders within major left parties might convince radical factions of the wisdom of the moderate course, such

⁴ The study uses the term faction to mean sub-partisan groups of party leaders and activists whose existence is widely acknowledged, that engage in their own strategic activities, and to which members and leaders attach value. While definitions of factions vary, this definition invokes commonly characteristics. See Belloni and Beller (1976) for a seminal overview of approaches to the study of factionalism in parties and party organizations. It should be noted that emphasis on factionalism has been prominent in Latin American analysis in particular, with numerous studies pointing to the importance of factions for understanding party organizations and the nature of partisan politics (Coppedge 1994a; Morganstern 2001).

that major left parties cohered around a moderate orientation and largely solved the problem of internal factionalism or denuded factional contestation of its ideological bite. Alternatively, major left parties might break under the strain of factional strife, opening up the possibility for radical factions to form a new alliance with ideologically compatible forces of the likewise radical fringe.

The occurrence or avoidance of legitimacy crisis strongly shaped the adoption of these alternative paths. The success of the Aylwin and Cardoso administrations in Chile and Brazil, which staved off legitimacy crisis and bolstered public confidence in the state's ability to govern in the neoliberal era, greatly strengthened moderate factions within major left parties, whose arguments for macroeconomic compromise and a more pragmatic liberal agenda found increased resonance, and undercut radicals, who found it difficult to articulate an alternative project or to counter the argument that macroeconomic moderation and a more pragmatic agenda was necessary to win electoral majorities. Factional divisions decreased as moderates within the PT and PS became increasingly hegemonic during the 1990s and radical factions finally acceded to programmatic adaptation and a pragmatic politics of the possible, in significant part because they feared that marginalization within the party would undercut their own professional goals. Moderate left coalitions thus consolidated within extant major left parties, and the arrival of the left to power in each country drove or reinforced consensual dynamics within party systems, which would be maintained throughout the Left Turn period.

The failure of the Caldera government and the onset of legitimacy crisis in Venezuela, in contrast, drastically undercut moderate factions within both MAS and LCR, which found their leadership positions challenged and usurped, while emboldening radicals, whose arguments for rejecting macroeconomic compromise and staying true to a post-liberal transformative agenda found greater resonance. Rather than the extension of moderate hegemony, both parties experienced a sharp increase in factional conflict, ultimately leading to massive internal crises and eventual implosion. With the fragmentation of major left parties, factions sought new and ideologically compatible alliance partners, opening the way for a new coalition between the radicals of MAS and LCR and the radical fringe of Hugo Chávez's MBR-200, a striking turn of events given that Chávez and the MBR-200 had labored through most of the 1990s in a very marginal position, attracting extremely low support in public polls and negative approval ratings. A radical left coalition, institutionalized within the Polo Patriótico alliance, thus consolidated in Venezuela. The arrival to power of Chávez and the Polo Patriótico coalition, who challenged the neoliberal consensus and made the post-liberal transformative agenda a centerpiece of their program, thus drove conflictual dynamics within the evolving Venezuelan party system, which would be maintained going forward during the highly tense and polarized Fifth Republic.

A few caveats might be highlighted about this argument. Most importantly, like many other studies in the social sciences, the argument represents an attempt to find a relatively parsimonious explanatory framework and to demonstrate the power of this framework through process-based analysis. As such, I do not argue that no other factors were relevant in shaping outcomes, only that those variables on which the study focuses were particularly relevant in driving outcomes. For example, Roberts (1998) has argued that the experience of authoritarian rule and nature of the democratic transition in Chile was particularly influential in inducing early moderation within segments of the PS and strengthening the hand of

moderate factions, which would dominate in the post-transition atmosphere. This study suggests that the triumph of moderates was not yet a “done deal” as democracy was restored and that moderate hegemony only consolidated after the success of the Aylwin administration and the prevention of any possibility of legitimacy crisis during the neoliberal transition. Yet it is completely possible that the nature of the democratic transition made the moderate direction more likely in the Chilean case than in Brazil or Venezuela. Another noteworthy hypothesis regarding Chile regards the design of electoral institutions. Many scholars have suggested that the institutional engineering of the outgoing Pinochet government, especially the binomial electoral system, created strong incentives for partisan pacting and centripetal politics (Rabkin 1996; Carey and Siavelis 2005). To claim that the consolidation of the moderate left depended on the avoidance of a legitimacy crisis does not imply that such institutional factors played no role in shaping outcomes.

Explaining the Politicization of Class Cleavages. Whether legitimacy crisis occurred or not exerted a more indirect effect on the politicization of class cleavages in party systems. The second part of the study argues that the occurrence or avoidance of legitimacy crisis was conducive to left governments coming to power that would pursue different strategies of political mobilization – a mass-organizational strategy in Venezuela and a catchall strategy in Brazil and Chile. This distinction revolves around whether or not governments designed social policies to foster social organization among lower class beneficiaries and the weight that left parties placed on constructing linkages with popular-sector social organizations. The adoption of these strategies, which were differentially effective in building support for political parties among the lower classes, shaped whether or not class cleavages became politicized in party systems.

The occurrence or avoidance of legitimacy crisis shaped the subsequent choice of mass-organizational or catchall strategies by the left in two ways. Radical and moderate left coalitions had clearly different ideological predispositions regarding fostering social organization and mobilization as an abstract value and as a strategy for building support. The radical coalition in Venezuela had consistently placed great emphasis on social mobilization during the 1990s, even as their efforts in this realm were limited in practice due to the relatively minor standing and weak organization of the incipient MBR-200. Over the course of the 1990s, the moderate left in Chile and Brazil, in contrast, had come to place less emphasis on social mobilization as an abstract value and as a strategy for building electoral support. This waning of emphasis on social mobilization occurred more quickly and more thoroughly within the Chilean PS than within the Brazilian PT. Nevertheless, the actions of the left in power in each case were strikingly similar: Neither made any significant attempt to pursue a mass-organizational strategy or to use the commanding heights of state power to actively support social mobilization.

Whether legitimacy crisis occurred also had significant implications for the nature of the institutional environment and the mandates that left governments would possess regarding institutional change. Legitimacy crisis in Venezuela entailed widespread anti-systemic sentiment, such that Chávez and the MVR made sweeping institutional reform, including the rewriting of a new constitution, a central plank of the 1998 campaign. In office, the Chávez administration would be able to leverage this mandate for institutional reform to rewrite the rules of the game in a way that would greatly free their hands in policy making. This latitude

was critical to the eventual implementation of mass-organizational strategies by the Chávez government, strategies that were highly controversial due to their mobilizational nature and overt politicization. The avoidance of legitimacy crisis in Chile and Brazil, in comparison, was associated with increasingly stable institutional environments and left parties that came to power with mandates for institutional continuity. In this milieu, the implementation of controversial mass-organizational strategies by the left was unlikely if not effectively impossible, as such policies would have raised the hackles of opponents and been blocked in the legislative arena.

Mass-organizational and catchall strategies differed in two ways, and provided different mechanisms for political parties of the left to reap advantages. The major domestic policy initiatives of left governments in all three countries involved the expansion of social protection to the lower classes. In the mass-organizational model in Venezuela, major policies were designed not just to provide material benefits or redistribute resources, but also to sponsor social organization among the lower class beneficiaries. This orientation was present in various minor initiatives of the Chávez government in its first years in power, but took fullest form after 2003 in several of the largest Misiones Bolivarianas, Barrio Adentro and Ribas, and in the Consejo Comunal program. These initiatives provided a massive spur to social organization and mobilization and significantly restructured the nature of the organizational sphere in Venezuela's popular sector communities. The second aspect of the mass-organizational strategy was a concerted effort to create linkages between these social organizations and the political parties of the Bolivarian Movement, first the MVR and later the PSUV. These linkages took the form of a variety of formal and informal working relationships, which were eventually institutionalized with the creation of committees within the PSUV to manage them.

The catchall strategy in Chile and Brazil differed in both respects. Left governments similarly made expansions of social protection the centerpieces of their domestic policy agendas. In Chile, the Lagos administration launched the conditional cash transfer (CCT) program Chile Solidario and an ambitious expansion of health coverage and infrastructure termed Plan Acceso Universal de Garantías Explícitas (Plan AUGE). In Brazil, the Lula administration combined and expanded several extent initiatives in non-contributory social assistance, creating the massive CCT program known as Bolsa Família. In each case, however, programs were designed and implemented in a technocratic manner that offered no incentives for social organization or mobilization among beneficiaries. The second aspect of the catchall strategy was that, with no social organizations of the lower classes sponsored through state policy, no opportunities were created to form linkages between those organizations and political parties of the left. Nor did left governments in either country seek out alternative means for creating or strengthening such party-organizational linkages.

The adoption of these alternative strategies of political mobilization drove variation in the politicization of class cleavages, because such strategies entailed differential opportunities for left parties to claim credit for new social policies and engage lower class beneficiaries for electoral recruitment. The mass-organizational strategy allowed the parties of the Bolivarian Movement to use linkages with the social organizations sponsored by new programs in order to better claim credit for programs such as the Bolivarian Missions and the Communal Councils. These linkages also afford parties the means to engage beneficiaries and recruit

them into electoral activism, relationships that proved critical to the building and solidifying of the MVR and, subsequently and more dramatically, the PSUV. These programs thus exerted huge effects on the likelihood of poor beneficiaries supporting the MVR and PSUV, tilting the Venezuelan party system along the class cleavage.

The catchall model made it much more difficult for the PT in Brazil and PS in Chile to reap advantages. While presidents could use the bully pulpit to claim credit for new social policies, parties struggled to associate themselves with and claim credit for these new programs, lacking the organizational linkages that facilitated partisan credit claiming in Venezuela. Without such organizational foundations, the catchall model also offered left parties in Brazil and Chile no special opportunities to engage beneficiaries for electoral recruitment. While new social programs implemented under the catchall model were the major initiatives of left governments in each case, they had no effects on support for left parties among poor beneficiaries. Party systems thus remained orthogonal to class cleavages, with major left parties drawing no more support among the poor than from other groups in society.

This argument can be usefully related to several lines of extant scholarship discussed in the previous section. Like scholars who have advanced labor-organizational theories to explain the politicization of class cleavages in industrializing societies, the study emphasizes the establishment of organizational foundations as a means to structure the class cleavage and to link citizens to political parties (Bartolini and Mair 1991; Bartolini 2002). In an age when the classic labor-organizational foundations of class politics are not viable, however, the study shows that the Chávez government's mass-organizational strategy has involved the creation of new organizational foundation for the class cleavage, one centered on territorial organizations sponsored through social policy rather than formal sector labor unions. The catchall strategy in Brazil and Chile, in contrast, more closely emulates the policies that other scholars have seen as capable of producing temporary shifts in cleavage expression in national elections in other contexts (Chhibber and Torcal 1999; Chhibber 2001). The arguments of this study are not necessarily at odds with these works. Catchall strategies did provide short term increases in personal support for left presidents in Brazil and Chile. But lacking organizational foundations that would allow the PT and PS to benefit, they did not provide the basis for lasting shifts in the alignment of party systems along class cleavages.

Research Design and Case Selection

The study is a comparative analysis of political trajectories in three countries in the South American region that share many common characteristics, and relies upon within-case analysis using a mixed methods strategy for leverage in causal inference. This section first briefly discusses the appropriate case universe for this kind of “middle-range” theorizing and the reasons for selecting particular cases within this universe. A next subsection discusses sources of causal leverage in this kind of research design, the rationale for a three-country comparison, and how qualitative and quantitative data and methods are utilized and combined at various stages of the argument.

Case Universe and Selection. The goals of this study are to develop and test hypotheses about the roots of divergence in Latin American party systems, in terms of

conflictual versus consensual dynamics and the politicization of class cleavages. The project can be seen as engaging in “middle-range” theorizing, attempting to explain variation in outcomes across a group of countries that are reasonably similar in their broad political, economic, and social contours. This approach does not imply that insights from the study cannot travel to other contexts. However, mechanistic testing of theoretical propositions may not be fruitful in contexts marked by substantially different underlying conditions.

A first task is to define the bounds of the more restricted case universe in which the study operates. While the Latin American region is generally considered to be home to more than 20 independent nations, the study, like many others, is geared specifically toward understanding and comparing macropolitical processes in the larger and/or historically more industrialized countries. We can think of this group as including the “Latin American Eight” (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Peru, Uruguay, Venezuela), countries that have long been viewed as the most advanced and industrialized in the region, as well as two others – Ecuador and Bolivia – that are of substantial size, if significantly poorer. By implication, this cut leaves out a variety of smaller countries, some of which – Nicaragua and El Salvador, for example – have also seen the arrival to power of governments of the left in the last decade.

Given the specific goals of examining different patterns of party system divergence across cases during the Left Turn in the region, several additional selection criteria were applied in selecting comparable cases. I first restricted the case universe to countries where electorally relevant left parties – meaning a “real” left, with roots in communist or socialist parties or movements – actually existed by the 1980s, a criterion which effectively excludes Argentina, where the partisan left has long been extremely marginal, squeezed out of the political arena by the dominance of Peronism. To account for variation, it would be necessary to develop a framework that also explained why the left never achieved substantial success in Argentina, a topic beyond the scope of this study. A second criterion involved restricting the universe to countries that were democratic throughout the 1980s and 1990s and in which major left parties or groups were active participants in the electoral arena rather than engaged in protracted armed insurgencies. The application of this criterion effectively excluded Peru, Mexico, and Colombia.

The application of these criteria leaves six cases in which the partisan left existed in meaningful form by the 1980s and competed on stable democratic ground in the 1990s. Not coincidentally, these are also the six cases where the left actually succeeded in winning the presidency between 1998 and 2006. Within this group, a subset of cases was chosen for close analysis based on several criteria. The first was to choose a group of cases displaying variation on the party system outcome, thus avoiding a “no variance” research design (Geddes 1990). Some scholars contend that such research designs are acceptable if between-case analysis is not relied upon for leverage in causal inference (Collier and Mahoney 1996; Collier, Mahoney, and Seawright 2004). Nevertheless, selecting cases that vary on the outcomes allows the study to avoid criticism on this point and facilitates a more compelling framing.

Within the group of six cases, there are also compelling reasons to specifically select those of Venezuela, Chile, and Brazil. For one, these three countries were the first in the region to elect presidents of the left, with these elections occurring in 1998, 2000, and 2002 respectively. In contrast, elections that brought the left to power in Uruguay, Bolivia, and

Ecuador occurred in 2004, 2005, and 2006 respectively. As research for this project began, then, left governments in the former trio had been in office for some time, each completing full presidential terms, while left governments in the latter trio had just entered office. Examining cases in the first group provided much greater perspective on the questions that occupy the second part of the study, concerning what the left has done in office and how their actions have or have not shaped the translation of class cleavages into party systems. In contrast, it would have been premature, or at least substantially more difficult, to evaluate these questions in the other trio of cases.

There are also numerous theoretical reasons for choosing these three cases. Among countries where the radical left has emerged in recent years and driven polarizing patterns of contestation in the region, the Venezuelan case has attracted a particularly high level of attention from both scholars and media observers. Chávez and the Bolivarian Movement have posed the strongest challenge to the hegemony of the neoliberal model in the region, and have placed especially heavy emphasis on class-based forms of political mobilization. In many respects, the Bolivarian Movement has provided the original model of a new radical left against which other radical cases, which have come later, have been compared. Choosing this instance of the radical left and a polarizing party system seems appropriate given the theoretical concerns of the study.

The Chilean PS and Brazilian PT are compelling cases for comparison because of their own notoriety and because of the surprising similarities that have emerged between them. Both parties have attracted great attention from scholars of Latin American politics over the years. The Chilean PS was arguably the most successful party of the left anywhere in South America during the post-war years, and its trajectory of adaptation after the return to democratic contestation has continued to attract significant interest. The Brazilian PT has been a particularly influential and compelling case among the many left parties that emerged in South America during the 1970s and 1980s seeking to theorize a new identity for the left in a world in which great disenchantment had set in with the Soviet experience and doctrinaire Socialist or Marxist-Leninist orthodoxy. Beyond these reasons, the parties are interesting to examine because of the surprising similarities they now display. For much of the 1990s, many scholars saw the PS and PT as representing fundamentally different kinds of left parties, both in their macroeconomic policies and their agendas regarding citizen participation and social mobilization. With the benefit of hindsight, it now appears that the two parties experienced broadly similar trajectories of adaptation toward a moderate and more catchall course, with the PS simply embarking on this trajectory at an earlier stage and making the transformation somewhat more thoroughly. Examining two parties that once seemed quite different provides a stiffer test for the hypothesis that the occurrence or avoidance of legitimacy crisis played a critical role in determining what kind of party system dynamics would eventually consolidate across countries in the region.

Research Design. The study is a comparison of party system divergence in countries over multiple decades. At a broad level, it thus works within the tradition of small-n analysis often associated with the “comparative method” or comparative historical analysis. Researchers working within this tradition lay claim to different sources of causal leverage. One approach has focused on between-case comparison as a source of causal leverage, either through variations on Mill’s Methods of Difference and Agreement or, in more sophisticated

fashion, the formulation and testing of hypotheses concerning necessary and sufficient conditions, often using techniques like Boolean algebra or Qualitative Comparative Analysis (Mahoney 2007). A second tradition has focused on within-case comparison as a source of causal leverage. In this approach, the strength of small-n comparison is its ability to elucidate mechanisms and to trace processes by making many fine-grained observations within a single “case” (Campbell 1975; George and McKeown 1985; Goldstone 1997; Collier, Brady, and Seawright 2004; Bennett and George 2005). These two sources of causal leverage, of course, are not incompatible: Scholars may call upon either or both, and they also may disagree about which is most suitable for a given research project.

This study emphasizes within-case analysis as a source of causal leverage. With an N of 3 (at the country-level at least), a simplistic Mill’s Methods approach runs into immediate difficulties: Any correlation between outcomes and explanatory variables is difficult to interpret and arguably does not provide an adequate basis for drawing causal inferences absent very strong assumptions.⁵ A more sophisticated between-case approach framed in the language of necessary, sufficient, or INUS causes presents an alternative in theory. Claims about necessity and sufficiency, however, can be very difficult to sustain and support: It is not difficult to imagine alternative scenarios in Venezuela, Brazil, or Chile where some event occurred that precipitated a different outcome. To take an extreme example, if we are to believe Chávez, at one point during the 2002 coup army officers loyal to the opposition had him on a beach with a gun to his head. They eventually returned him to custody, and he soon was back in power. But what if someone’s trigger finger was itchy? It seems safer to consider what happened and why, yet to fall short of making claims about whether or not certain combinations of explanatory variables were necessary or sufficient for outcomes.

An alternative is to rely upon within-case analysis and attempt to trace the processes that connect variables in a causal chain. Taking this approach begs two questions: If between-case analysis is not drawn upon for causal leverage, why conduct a three-country comparison? How is the within-case analysis designed and conducted? The rationale for a three-country comparison relates to the issue of generalizability and the ways that descriptive inferences aid the process of framing research and formulating hypotheses. Examining multiple cases is valuable because it facilitates the development of theories that extend beyond the idiosyncrasies of a single country and instead cover several of the more important cases experiencing similar processes in a world region. While the study does not rely on between-case comparison for causal leverage, examining multiple cases allows it to develop a theory of slightly greater generalizability and a project that may be of interest to a larger number of other scholars. A second rationale is that comparison facilitates our ability to identify a compelling research question and to generate hypotheses. One reason why the outcomes in this study are intriguing is precisely because they are divergent. Were all three countries to have the same outcomes, explaining those outcomes would be far less compelling. Just as importantly, cross-case comparison is useful in the research process because it can be a source

⁵ Sekhon (2004) argues convincingly that between-case analysis with a small n can only produce valid causal inferences if there is a single and deterministic explanatory variable that is measured without error. Such assumptions cannot be sustained for this study and, as a generalization, are extremely difficult to sustain in any study.

of hypothesis generation. For example, the observation that legitimacy crisis occurred in Venezuela but not in Brazil and Chile was fundamental to generating the hypothesis that this variable might have played an important role in what kind of left coalition eventually came to power in each country. Hypotheses can thus be generated through between-case analysis yet tested via within-case analysis.

Mixed-Methods Strategy. To conduct the within-case analysis and draw causal inferences, the study employs both qualitative and quantitative data and methods, which are utilized at different stages of the project. The first part of the study mainly employs case-based and qualitative forms of evidence, including the memoirs of left party leaders, contemporaneous news sources reporting on factional divides and developments within left parties, internal party documents and data related to internal elections, and secondary scholarship shedding light on all of these subjects. This part of the study relies upon process-tracing for leverage in causal inference. Goldstone (1997) usefully describes this task as: “figuring out *which* aspects of the initial conditions observed, in conjunction with *which simple principles* of the many that may be at work, would have *combined* to generate the observed sequence of events” (emphasis in original). The study establishes that the partisan left in each country shared certain commonalities, including a tripartite structure and clear leadership roles for moderates within major left parties, which constitute baseline conditions for the argument to follow. The study then uses various sources of data to draw causal inferences regarding how the occurrence or avoidance of legitimacy crisis shaped factional contestation within major left parties and led to the consolidation of different coalitions on the left and party systems marked by conflictual or consensual patterns of contestation.

The second part of the study utilizes a more balanced mixture of qualitative and quantitative data and methods to examine why left governments implemented different strategies of political mobilization and to test hypotheses regarding how these different policy orientations catalyzed party system reorientation around class cleavages. The study relies mainly on qualitative materials to score cases with respect to the implementation of mass-organizational or catchall strategies of political mobilization, including a variety of data gathered during 11 months of fieldwork in Venezuela. Data sources relied upon include interviews, government documents, news articles, secondary sources, and public opinion data. In so doing, the study also uses the materials to illuminate why different approaches to political mobilization would plausibly have different effects on support for left parties among the lower classes and, in aggregate, lead to different patterns of party system reorientation around the class cleavage. In this sense, qualitative data is fundamental to understanding the mechanism at work.

The latter half of the second part of the study then tests the theory with quantitative data and methods, drawing upon datasets that merge public opinion data and information on the characteristics of parishes and municipalities in each country. The basic goal is to evaluate the effects of different social programs – those that were part of a mass-organizational strategy in Venezuela and those that were part of a catchall strategy in Brazil and Chile– on partisanship with the left. For each program, Genetic Matching is used to construct control groups that are balanced with treatment groups on a set of pre-treatment covariates. Effects are then estimated in the matched data, and sensitivity analysis is conducted to probe the robustness of findings to hidden confounders.

It must be stressed that causal inferences in the study should be taken *as inferences*, not as ironclad claims. The process-oriented parts of the analysis are geared toward the goal of reconstructing causal chains and marshalling evidence that a group of variables plausibly had significant causal effects, while shying away from strong claims about the necessity or sufficiency of these variables. Although the statistical part of the analysis is oriented toward minimizing threats to inference by being careful with data structure and conducting robustness tests, the data is still observational and thus the study must ultimately rely on strong assumptions for identification. The study takes pains to remind the reader of these inconvenient facts in the appropriate places.

Plan of the Study

The study is organized into seven chapters, with the empirical analysis divided into two parts. Chapters 2 and 3 address the consolidation of conflictual or consensual party systems as the Left Turn began in the region. The former chapter examines the trajectory of development of the partisan left in Venezuela, Brazil, and Chile during the 1975-1990 period, focusing on illustrating the common challenges faced by major left parties, the crystallization of factional divisions within major left parties, and the overall tripartite structure of the partisan left in each country. Chapter 3 develops the argument that the avoidance or occurrence of legitimacy crisis had a critical impact on the outcome of factional contestation within the partisan left and the establishment of party systems marked by consensual or conflictual competitive dynamics.

The second part of the study examines different strategies by the left in power and how they drove divergence in the politicization of class cleavages in party systems. Chapter 4 shows how the consolidation of a radical coalition on the left in Venezuela with a mandate for institutional reform led to a left government that embraced a mass-organizational strategy for popular mobilization. The chapter also explores this mass-organizational strategy in considerable depth, illustrating how these initiatives served to restructure civil society and the variety of informal and formal linkages that were formed between new social organizations and the partisan apparatus of the Bolivarian Movement, especially the PSUV.

Chapter 5 shows how the consolidation of moderate coalitions on the left in Brazil and Chile with mandates for institutional continuity led to left governments that pursued catchall strategies for popular mobilization. This chapter also demonstrates how, in the absence of mass-organizational strategies from the left, populations in both countries became relatively demobilized and party-organizational linkages were weak. Chapter 6 then demonstrates the divergence between cases in the reflection of class cleavages in party systems and tests the argument that the adoption of the mass-organizational or catchall strategies catalyzed these different outcomes.

Chapter 7 serves as a conclusion. A first section briefly examines how well the analytic model travels to the cases of Bolivia and Uruguay. This cursory look is promising on balance, while also suggesting that a few additional variables might be introduced in order to better capture variation in the broader case universe. The chapter ends with some final observations regarding the contributions of the study and directions for future research.

Chapter 2 –The Roots and Rise of a Factionalized Partisan Left, 1975-1990

This study revolves around the argument that factional contestation within the partisan left in Venezuela, Brazil, and Chile was decisively shaped by the occurrence or avoidance of legitimacy crises, leading to the consolidation of a radical left coalition and conflictual party system dynamics in the former country and moderate left coalitions and consensual competitive dynamics in the latter pair. The role of this chapter is to establish that the partisan left in each country shared a set of key similarities prior to the critical period in which legitimacy crisis did or did not occur, such that both coalitional outcomes were theoretically plausible in each case. Put in more analytic terms, these similarities represent common baseline conditions, from which divergent outcomes eventually emerged.

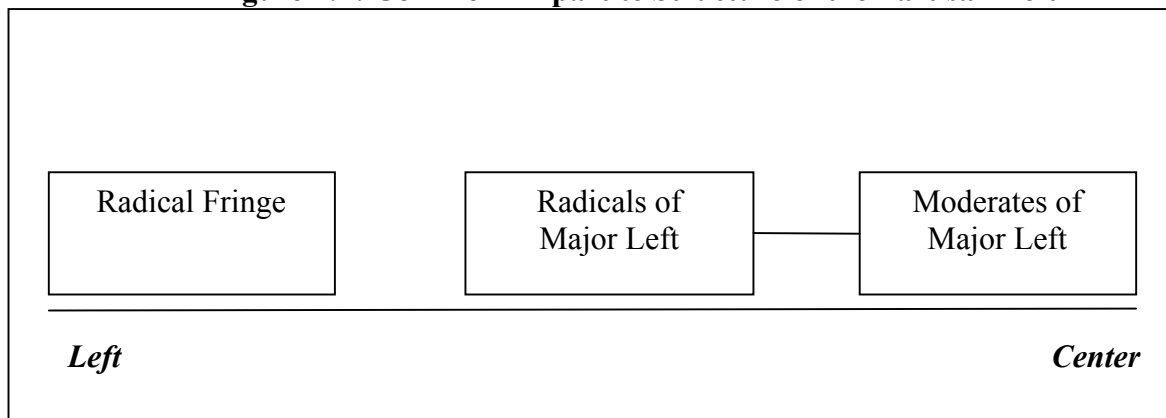
The central claim of the chapter is that the partisan left in each country, facing many common challenges, evolved in such a way that major elements could be grouped into a tripartite schema. In each country, at least one major left party emerged that seriously took up what proved to be a generational challenge for the left across much of Latin America, involving no less than a fundamental reinvention of what it meant to be a left or socialist party in the interest of displacing status quo competitors through institutional channels. These were the PS in Chile, the PT in Brazil, and LCR and MAS in Venezuela. For each of these parties, the process of adaptation proved deeply wrenching and ridden with conflict, such that factional divides became particularly salient and clearly identifiable camps could be discerned, termed here *moderates* and *radicals*. Further, in each country a *radical fringe* also existed, constituted by minor left parties and movements that were generally at least as extreme, and often more so, than the major party radicals, having not taken up the generational challenge of reinvention with such vigor and having made only meager inroads in electoral politics.

These elements within the partisan left could be differentiated on the basis of the same two coterminous dimensions on which the study differentiates the radical and moderate left coalitions that eventually consolidated across countries. The first is macroeconomic policy, especially the extent to which left parties or factions were willing to compromise (or at least entertain compromise) with market liberalism. The second is the emphasis placed on a post-liberal democratic agenda centered on the enhancement of citizen participation outside the electoral arena and the mobilization of collective actors as a means to ameliorate and contest social inequalities. Given the dominance of liberal representative democratic institutions and practices, this post-liberal agenda, by its very nature, required the embrace of a fundamentally transformative mission that rejected a pragmatic “politics of the possible” in which the left would be content to work within, rather than seek to fundamentally alter, extant liberal democratic institutions.

During this period, culminating in the early 1990s, programmatic differences between left groups were not as wide as they were to eventually become. Most importantly, the “moderates” of major left parties, especially those in Brazil and Venezuela, had not yet moved all the way to the macroeconomic center nor entirely given up the idea of a post-liberal agenda. Nevertheless, even within a more compressed programmatic spectrum, differences were already apparent: Groups within each country could be distinguished along the same

dimensions that would later distinguish the moderate and radical left coalitions that consolidated across countries.

Figure 2:1: Common Tripartite Structure of the Partisan Left



The second major claim of the chapter is that, by the late 1980s or early 1990s, the partisan left shared not only a similar structure across the three countries, but also a similar balance of power. In each country, moderate factions within major left parties held leadership roles, yet none were hegemonic, with radical factions still strong in every case. Under moderate leadership, each major left party increased engagement in electoral politics, began to at least entertain macroeconomic compromise, and evinced a greater pragmatism about the limits of post-liberal transformation. And in each case, moderate leadership led to substantial successes for major left parties in the electoral arena, while the radical fringe remained marginal players. In sum, in all three countries major left parties were, under moderate leadership, poised to consolidate positions as major partisan forces to the left of center in the new neoliberal age.

The chapter proceeds as follows. Successive sections chart the trajectory of development of the partisan left in each country during the 1970s and 1980s, laying out the key information in narrative form. The focus is primarily on those major left parties that took up the generational challenge of self-reinvention. Each country discussion explores the roots of these parties, the difficult process of programmatic and strategic adaptation, and the sharp and clearly defined factional divisions between moderates and radicals that emerged over the course of this period. The end of each subsection then turns to the status of the fringe left in each country and establishes the broader idea of a tripartite partisan left as the 1990s dawned. Finally, a subsequent section explicitly compares the cases with respect to these baseline conditions and discusses some additional baseline differences among major left parties

Chile

The Chilean PS is the oldest major left party of those under consideration, founded in 1933 as an alliance between several minor parties of the left and reformist military officers. The PS initially staked out a relatively moderate position within Chilean politics, taking a

leading role in the heterogeneous opposition to the government of Jorge Alessandri and joining the Popular Front. Over the post-war era, however, the PS experienced increasing radicalization in the context of a party system marked by “multiparty polarizing politics” (Collier and Collier 1991). In this favorable milieu, the PS in Chile grew to become the largest socialist party in South America and, along with the Communist Party (PC), came to constitute one of the central pillars of Salvador Allende’s Unidad Popular (UP) coalition. Within UP, the Socialists represented a more extremist wing, staunchly rejecting the possibility of accommodation with the centrist Partido Democrática Cristiano (PDC) and expressing more conviction about the eventuality of armed conflict with the forces of the right.

The PS (as well as the PC) put great emphasis on the organization of social groups and constituencies as a fundamental element of a more revolutionary political agenda, an embrace of social mobilization that reached a crescendo during the “hypermobilization” of the Allende presidency. This orientation was most famously manifested in relationships with the labor movement in Chile, which the PS viewed as the popular base of the UP project. While the Chilean left had long struggled with the PDC to win the allegiance of organized labor, its efforts in social mobilization eventually paid off and the labor sector became strongly linked with the left. By the early 1960s, surveys of union leaders revealed that they supported either the PS or the PC over the PDC by a nearly 2:1 margin, a ratio that almost surely rose in the following years of polarization (Landsberger and McDaniel 1976, pg. 510). The PS was also active in other forms of social mobilization. Although perhaps less so than the PC, the PS had long attempted to organize and mobilize the Chilean peasantry, and developed extensive linkages with the “peasant councils” and “peasant unions” that proliferated in Chile first after the Frei land reforms of the mid 1960s and subsequently during the Allende years.⁶ Recognizing the changes to Chilean social structure brought by urbanization, the PS also extended its mobilizational efforts to neighborhood associations in urban shantytowns, although once again perhaps less so than the PC. By the end of the 1960s, surveys of associational leaders in urban shantytowns found very strong linkages with both of the major UP parties (Pratt 1971).

The imposition of military rule in 1973 under the repressive Pinochet regime was devastating to both left parties, but especially so for the PS. Party leaderships and militants alike were arrested and, in many cases, faced torture, execution, or prolonged imprisonment. Those that escaped repression fled the country – creating a leftist Chilean diaspora some have estimated to be as strong as 200,000 – or went underground.⁷ The PC, with a more established cellular structure and more experience with clandestine operations, was much better prepared to weather the storm. Despite very significant repression, the PC was thus able retaining a greater presence within Chile, in the form of an extensive network of

⁶ During the Allende government, the proportion of the rural labor force in peasant unions also increased markedly, with unions affiliated with UP parties such as Ranquil growing in particular, while unions affiliated with the PDC stagnated or decreased in size (Chinchalle and Sternberg 1973, pg 120).

⁷ The figure of 200,000 is a commonly accepted estimate in scholarship on the Chilean diaspora, with its original provenance in data collected by the International Organization for Migration and the Chilean Commission on Human Rights. For an extended discussion of the diaspora and Chilean migration, see Wright and Oñate Zúñiga (2007). Another informative source is Angell and Carstairs (1987).

militants, and a more cohesive party leadership. The Socialist Party, in contrast, was less successful at maintaining networks within Chile, saw much of its leadership end up in European exile, creating geographic and strategic divides that put the party's leadership under strain. In 1974, a group of socialists that had remained inside Chile (the "Elenos") wrote and disseminated a highly critical evaluation of the role of the PS in the downfall of the UP government and in the development of the Chilean left more generally.⁸ This "March document" drove an initial wedge between parts of the PS that had stayed in Chile and its leadership, now residing in exile. These and other tensions between PS factions would only increase over time.

The coming years saw a period reflection, reinvention, and extremely fierce factional infighting. The dilemma of strategic adaptation loomed particularly large, a question not only of how to oppose the Pinochet regime but also, more generally, of what principles socialism was to stand for in a world in which the left was everywhere on the defensive and in which the debilities and horrors of the Soviet Union were increasingly apparent. That many leaders of the PS were in European exile was particularly critical in this process of "reflection and self-criticism" (Ortega Frei 1992, pg 80). Residing in and often traveling between the capitals of Eastern and Western Europe, leaders of the party were exposed to the contrast between socialism as practiced in the eastern bloc and social democracy as espoused by its proponents in France and West Germany.⁹ Carlos Altamirano, the Secretary General of the party's leadership in exile, became perhaps the leading proponent of a more moderate course, dedicated to support of democracy, the abandonment of Marxist-Leninist principles, and the embrace of a more social democratic orientation. Influential figures such as Jorge Arrate and Ricardo Nuñez also began to embrace this "renovationist" project.

Enthusiasm for renovation, however, was far from universal among PS exiles and found little support among those elements of the PS still clinging on within Chile. Tensions within the party simmered for some time and then came to a head in 1979, when opponents of the renovationist project, who controlled the party's Internal Directorate, removed Altamirano from his post as Secretary General and replaced him with the more hard line Clodomiro Almeyda. The supporters of Altamirano, led by Nuñez, did not recognize the legitimacy of this action, and the party effectively divided over the issue, with each faction claiming ownership over the socialist mantle.¹⁰ The PS thus divided into two broad camps, a more orthodox faction led by Almeyda (PS-Almeyda) and a more accommodationist faction headed by Ricardo Nuñez (PS-Nuñez).¹¹ These factions within the PS also, naturally, constituted

⁸ See Bascuñán Edwards (1990, pg 73-74) or Pollack and Rosenkrantz (1986, pg 187-189) for greater elaboration on the "March Document" and the factional politics surrounding the "Elenos."

⁹ Walker (1990, pgs 182-190), drawing upon numerous interviews with key figures in the PS, provide an especially enlightening account of how the party leadership reacted to its experience in European exile and, in particular, its exposure to Western European social democracy.

¹⁰ The factional disputes within the PS and the ultimate division of the party have been well chronicled. See Bascuñán Edwards (1990), Roberts (1997, pgs 98-107), and Gutiérrez González (2003).

¹¹ These broad camps themselves were also factionalized, and many smaller factions also existed that were aligned with neither. Chroniclers of the PS therefore sometimes speak of ten or even twenty distinct factions during the 1980s. For example, Gutiérrez González (2003, pg 123), who was in the thick of things as an important figure in the PS-Almeyda, actually identifies ten factions, which were split between support of an insurrectionary or conciliatory course of action: PS/Almeyda, PS/Nuñez, PS/Suizos (conciliatory), PS/CNR

only one part of the Chilean left, with the Communist Party also assuming a prominent role. The Chilean left was tripartite, involving the PS-Nuñez, the PS-Almeyda, and the PC.

Factionalism Within the PS During the 1980s. The PS was thus already fractured when the strategic situation changed dramatically with the regime's implementation of a new constitution in 1980, which established a roadmap for democratic transition, with a planned plebiscite in 1988 on Pinochet's continued rule. The PS-Nuñez was most supportive of a negotiated transition and a social democratic orientation but entered the transition period in the weaker position, lacking a significant organizational presence within Chile and arguably holding a more tenuous claim to the PS mantle. Over the course of the decade, as the dynamics of transition changed, however, the prominence and power of the Nuñez faction increased. For present purposes, two points are critical, elaborated on below: First, the PS-Nuñez was able to consolidate a leading role within a socialist bloc that became increasingly united by the democratization process. Second, the position of the Nuñez Socialists, however, was far from hegemonic as the Aylwin administration commenced. Other powerful factions, most prominently the PS-Almeyda, contested the power of the PS-Nuñez and overtly advocated different strategies and principles for the future of the party.

The plebiscite remained distant and uncertain during the first half of the decade. In this environment, opposition to the regime was oriented toward protest and contention, a dynamic that favored those actors with deeper roots in society and a more mobilizational orientation. The Communists were best poised to capitalize, with the most effective and extensive network within the country, the deepest roots in the poorer districts of Santiago that were emerging as hotbeds of anti-regime sentiment, and the strongest commitment to an insurrectionary course of action. But the PS-Almeyda, able to draw on some of these resources and also sympathetic to contentious politics, likewise gained traction and became a key partisan actors during the emergence of the regular anti-regime mobilization that marked the first half of the decade.

The PS-Nuñez had neither the resources nor the inclination to embrace the unpredictable and sometimes violent protest movement, although they did express strong support for the notion of popular participation and mobilization more generally.¹² The faction therefore took a different strategic tact, centered on alliance building in preparation for the plebiscite, which would ultimately prove more successful and position them for a leading role in post-transition politics. One aspect of this strategy involved reaching out to other minor elements of the left also supportive of a negotiated transition and a moderate course, building a coalition under the banner of *Convergencia Socialista* and branding the moderate

Indoamerica (insurrectionary), PS/CNR Revolución (insurrectionary), PS/24 Congreso (insurrectionary), PS/Comandantes (insurrectionary), PS/Histórico (conciliatory), PS/Mandujano (conciliatory), and PS/Salvador Allende (insurrectionary). Pollack and Rosenkrantz (1986, pg 167) go even further, claiming that at least 20 distinct groups could be identified in the mid 1980s as "Socialist offspring." The PS-Almeyda and PS-Nuñez, however, were clearly the largest and most important discernible factions of the PS during this period and, following other scholars, the rest of this analysis focuses on their activities. We would keep in mind, however, that factional politics were extremely fluid and complicated even within these broad camps.

¹² See Oxhorn's (1995) interviews during the regime transition (especially Chapter 6, pgs 186-193), which suggest strong support for popular participation and social organization by militants of both the Almeyda and Nunez factions. Indeed, both factions overwhelmingly expressed the opinion that these forms of political participation were even more important than electoral participation in a future Chilean democracy.

progressive project as one of “renovación.” A second aspect involved reaching out to the center. Since at least 1977, prominent members of the PS-Nuñez such as Altimirano had begun advocating a strategic alliance with the PDC as a means to “destroy fascism” in the country.¹³ The PDC, in turn, had become active after 1980 in advocating a negotiated regime transition through electoral means and was looking to build a broader alliance in support of this position. In 1983, after an extensive set of negotiations, the formal Alianza Democrática was created to unify those sectors of the democratic opposition backing a negotiated transition. These included the PDC, the PS-Nuñez, some minor parties of the left that had also joined the Convergencia Socialista, and some elements of the pro-democratic right. While a few members of the PS-Almeyda expressed support, the faction rejected overtures to join the alliance.¹⁴

The PS-Almeyda and PS-Nuñez proceeded through the next few years under different leadership, advocating different principles on which to base the future of socialism, and embracing different strategies for contesting the regime. While the political climate of the early 1980s may have been initially more favorable to the PS-Almeyda, the terrain gradually shifted as the plebiscite grew increasingly near. Those parties committed to a negotiated and electoral transition continued to engage in a series of negotiations and produce a number of joint declarations regarding the coming democratic transition. While the PS-Nuñez played a key role (along with the PDC and parties of the right) in these activities, the PS-Almeyda largely abstained. Meanwhile, the protest movement, which had peaked in the early 1980s, was fading away, undercut by both the increasing realization among Chileans that an electoral showdown was coming and the delegitimizing effects of a failed attempt on the life of Pinochet and a subsequent crackdown by the regime.

Even as the inevitability of an electoral battle became increasingly clear to all actors in the transition, the PS-Nuñez and PS-Almeyda remained on separate tracks, despite significant negotiations and numerous highly publicized calls for socialist unity.¹⁵ An attempt was made to form a united front called Área Socialista, but idea was soon rejected by the PS-Almeyda (Ortega Frei 1992, pg 345-346). The PS-Nuñez instead eventually joined, with the PDC, a group geared toward calling for free elections rather than the regime’s planned plebiscite. Within this coalition, the PS-Nuñez and other minor left parties formed the Comité de Izquierda por las Elecciones Libres. The PS-Almeyda, for its part, joined the Izquierda Unida counter-alliance, which also attracted the participation of the Communists and other minor left parties that remained more suspicious of the electoral transition. Perhaps most importantly, in expectation of more general elections and to circumvent the constitutional ban on parties of

¹³ Altimirano (1979, pg 280). The full quotation illustrates his conviction on this point: “No sólo posible, sino categóricamente deseable, una convergencia con la Democracia Cristiana tras un objetivo histórico concreto: destruir el fascismo.”

¹⁴ This discussion draws heavily on Ortega Frei (1992), which extensively chronicles the history of overtures between the PDC and PS-Nuñez and the complicated machinations and negotiations surrounding the formation of the Alianza Democrática.

¹⁵ For example, several salient calls to unity were penned during 1987 by Aniceto Rodríguez, a well-regarded socialist leader who, like the PS-Nuñez, supported a negotiated transition but was well positioned to act as peacemaker, having always been distant from both the PS-Nuñez and PS-Almeyda factions due to his exile in Caracas, rather than Europe. See Rodríguez (1990), especially “Mensaje de Unidad a los Socialistas” and “No Todos Entrarán en la Unidad.”

Marxist origin, several prominent leaders of the PS-Nuñez announced the formation of the Partido por la Democracia. Intended to be a “party of ideas, and not ideologies” (Rojas 2008, pg. 37), the PPD positioned the Nuñez wing of the PS for future electoral success and also complicated the already complex factional deal making occurring among the Chilean left.

These ongoing factional differences were put aside in the formation of the Concertación de Partidos por el NO in February 1988, an umbrella group to coordinate a broad coalition of forces supportive of Pinochet’s ouster, which both the PS-Almeyda and PS-Nuñez joined (but the PC, notably, did not). Over the course of 1988, the Concertación worked with diligence to increase voter registration and launched a creative advertising campaign focused on positive messaging rather than denunciations of the regime (Boas 2008). In October, the Chilean electorate cast a historic vote on the future of the country’s political regime, with the NO option triumphing easily with 54.7% of the vote. Buoyed by this victory, the Concertación stayed intact in order to back the successful presidential candidacy of the PDC’s Patricio Aylwin in the following year, with its constituent parties going their separate ways in running in roughly concomitant legislative elections.

The final stages of transition solidified the leadership role of the PS-Nuñez and led to a significant rapprochement between the two main socialist factions. Because a ban on parties of Marxist origin was still in effect, socialist candidates in the legislative elections were forced to run under the PPD banner or as independents, strongly favoring the PS-Nuñez. Ultimately, the Nuñez sector was able to elect 18 deputies and four senators while only six deputies and one senator were to come from the ranks of those associated with the PS-Almeyda (Roberts 1998, pg 132).¹⁶ The PS-Nuñez was thus in a stronger position as the process of party reunification gained momentum after the plebiscite. Over the latter half of 1989, the PS-Nuñez and PS-Almeyda entered into lengthy discussions and negotiations about unification. In mid 1990, after ten years of division and, at times, bitter acrimony, the major factions of the PS were once again brought under the same organizational banner. It was also agreed that the PPD would remain, as a “democratic political movement surrounding” the PS, an affiliated party that would share leadership with the new PS and engage in close electoral and strategic coordination, and facilitate a more inclusive and broader electoral strategy.¹⁷

While the last stages of the democratic transition undoubtedly were a spur to this historic process of rapprochement and reunification, they did not eliminate factional differences between the Nuñez and Almeyda socialists or other smaller groups. Rather, “things were not so simple” (Gutiérrez González 2003, pg 138). The issue of how to bring down the Pinochet regime, such a divisive one for much of the past decade, had been triumphantly settled. Yet a decade of operating as distinct organizations, with divergent leadership structures, loyalties, and no small amount of recrimination, had left its mark. These tensions did not simply disappear into thin air amid the triumphalism of the transition’s last stages. That many prominent figures in the PS-Nuñez had remained outside Chile during

¹⁶ The PS-Nuñez, longtime alliance partners of the PDC, also received more cabinet appointments and greater influence in the new Aylwin administration.

¹⁷ The quotation comes from correspondence between Arrate and Almeyda during the latter half of 1989 (Nuñez 1991, pg 329). Leadership crossover has been a hallmark of the PPD/PS relationship since the transition to democracy, with numerous key figures, such as Nuñez and Lagos, at times simultaneously occupying leadership positions in the parties.

much of the transition led to grumbling about the dominant leadership role of this “foreign legion,” while others complained that the party had been taken over by new entrants from Izquierda Cristiana and MAPU without a history in socialist politics (Gutiérrez González 2003, pg 127). Many militants of the Almeyda faction expressed only lukewarm support for the unification process and continued to see their primary loyalty to factional figures such as Escalona, rather than the unified party leadership. Many militants in the Nuñez faction, in turn, questioned whether unification should have been delayed until their own hegemony over the party had been further consolidated.¹⁸

Just as importantly, factional divisions were not simply rooted in personal rivalry, but also reflected fundamentally different programmatic and ideological visions for the future that had not been reconciled. The Nuñez sector espoused a moderate agenda. On a macroeconomic level, this agenda involved, by and large, leaving the economic model of the Pinochet regime in place. On a political level, the Nuñez sector deemphasized post-liberal ideas concerning deepening democracy and social transformation, which were seen as threatening the stability of the transition, and instead embraced a pragmatic vision centered on defense of liberal representative democracy.

Despite the reunification of the party, neither side of this agenda was fully embraced by the radical wing represented in the Almeyda sector and other minor groups. These differences were acknowledged by Nuñez himself, who noted in a 1989 address to the XXV Party Congress: “We still have some important differences with the PS-Almeyda and strategic visions survive that are not shared between us” (Nuñez 1991, pg 267). Indeed, while the Almeyda sector had moderated to some degree, its vision for the PS was fundamentally different than that of the Nuñez sector even as Chile returned to democracy. The PS-Almeyda had moved away from Marxist-Leninist principles, a process eased by an internal division that saw a more hard line group known as the “comandantes” become increasingly marginal. But the faction and its leaders, including both Almeyda himself and emerging leader Camilo Escalona, were still adamant that the PS had to maintain a critical posture toward capitalism and reject market liberalism, that the PS must be: “A party that exists and acts motivated by a firm conviction in the validity of socialismo, as the only viable solution to global problems...generated especially by capitalism, the neoliberal version of which has proven incapable of resolving.”¹⁹ While adamantly defending the importance of the democratic transition, the Almeyda wing also repeatedly declared that liberal democracy was not sufficient for carrying out the social changes that the PS should be pursuing.

Status of the Radical Fringe and a Tripartite Partisan Left. While the PS was newly ascendant, the latter years of the transition were not kind to its historical alliance partner, the PC. Once equal in stature to the PS in the country, the party saw its base dwindle and its influence over events decline markedly as the transition process move away from the popular protests of the early 1980s and into institutional contestation in the electoral arena (Roberts 1998). The wound was partly self-inflicted. Whereas the radicals of the PS

¹⁸ See Roberts (1998, pg 132, especially footnote 32) regarding this hesitance regarding unification among militants in both the Almeyda and f factions.

¹⁹ The quotation is the first sentence in an editorial published by Almeyda in *La Nación*, “El Partido Socialista como yo lo quiero.” The editorial can be found in Almeyda (1992, pg 379-382).

eventually saw the light and joined the electoral fight as a participant in the Concertación, the PC remained largely intransigent, opposing the idea of an electoral resolution for most of the decade, declining to join the Concertación, and only grudgingly supporting the referendum against Pinochet. This intransigence was motivated by a sense of ideologically incompatibility with the centrist forces of the Concertación. Like the radical fringe in Brazil and Venezuela, the PC remained adamantly opposed to macroeconomic accommodation with the neoliberal model and highly dedicated to a post-liberal agenda that rejected the status quo of liberal democracy and a pragmatic politics of the possible.

As the transition to democracy was made, the PC was also hurt by the institutional engineering of the outgoing Pinochet government, especially the electoral ban on parties of Marxist-Leninist origin. Like the PS, the PC and other minor left parties attempted to circumvent the ban by forming an instrumental party, the Partido Amplio de Izquierda Socialista (PAIS), and running under this banner. However, the initiative was hastily conceived, PAIS managed to attract only 4.4% of the vote nationally, and the only deputies that it elected were actually members of the PS-Almeyda. The fringe left thus occupied a marginal position in the party system. This position would improve only incrementally in the coming years, with the PC winning slightly more votes in 1993 as a legalized party than the umbrella PAIS had in 1989.

As the democratic era began, then, the partisan left was roughly divided in a tripartite structure, consisting of the moderate renovación wing of the PS, the radical factions of the PS descended from the PS-Almeyda, and the fringe left represented most strongly by the PC. The resolution of factional contestation within the partisan left remained in the balance. For the bulk of the 1980s, the PS was more divided, ideologically, strategically, and organizationally, than any of the other major left parties under consideration. The latter stages of the transition process unified the party and went a considerable way toward bringing factions together and easing a history of suspicion and recrimination. Yet we should not overstate the thoroughness of this transformation: The PS did not go to sleep one day as the most divided left party under consideration, and wake up the next day as a cohesive party freed from ideological and personal disputes. Rather, like the other left parties, the PS entered the 1990s factionalized in important ways, yet led by a moderate and pragmatic wing. While the subsequent years would witness increasing programmatic convergence and homogenization around the moderate stance of the Nuñez sector, this next stage in the development of the party depended, in fundamental ways, on what happened after the transition to democracy, and in particular the success of the Aylwin administration, which bolstered public confidence in the state and prevented any possibility of legitimacy crisis.

Brazil

The Brazilian PT had very different roots, emerging during the late 1970s in the context of the struggle for democratization and uniting a diverse set of leftists and labor activists. As in Chile, the post-war Brazilian party system was characterized by polarizing dynamics and the failure of centrist political projects, eventually leading to a military coup in 1964, backed by elite and middle-class sectors fearful of a leftward swing under João Goulart and the growing influence of a radicalized labor sector. Authoritarian rule in Brazil was

considerably less violent and repressive than in Chile.²⁰ However, the government's project was similarly geared toward the weakening and undercutting of organized labor and the left. The regime was extremely active in restructuring the labor movement, removing and replacing union leadership and further entrenching corporatist structures in a context in which policies were oriented toward a deepening of import substitution industrialization.²¹

The military also took active steps to reconstitute a new party system, banning all parties that had existed before 1964 and allowing only the Aliança Renovadora Nacional (ARENA), representing the regime, and the Movimento Democrático Brasileiro (MDB), an officially sanctioned opposition party. As with many other examples of authoritarian rule, permitting the existence of elections and political parties, especially a weak opposition party, served the purpose of legitimating the regime and warding off criticism both internally and from abroad. In addition, the creation and support of an umbrella opposition party like the MDB served as a strategy to specifically weaken the influence of the left, which would be only one set of voices within a party that attracted heterogeneous support and that had regime change, not any kind of deeper transformative agenda, as its fundamental goal.²²

As pressure for a democratic reversal built in the late 1970s, then, the question of whether or not to remain aligned with the MDB became critical for the heterogeneous set of actors that identified with the left. Most salient was the "new labor" movement, a set of dissident unionists at the forefront of increasing strike activity and labor unrest in the 1978-1979 period. Led by several metal workers' unions from the state of São Paulo, various leaders and activists within the new union movement began discussing the formation of a new political party to represent workers in 1978. A chaotic process of discussion and negotiation ensued among various sectors of the labor movement and other interested groups, leading eventually to the official formation of the PT in late 1979.

The newly founded PT possessed two related characteristics that were to prove particularly consequential in its subsequent course of development. First, the party lacked a clear ideological or programmatic definition from the beginning. As Keck (1992, pg 245) eloquently put it, "the party grew up with less of an ideology than an ethical proposal, within which a number of alternative visions of the good society competed, using different languages." This amorphous program was partly a product of the heterogeneity of the groups that joined the PT. But it also reflected a conscious determination to avoid being ideologically pigeonholed and to emphasize the movementist practices of the party rather than its program, during a time in which the very meaning of socialism was under debate. Second, the party was formed out of a very heterogeneous group of extant actors. While the base of the PT was

²⁰ The killing of dissidents was considerably less frequent, and occurred a campaign against armed guerrilla groups rather than through systematic violence against a broader set of dissidents. A 2007 government report estimated 339 politically motivated killings by the regime over the course of the 1964-1985 period. See Folha de São Paulo (8/25/2007). See Schamis (1991) for an insightful comparison between the bureaucratic authoritarian model in Brazil and later authoritarian regimes in Chile and Argentina that were considerably more repressive and possessed more transformative policy agendas.

²¹ Keck (1992, pg 63) reports a total of 536 interventions to replace union leaders, at the levels of single unions, federations, and confederations. See O'Donnell (1973) for the classical analysis of the relationship between authoritarianism and import substitution in Brazil.

²² For a more in depth discussion of the use of the MDB as a tool for containing and channeling opposition to the regime, see the excellent discussion in Keck (1992), especially pgs 30-35.

in the “new unionism,” the party also drew support from many other sectors. Numerous fringe left parties and movements cast their lot with the PT, including *Convergência Socialista*, *Fração Operária*, *Movimento pela Emancipação de Proletariado*, *Partido Comunista Brasileiro Revolucionário*, and *Ação Popular Marxista Leninista*. The party also attracted support from MDB dissidents, social movement leaders, and Christian activists in the liberation theology movement.²³ As such, the party was born as a highly factionalized organization. Indeed, in its initial years there was significant debate about the existence of “parties within the party” or whether or not the PT should be considered a party at all, or rather a front representing a multitude of allied parties.²⁴

As in Chile, the situation was one in which a highly factionalized party set about figuring out the questions of what socialism was to mean and what “the left” was to represent, all while trying to influence a regime transition and set itself up for success in electoral politics. Once again, this process of ideological reinvention was dualistic. On the one hand, there was debate about a macroeconomic platform and what kind of policies the left should advance. On the other hand, programmatic reinvention also involved a rethinking of the left’s orientation toward democracy, the theorizing of a fundamentally transformational post-liberal vision of deepening democracy through citizen participation and mobilization, and questions concerning how that vision could be achieved. These debates remained fundamental as the party grew gradually over the course over the 1980s. The 1982 congressional elections proved to be a massive disappointment, with the party garnering less than 4% of the vote nationally. But PT vote share grew in both the 1986 and 1990 congressional elections, with the party emerging from the latter with the third highest vote total in the country. The party also made gains in subnational elections, eventually capturing 32 municipalities in 1988, including three state capitols, giving the party a platform for governance. Perhaps most spectacularly, Lula finished second in the first round of the 1989 presidential elections and proceeded to lose the run-off to Fernando Collor de Mello by only a small margin, a breakthrough that raised the party’s profile considerably in areas of the country outside of its base in the industrial Southeast.

Factionalism Within the PT During the 1980s. The PT’s growth over this period brought new challenges and opportunities, and also created new tensions that were reflected in, and in some ways exacerbated, factional conflicts. One source of tension regarded the PT’s dual existence as a political party and social movement, and the highly related question of how the PT would balance commitment to a transformational vision while also competing in elections and holding office. The PT’s growth over the 1980s involved a deepening of its commitments to a basist identity and new forms of theorizing how Brazilian society might be transformed from the ground up. In addition to nurturing established alliances with social movements and labor actors, the PT cultivated new relationships with groups active in the shifting organizational landscape of democratizing Brazil, including neighborhood associations, womens’ movements, and agrarian movements such as the Landless Workers

²³ A survey of parish priests in the Sao Paulo area by Pierucci (1982) showed that nearly half identified with the PT, and that other Catholic activists in the area were heavily involved in PT activism.

²⁴ On this point in general, see Keck (1992, pgs. 96-121) and Lacerda (2002, pg 50).

Movement (MST).²⁵ These strategies reflected what Keck (1992, pg. 247) has called a “radical democratic vision of the empowerment of civil society.” Such support was not simply framed as a good in and of itself, but also a component of a broader vision of transforming state-society relations. In this vein, party leaders also began to discuss and forward increasingly radical ideas, such as the replacement of local government with a pyramidal hierarchy of “Popular Councils,” a notion partly inspired by the example of neighborhood Health Committees that had sprung up in Sao Paolo.²⁶ The party’s support of and base among organized elements of society was such that commentators on the 1989 presidential election regularly referred to the contest as one between “organized Brazil” and “unorganized Brazil.”

The growth of the PT, however, also by definition involved competing in the electoral arena and, eventually, dealing with the realities of governance. The expansion of the party mainly occurred through winning subnational races, which required winning majorities and appealing to a broad swath of the electorate. Experiences in office also had complex ramifications for the party’s dual identity and its commitment to social transformation. Winning power in municipal administrations allowed the PT to put its ideas in practice, most notably through a series of initiatives to sponsor participatory forms of governance integrating civil society into local administration, the earliest and most famous of which was undertaken by the municipal government of Puerto Alegre under the stewardship of Olívio Dutra. While offering the party an opportunity to showcase its ideas, these experiences also exposed PT politicians to sobering realities regarding the challenges inherent to implementing policies to enhance citizen participation and the obstacles to societal change presented by other parties and interest groups. Finally, electoral success also led to an increase in professionalization within the party, both among leaders, who were now official politicians holding office, and among many activists, who were rewarded with jobs. The result was a significant increase in the number of individuals depending directly on the party for their livelihoods, as PT officials or as employees of the party or PT administrations (Baiocchi 2003)

A second source of tension and ongoing debate regarded the party’s programmatic stance with respect to macroeconomic policy. As with other major left parties during this time, the PT faced a fundamental, in some ways nearly existential, question: What was a “socialist” party to advocate in an era during which the old model of import substitution no longer appeared capable of sustaining economic growth and liberalizing market reforms were becoming increasingly widespread? Throughout the 1980s, the PT’s position vis-à-vis specific proposals for market liberalization was relatively clear, as the party’s delegates and leaders joined in a firm anti-market position during the Constituent Assembly debates of 1987-1988 and firmly denounced the neoliberal Collor Plan as inhumane and unsustainable. The alternative proposed by the PT was a not quite as clear. In resolutions of its party congress

²⁵ Examples and anecdotes concerning these relationships run throughout studies of the PT and of social movements and civil society in Brazil during this period. One interesting discussion regarding the neighborhood movement can be found in Abers’ work (2000, pg 49-50), detailing the PT’s involvement with and leadership within a federation of neighborhood associations in Puerto Alegre. Alvarez (1990, pg 170-175) offers some insight into the party’s relationships with womens’ movements. Many studies of the MST have highlighted the movement’s relationship with the PT.

²⁶ See Abers (2000, pg 51-52) for more information on this point and, more generally, the ambitious vision of Popular Councils. Gadotti and Pereira (1989) also discuss the PT’s notion of Popular Councils at length.

and other public declarations, the party consistently identified itself as “socialist” and expressed support for poverty alleviation and the alleviation of inequalities and social exclusion, affirming principles but rarely offering concrete alternative policy proposals. While largely consistent, these policy proposals seem likely to have exaggerated the unity within the party, serving as means by which concessions to different party factions could be made and significant disagreements symbolically bridged in the interest of maintaining unity (Novaes 1993; Nylén 2000).

Indeed, disagreements about the PT’s commitment to its basist roots and the nature of its program were reflected increasingly strongly in factional divisions as the 1980s progressed. While the PT was not formally split like the PS, the problem of internal factional contestation plagued the party through the decades. If the party was to grow, it had a natural interest in reaching out to a broad coalition of supporters and accommodating different sectors. Yet if the party was to develop organizationally and compete electorally, it needed to be able to subsume factions within a unified party structure and produce a coherent program. These considerations guided several critical developments in the early years of the party. In 1983, a group within the party leadership, led by Lula, formally banded together under the rubric of “Articulação de 113,” in an attempt to consolidate its own leadership, create a more unified majority faction within the party, and block the growth of vanguardist “parapartisan” factions (Azevedo 1995, pg 79). Even at this early stage, Articulação represented a relatively more pragmatic wing of the PT, although real programmatic moderation had yet to come.

While the creation of Articulação was largely successful in consolidating leadership, it did not resolve the question of what would happen to other factions and groups, most of which held more extremist positions and goals. Discourse on the “party within the party” problem was often acerbic, with Articulação leaders accusing minority factions of using the PT instrumentally for their own purposes while representatives of those factions responded with derisive comments of their own.²⁷ At the 1986 national party meeting, a major step forward was taken in the drafting of a resolution on the nature of the PT and its relationship to constituent groups, which affirmed the status of the PT as a single party, rather than a front, but recognized a “right of *tendência*,” a formal recognition of factions. The subsequent party congress saw further debate of how the *tendência* system would function and the passing of a resolution on how they would be recognized and regulated. These steps had the effect of institutionalizing and formalizing factional divides within the party, in effect altering the internal rules of the game, but did not eliminate the problem of factionalism. Indeed, the resolution on *tendências* was itself controversial, passing despite quite significant opposition, with a 204-147 vote.²⁸ Neither did the new system necessarily bridge divides between different sectors of the party.

The internal balance of factional power that crystallized over the 1980s, then, was one marked by one large moderate *tendência* and a variety of minority factions, mainly of the radical left. These further could be divided into those that derived from clandestine Communist movements, such as Nova Esquerda and Força Socialista, and those with their

²⁷ See Keck (1992, pgs 116-120) for an extensive summary of the debate about *tendências*.

²⁸ See Petit (1992) for more elaboration regarding the controversial step of formally recognizing and regulating *tendências* within the party.

roots in Trotskyite movements and parties, such as Democracia Socialista, O Trabalho, Convergência Socialista, and Causa Operária.²⁹ Most of these leftist factions eventually became formally recognized as *tendências*, but the process was accepted grudgingly by many militants and not helped by the fact that others such as Causa Operária were denied recognition as *tendências* by the PT's national directorate.

Overall, the PT did not proceed along the course of moderation nearly as far as the PS during this period. Nevertheless, by the early 1990s factional camps were clearly identifiable and distinguished in terms of their willingness to entertain compromises with market liberalism and their adherence to a post-liberal transformative vision that lionized the party's grassroots mission, rather than an increasingly pragmatic and professionalized orientation that focused on making incremental electoral gains. *Articulação*, led by Lula and other prominent petistas like José Dirceu, held a majority position and leaned toward more moderate sympathies and a pragmatic approach to building electoral support within the confines of institutionalized politics. The variety of radical *tendências*, in contrast, overtly rejected any kind of compromise with the market model and increasingly questioned whether the party was becoming too "electoralist," straying from its movementist roots and losing sight of its post-liberal vision of fundamentally transforming state-society relations.

In the early 1990s, these disagreements over the future of the party were exacerbated by a perceived lack of electoral momentum. While the party made gains in the congressional elections of 1990 and the municipal elections of 1992, the results were disappointing to some activists who envisioned a much higher rate of growth following Lula's near victory in the 1989 presidential election and the subsequent widespread discrediting of the Collor administration. In this context, the party experienced its greatest leadership crisis. The *Articulação* faction splintered into several groups and the more moderate remnants, led by Lula, lost their majority in the national directorate for the first time.

Status of the Radical Fringe and a Tripartite Partisan Left. The fringe left in Brazil occupied a similarly weak position as in Chile, but was somewhat more fragmented, consisting mainly of three smaller leftist parties, each with roots as socialist or communist parties that emerged in early 20th century Brazil. The Partido Socialista Brasileiro (PSB), formed in 1986, was the most prominent. The party adopted the statutes of the former PSB, which had been an integral part of the coalition support Goulart in the 1960s, and laid claim to the mantle of the traditional Brazilian socialist movement. The other most noteworthy parties in the fringe left were two parties that emerged from the 1958 splintering of the Partido Comunista Brasileiro (PCB), which were the PCB itself and the Partido Comunista do Brasil (PCdoB). These parties had been salient political actors in mid-century Brazilian politics, but had never gained significant electoral strength and had played largely minor roles in the transition process of the 1970s and early 1980s.

The post-transition milieu thus saw the fringe left occupying a marginal if not completely inconsequential role in the party system. The use of proportional representation in legislative elections was more favorable than Chile's binomial system to the fringe. In the 1990 congressional elections, the PSB managed to win 11 seats, the PCdoB 5 seats, and the

²⁹ See Azevedo (1995, pgs. 80-124) for an extensive overview of factional divisions within the PT at this time, as well as discussion of the roots of each of these groups.

PCB only 3, a total that amounted to about 4.5% of the total in the chamber of deputies. They were also able to leverage some regional bases of support to forge strategic electoral pacts with other parties in gubernatorial and municipal elections and become players in Brazilian coalitional politics. Nevertheless, the combined strength of the three fringe parties amounted to roughly half of what the PT itself held at the time.

As the second wave reform era began in Brazil, the partisan left in Brazil thus also could be grouped into a tripartite schema on ideological grounds, consisting of the moderate Articulação faction and allied groups within the PT, the newly ascendant radical left *tendências* within the PT, and the fringe left consisting mainly of the PSB, PCB, and PCdoB. Similar to Chile, the outcome of factional contestation remained in the balance. Articulação faced the steepest ever challenge to its leadership, fundamental divisions within the party threatened to break the PT apart, and an alliance between radical *tendências* and elements of the fringe left remained a distinct possibility.

Venezuela

During the late 1970s and 1980s in Venezuela, left parties also emerged as new challengers to the status quo and were faced with similar dilemmas of strategic and programmatic adjustment and confronted with similar problems of factional contestation. Each party was formed by dissidents from the Partido Comunista de Venezuela (PCV) in the early 1970s, a time in which the left in the country was badly in retreat, with one foot in a failing guerilla insurgency and the other in an electoral arena increasingly monopolized by the country's two dominant parties, Acción Democrática (AD) and Comité de Organización Política Electoral Independiente (Copei).

This situation had its roots in the political maneuvering and deal making that surrounded the 1958 democratic transition. Over the course of the 1950s, a heterogeneous coalition grew in opposition to dictatorship of Marcos Pérez Jiménez, led by the populist AD but also including parties of the left and a business community increasingly disenchanted with economic mismanagement by the regime.³⁰ This coalition, especially the left's role within it, proved highly unstable as the transition process moved forward. In order to ensure the support of the business community, and to cement its own preeminence, AD made a series of moderating adjustments that would quell fears of a leftward shift under democratic rule. In addition to making explicit commitments to supporting capitalist enterprise and containing labor radicalism, AD moved to exclude the two major parties of the left at the time – the PCV and Movimiento Izquierda Revolucionaria (MIR) – from the Pact of Punto Fijo, in which the major pro-democratic actors established a set of formal and informal agreements regarding the parameters of the new democracy. AD also purged its own left wing, forcing militant factions out of the party, and took steps to marginalize more radical trade unions and to bring more cooperative elements of the labor movement into line through selective incentives (Collier and Collier 1991).

³⁰ The party had ruled the country during the aborted transition to democracy in the *trienio* period of 1945-1948, represented the strongest and most credible partisan force in the opposition, and commanded significant support from both the labor sector and the peasantry.

The consequences for the left were devastating and, eventually, atomizing. Marginalized under the new democratic regime and inspired by recent events in Cuba, much of the left (including both the PCV and MIR) chose to form guerrilla movements to oppose *puntofijismo* through insurrectionary means. The government responded with a military crackdown, forcing the left out of the major cities and into a largely rural and unsuccessful insurgency, and arresting PCV and MIR politicians sympathetic to the guerrillas.³¹ What remnants of the left which remained committed to electoral contestation were then further squeezed by the growth of AD and Copei, which were able to use their control over the state in a time of economic expansion to achieve virtual electoral hegemony.³² The Venezuelan left thus spent much of the 1960s and early 1970s torn between insurrectionary and institutional strategies for contesting power, a leading to factionalism, defection, and, ultimately, a fragmented and protean set of parties and movements. These included not just firmly established parties like PCV and MIR, but a variety of offshoots and newer entrants, such as Liga Socialista (LS), Movimiento Electoral del Pueblo (MEP), El Pueblo Avanza (EPA), Grupo de Acción Revolucionaria (GAR), Movimiento al Socialismo (MAS), and La Causa R (LCR).

The last two parties, each formed by PCV dissidents, would eventually emerge as the greatest challengers to the Punto Fijo parties during the 1980s and early 1990s. Both parties represented attempts to break with leftist orthodoxy, and their formative years during the 1970s were characterized by the same dynamics of reflection, internal criticism, and programmatic reorientation taking place within the left elsewhere on the continent. MAS took on a somewhat more vanguardist orientation, roughly analogous to the PS in Chile. LCR embraced a more basist orientation, espousing the need to build a vanguard from below and blurring the line between a political party and social movement in ways that were strikingly similar to the PT in Brazil. Despite these differences, the parties displayed broad similarities in their trajectories of growth and change. Both remained relatively minor players during the 1970s and grew over the course of the 1980s, while negotiating dilemmas of programmatic and strategic adaptation and dealing with factional disputes. And in each case, relatively moderate wings gained some degree of control as the party reached unprecedented electoral heights in the early 1990s, before the full-blown onset of the Venezuelan legitimacy crisis.

From its origins, MAS put a more immediate emphasis on joining the battle in the electoral arena. Created by a dissident faction of the PCV led by Teodoro Petkoff, the party's formation represented both a growing rift with hardliners within the PCV and a new resolve to move on from the failures of the guerilla movement. The new party thus sought greater internal flexibility and debate, more freedom from Moscow, and an accommodation with procedural democracy. But MAS also placed heavy emphasis on "socialismo ya," the idea

³¹ A low-intensity leftist insurgency continued throughout the 1960s and into the 1970s, marked by small skirmishes between guerrillas and the Venezuelan armed forces in rural parts of the country, the occasional terrorist action in more populated areas, and the eventual arrest and incarceration of a large number of influential leftist leaders and activists (Alexander 1982).

³² In the aftermath of democratic transition, the two major parties did not have a complete stranglehold on the electoral system, winning, for example, only 64% of the seats in the senate. Yet whatever space was available for other parties in this period quickly disappeared. By 1973 the AD/Copei duopoly held 87% of the senate, a number that would not again fall below 90% for twenty years.

that the path forward entailed calling for an immediate transition to socialism (rather than seeing the transition as necessarily involving many stages) and convincing the Venezuelan population to support this platform. One implication of this strategy was the almost immediate launch of a publicity campaign, which attracted great attention.³³ Another implication was an immediate emphasis on electoral contestation. MAS won nine seats, about 5% of the total, in the chamber of deputies in 1973, numbers that held relatively constant over the next two electoral cycles. A final implication was that MAS, like the PCV from which it came, remained somewhat vanguardist. If the way forward entailed calling for socialism now and getting Venezuelans to agree, then the primary role of party leadership was to proselytize. The party's emphasis on its own role in disseminating the ideas of socialism may have undermined its ability to build a movement from the grassroots through more practical strategies.³⁴

One member of the Petkoff faction of the PCV who did not join MAS was the former guerilla commander Alfredo Maneiro. Uncomfortable with the MAS's vanguardist orientation, Maneiro and other dissidents set about building an alternative movement, which eventually became LCR. Unlike MAS, Maneiro's group did not attempt to immediately place itself on the electoral map, and indeed did not register as political party until 1979, and only then to run in a few municipal council elections in the state of Bolívar (Hellinger 1986, pg 119). Emphasis was instead placed on grassroots organizational strategies. Originally named Venezuela 83, the group set out to identify different sectors of society where an alternative left movement could be built from the ground up, settling on four: the barrios of Catia, a parish in western Caracas; the Universidad Central de Venezuela (UCV), where the student movement was already strong; the intellectual community in Caracas, Anzoategui, and Merida; and the labor movement in Ciudad Guyana, a geographic focus of Venezuela's oil-led and state-directed development strategies in the 1960s and 1970s and home to many massive state-owned enterprises.

In this sense, LCR was formed out of a heterogeneous set of left and labor actors, in much the same way as the PT in Brazil. As with the PT, however, the party found its most important base of support in the labor sector, organically growing in strength through the promotion of a "new unionism" that emphasized the democratization of worker representation, improvements in occupational health and safety standards, and the breaking of corporatist constraints on labor militancy and effective wage bargaining. This wing of LCR came to be called Matancero, and its strategies eventually bore significant fruit. In 1979, Matancero candidates won control of the Sindicato Único de Trabajadores Siderúrgicos y sus Similares (SUTISS) union, which represented many of the workers in the state-owned steel company Siderúrgica de Orinoco C.A. (SIDOR) and, with 8,000 workers, was the largest in the country. While LCR eventually lost control of the union, after the government intervened at the behest of the dominant CTV, this victory raised the party's national profile tremendously.

³³ For example, only a year after the founding of MAS, Gabriel Garcia-Marquez was to donate to the party the financial reward (a not inconsiderable \$23,000) from the Romulo Gallegos Prize, with which he had just been presented in Caracas for his novel *One Hundred Years of Solitude*.

³⁴ See Ellner (1986), pgs 81-82 on this specific point. The discussion of MAS in general draws more broadly from that article, as well as Ellner's book (1988) on the same topic.

As Venezuela entered the 1980s, economic stagnation and growing citizen perceptions of corruption in the government produced new opportunities for these outsiders to make inroads into the Punto Fijo duopoly of AD and Copei. Oil prices fell sharply, and the country was shaken by the regional debt crisis, even if it did not experience a disastrous hyperinflation like many other countries. Starting in 1979, Venezuelans consistently expressed strongly negative economic evaluations every year for the next decade and a half (Templeton 1995, pg 81). Discontent with the status quo manifested itself in increasing levels of popular protest (López Maya and Lander 2005), in rises in electoral abstention, and in large decreases in identification with the two major parties (Seawright 2006, pg 154).

While cracks in the foundation of Punto Fijo presented opportunities for challengers in general, the situation was especially ripe for those on the left. Ideological space within the Punto Fijo system was open, with Venezuelans placing both AD and Copei to the right of center in public opinion surveys. The pathologies of Punto Fijo governance also played into the hands of left challengers. Economic stagnation led to significant rises in poverty and the deterioration of real wages, a situation seemingly propitious for the electoral fortunes of left parties. The debilities of Punto Fijo democracy, in which mayors and governors were appointed rather than elected and power largely rested in the hands of influential party brokers, also played into the hand of a left that was inclined to make the deepening of democracy a central tenet of its program. While, unlike in Chile and Brazil, the left did not rise in the midst of a regime transition, they were still able to overtly frame their agendas in terms of a struggle for democracy, a message that resonated with much of the population.³⁵

With this auspicious confluence of factors working in their favor, both MAS and LCR grew substantially over the course of the 1980s and early 1990s. As with their counterparts in Chile and Brazil, this process involved continuing ideological reinvention and rethinking along two dimensions – the search for a new macroeconomic program and the theorization of a post-liberal agenda of deepening democracy while attempting to balance this fundamentally transformative notion with the pragmatic realities of electoral competition and governance within established institutional confines. And, again like counterparts elsewhere, this process of adaptation was internally controversial and wrenching, such that clear factional divides between moderates and radicals would become increasingly apparent and entrenched.

Factionalism Within MAS During the 1980s. In the case of MAS, the search for a new macroeconomic program was particularly wrenching. The party had been explicitly founded on the idea of “socialismo ya,” understood at the time to actually entail a commitment to radical changes in the nature of property relations. Only a decade later, starting in the early 1980s, the MAS set out to “deemphasize socialism and to redefine the word to rid it of its controversial connotations” (Ellner 1988, pg 131). This programmatic adjustment, as with other major left parties under consideration, involved an increasing

³⁵ Indeed, during the 1980s the Punto Fijo system came under heavy fire from many quarters, not just from the left, for exclusionary and quasi-democratic practices, with widespread calls for state reforms that would democratize subnational elections, decentralize resources, break the hold of party brokers, and increase government accountability. The widespread condemnation of old practices eventually led to the formation of the Presidential Commission for State Reform (COPRE) and the implementation of many of its recommendations (Crisp and Levine 1998; Lalander 2004).

vagueness concerning what the economic implications of socialism might be and a tendency to forward abstract principles rather than offer concrete proposals.³⁶

On the other hand, balancing a commitment to a post-liberal agenda with the pragmatic realities of electoral competition was perhaps easier than for other parties, because MAS had agreed upon an electoral course from its very beginning and had always possessed a somewhat vanguardist orientation. Nevertheless, the party's evolution involved a renewed emphasis on deepening democracy and the notion of transforming status quo of state-society relations through citizen participation and, like its counterparts, MAS would eventually have to grapple with the limits of social transformation within institutionalized politics. Starting in the early 1980s, MAS increasingly cast themselves to the public as involved in a democratization struggle, as symbolized by their 1983 slogan, "More Democracy for Venezuela." Given the party's small stature, a particular fixation throughout the 1980s was electoral reform, especially the direct election of mayors and governors and changes to the country's system of proportional representation that were seen as favoring larger parties and coalitions.³⁷ However, as MAS's electoral strength grew, partly propelled by these reforms, the party would have to deal with the dilemmas not just of competing within institutionalized politics but also of governing and potentially compromising with the hated forces of Punto Fijo.

As with other parties, these dilemmas were reflected in, and in many ways exacerbated, factional tensions within the party. The problem of factionalism was especially severe for MAS, which had been notoriously divided since its origins, led by strong personalities like Petkoff and Pompeyo Marquez and attracting a diverse group of leftists with different conceptions of what a new kind of socialist party would look like. In the late 1970s, the problem of factionalism had become significant enough that MAS took steps very similar to those of the PT in Brazil, moving in a party congress to officially recognize and regulate party factions, and to more clearly spell out how factions would be represented in party administrative posts. As with the PT, however, these steps served to change the rules of the game but not to eliminate factionalism itself. As MAS entered the 1980s, it was divided into three large, and colorfully named, factions. The Tucanes represented a renovationist wing led by Luis Bayardo Sardi, most inclined toward programmatic moderation and political pragmatism. On the other side of the spectrum were the Halcones, led by Freddy Muñoz, espousing a more orthodox programmatic line and highly critical of any accommodation with the forces of Punto Fijo. The last faction was known as the Perros, a group led by Marquez that sought to stake out an intermediary position. Petkoff, a dominant figure and formally party president after 1980, was not a member of any of these factions, but gave at least tacit support to the Tucanes.

Factional tensions within MAS came to a boil in the events during and after the 1983 presidential election. The party's approach to the 1983 elections was internally controversial for several reasons: the deemphasizing of socialism, the choice of Petkoff as candidate (and

³⁶ For an extremely comprehensive analysis of these processes of programmatic adjustment within MAS during the 1980s, see Giordani (1992, pgs 44-64).

³⁷ See Kornblith and Levine (1995, pg 61-67) for an overview of the process of electoral reform and the role of MAS.

the rejection of overtures from other parties to field a united left candidate), and its desultory results. Despite the party's reformed message, Petkoff proved to be an uninspiring candidate, winning only 4.1% of the vote and badly underperforming the party's vote share in municipal elections. Recriminations flew from both sides in the aftermath of electoral defeat, with the Tucanes claiming that MAS' association with the traditional left continued to poison its public image and the Halcones blaming the electoral disappointment on the Petkoff campaign's abandonment of its socialist principles. This heated atmosphere led to the defection from the party of several important figures in the Tucanes faction, who predicted that the electoral setback would lead to a resurgence of orthodoxy.

These dire predictions largely failed to materialize. Despite the setbacks of 1983, moderates within MAS were able to maintain control and keep the party on a programmatic course that deemphasized Marxism, advocated for a balance between state and market, and, while placing rhetorical emphasis on post-liberal ideas, increasingly acknowledged the pragmatic limits of social transformation. These strategies eventually paid off. MAS nearly doubled its legislative representation in the 1988 elections, triggering talk among political commentators of a real third force emerging in Venezuelan politics for the first time since the Punto Fijo era began. These electoral victories were won partly via programmatic moderation and an increasing willingness to engage in coalitional politics and deal making, an orientation most strongly supported by Petkoff and the Tucanes like Bayardo Sardi, and to which other prominent leaders such as Marquez eventually came around.³⁸ No decision better exemplified this increasingly pragmatic approach of the MAS than its decision to join the Convergencia coalition backing Rafael Caldera for the presidency in 1993. While Caldera positioned himself as an outsider and campaigned against the structural reforms of Carlos Andrés Pérez, he was an old guard *copeyano*, one of the Punto Fijo insiders whom the older generation of MAS leaders had been trying to overthrow by violent means 25 years previously. Several cabinet positions were given to MAS, including to its two most famous and iconic leaders. Marquez became Minister of Frontiers while Petkoff became Minister of Planning, a critical appointment in a government still navigating the shoals of structural adjustment.

As the Caldera presidency began, then, MAS stood in a position of unprecedented influence, both in congress and for the first time in the executive branch, and seemed poised for future growth. Yet the party also remained deeply divided regarding both macroeconomic accommodation with the neoliberal model and the wisdom of the pragmatic politics of the possible that its moderate wing had embraced. This moderate wing, led by Petkoff and the Tucanes like Bayardo Sardi, was clearly in control of the party. But the more radical Halcones wing, as well as a substantial portion of MAS's impressive activist base who had spent the last decade denouncing the corruption of the Punto Fijo system and the need for wholesale renovation in the interests of deepening democracy, remained both powerful and deeply skeptical about the party's new identity as a governing force and the compromises it might entail.

Factionalism Within LCR During the 1980s. For LCR, the problem of macroeconomic adaptation was likewise wrenching, although perhaps a bit easier given that

³⁸ See Petkoff (1989) for some interesting self-commentary from the party's founder about the process of adaptation and the distinctive qualities of MAS as the 1980s came to a close.

the party had explicitly rejected ideological labels in its early years.³⁹ Rather than framing its agenda in terms of property rights and socialism, LCR leaders advocated for principles of workers' rights and self-determination, and spoke in terms of more abstract principles of inequality and exclusion. When the Pérez administration implemented market reforms, LCR deputies were particularly vocal in denouncing the new policies (Buxton 2001, pg. 157-158), yet they shied away from proposing alternative macroeconomic solutions, other than to insist that the deepening of democracy would be a key to the country's social ills. This dynamic is conveyed quite strikingly in a widely circulated interview of Andrés Velásquez in 1991.⁴⁰ The interviewer outlines the neoliberal agenda of the Pérez administration and asks whether Velásquez supports it, to which the party leader replies: "No, no, no we don't want a government like that. It won't do for us to have a country that solves balance of payments problems but not the problem of hunger." The interviewer then follows up by asking what is the "third model" that LCR instead suggests, and Velásquez continues: "A government of workers. With the most classical definition of democracy... of the people, by the people, and for the people."

Much like the PT, to which it bore so many resemblances, LCR was particularly torn during period by its dual identity as a social movement and a political party, and the attendant dilemmas regarding its ability to balance a commitment to social transformation from below and the pressures of operating within the arena of institutionalized politics. From its origins, LCR had made the issue of social transformation through deepening democracy a defining one: As Maneiro (1986, pg. 163) put it, "We do not believe that the country at this time is facing a dilemma between socialism and capitalism; that is to say, it is not a practical dilemma of choosing a type of society...in contrast, the country is facing the problem of democracy itself, the problem of refining, of deepening democracy." LCR gradual growth over the course of the 1980s was spurred by basist strategies of grassroots organization, especially in the state of Bolívar. Winning power at subnational level, most notably the governorship of Bolivar and mayoral races in municipalities such as Coroni and Caracas, also allowed LCR to put theory into practice, with new administrations initiating a variety of innovative plans to spur citizen participation in local governance.⁴¹

LCR's success at the subnational level and embrace of the electoral course also brought tensions. Subnational administrations were forced to confront the difficulties of social transformation in the context of entrenched opponents who sought to block their efforts, a dilemma that was became particularly acute for the municipal administration of Artistóbulo Istúriz in Caracas (Goldfrank 2011). The party also grew in electoral strength at a very rapid rate. For much of the 1980s, LCR experienced little success at all. The party then strung together a stunning run of victories, starting with the 1989 gubernatorial race in Bolívar

³⁹ As Maneiro wrote, "If you say I am a Marxist in a country where one says a Marxist is Liga Socialista, the MAS, the PCV, another, another, and another, you offer an easy way for the people to identify me in ways that I don't want to be identified. Therefore, I prefer to be perceived as ideological undefined, at running the risk of confusion" (Maneiro 1986, pg. 92).

⁴⁰ The interview was conducted by LCR militant and chronicler Farruco Sesto, and later published in Velásquez (1992).

⁴¹ See Buxton (2001, pgs. 151-154) and Yépez Salas (1993, pg 159-166) for further information about LCR administrations in the 1980s, their agendas, and their accomplishments.

and culminating with the 1993 elections that saw the party win a fifth of the seats in the lower house of congress and quite nearly elevate its candidate Velásquez to the presidency. A party that had long been an insurgent outsider in the Punto Fijo system was now a substantial player, and debates about how to proceed thereafter, and how it should balance the pressures of electoral politics and governance with its longstanding commitment to social transformation, remained unresolved.

As with other major left parties, the difficulties of adaptation led to factional strife throughout this period, with the lines of contestation shifting somewhat over time. Given that Venezuela 83 was originally conceived as possessing four “legs” that would grow organically in different sectors of society and in different parts of the country, the potential for factionalism was clear from the start. Indeed, the student leg of the table based in the UCV, called Prag, quickly left the movement over demands concerning a timetable for revolutionary change (Buxton, pg. 139). The intellectual leg of the table was more amorphous, possessed the least strength from the beginning, and played only a subsidiary role as the movement developed. This left the “new labor” movement of Matancero and the group of activists in Catia, called ProCatia, as the two largest wings of the incipient party. While operating in different locales and attempting to mobilize and organize very different populations, these two wings managed to coexist and coordinate throughout the 1970s, in no small part because both recognized the ultimate leadership role of Maneiro.

Events surrounding the presidential election of 1983 drove a wedge between rival camps. LCR had settled, somewhat uncomfortably, on the selection of Jorge Olavarría as a presidential candidate, a choice that was not welcomed by Matancero but accepted due to the firm backing he enjoyed from Maneiro. A year before the election, however, the party’s leader unexpectedly died, throwing LCR into chaos. After extensive negotiations, Olavarría withdrew his candidacy, leaving the party to scramble for a replacement. Matancero advanced the candidacy of Velásquez, a metalworker and widely known labor activist who had been instrumental to the construction of the “new unionism” in Ciudad Guyana.⁴² Unable to reach a compromise, ProCatia left the party, leaving Velásquez to run under the banner of an LCR that was effectively Matancero alone. The early attrition of the original Venezuela 83 groups hampered LCR’s growth, as reflected in its disappointing showing in the 1983 election, but also carried benefits. The party’s leadership post-Maneiro was largely consolidated among a group of Matancero activists, rather than dispersed across and contested by leaders from many different sectors: Given the problem of factionalism that bedeviled all left parties under consideration during these times, in some ways a one-legged stool (or a two-legged stool, if one counted the “intellectual” leg of Venezuela 83) was sturdier than a four-legged one.

As LCR grew over the course of the 1980s and early 1990s, however, tensions and divisions emerged even among the Matancero core that now led the party. The primary axes of contestation were ideological and related to how the party ought to go about attaining

⁴² The parallels between Velasquez and the PT’s Lula are quite striking: metal workers who led the “new unionism” movement, who came to occupy leadership roles in the parties emerging from those movements, who narrowly lost presidential elections in the late 1980s or early 1990s, and who turned out to be relatively pragmatic forces within those parties as the subsequent center-left project unfolded in each country.

power and what kinds of compromises it should be willing to make with the Punto Fijo powers. A more pragmatic group, led by party leader and perennial presidential candidate Velásquez, was more willing to embrace programmatic moderation, more staunchly committed to winning power only through the electoral process, and more willing to accept that doing so might involve some degree of deal-making and negotiation with the Punto Fijo parties. Another group, led by Pablo Medina, another widely respected Matancero activist, was more hard line programmatically and, while supportive of the party's electoral strategies, unwilling to completely abandon the possibility of an insurrectionary path to power.

This division of opinion was expressed in how each faction's relations developed over the late 1980s and early 1990s with the MBR-200, the clandestine group of military officers led by Hugo Chávez. The MBR-200 and the leadership of LCR had a longstanding, if not particularly close, relationship. Through his brother Adán and other childhood connections, Chávez had met many prominent figures on the left during the 1970s, including both Medina and Maneiro. After the founding of the MBR-200 in 1982, the group had made concerted efforts to reach out to and maintain contact with leaders of many leftist parties. Relations with LCR were weaker than with fringe elements of the radical left more supportive of an insurrectionary course. Nevertheless, a weaker relationship marked by intermittent contact existed throughout the 1980s (Medina 1999). As LCR experienced more success in the electoral arena, however, leaders like Velásquez sought distance from the then still underground MBR-200. Velásquez cut off all contact with Chávez and the MBR-200 after his shocking victory in the 1989 race for the governor of Bolívar. Medina and some prominent allies in the party, such as Istúriz and Jorge Rodríguez, however, remained in contact with the MBR-200 through other channels and even expressed encouragement for Chávez's plans to overthrow the regime.⁴³

While divisions existed within LCR, they should not be overstated. While clearly expressing some sympathy for the insurrectionary course, Medina maintained a close relationship with Velásquez and was central in coordinating the 1993 electoral campaign. The amazing performance of both Velásquez and LCR in the presidential and congressional elections seemed to validate this course of action. As the national face of the party and the strongest advocate of winning power through institutional channels, these results also strengthened the relative position of Velásquez, who Medina himself acknowledged already held a unique position of influence within LCR, as the leader of the new unionism, as the party's undisputed political leader, and, in some senses, as the personification of what the party stood for.⁴⁴

⁴³ The degree to which the Medina faction within LCR actively supported the 1992 coup is somewhat unclear. In Medina's recounting of events, he and other LCR leaders were ready to provide active support through logistical aid and rallying popular sentiment, but a breakdown in communication with the coup plotters prevented them from following through. In Chávez's recounting (2005, pgs 33-35), LCR leaders pledged their support and then "publically hung us out to dry." The veracity of these conflicting accounts is difficult to verify, especially given that they occurred long after the fact and that both men likely had reasons to put their own spin on events. But there was clearly considerable sympathy for an insurrectionary course of action within the *medinista* faction of the party (Lalander 2004, pgs. 199-200)

⁴⁴ Medina (1999, pg. 60) put it this way: "The enormous weight that Andrés had after having been leader of the New Unionism, Councilman, Deputy, Governor, and three times candidate for the Presidency of the Republic...Andrés was, for us, much more than a candidate. He was a symbol, a symbol of the workers, of the

Status of the Radial Fringe and a Tripartite Partisan Left. The growth of MAS and LCR over the course of the 1980s left little space for the multitude of fringe left parties in Venezuela, which struggled to make an impact in the electoral arena. The most established parties were the PCV and MEP, both of which actually backed Caldera's Convergencia but solely instrumentally, as a way to further the decline of the Punto Fijo duopoly. Both parties had been longstanding participants in fringe leftist politics in the country. As noted at the beginning of this section, the PCV traced its origins back to the 1930s and had been a central player in Venezuelan leftist politics up through the 1960s, after which defections left the party increasingly marginalized. MEP was formed by dissident leftist factions of AD in the 1960s, who were unhappy with the various programmatic compromises the party had negotiated as part of the democratic transition. MEP was able to briefly make some inroads in the electoral arena in the aftermath of this split, taking advantage of the fact that other leftist parties were disarticulated and committed to an insurrectionary course. Over the course of the 1970s and, even more so, during the 1980s, however, the party became, like the PCV, increasingly marginal. Between the two of them, they managed to win only one seat in the lower house of congress in the 1993 elections before the beginning of the legitimacy crisis.

While the fringe left in Venezuela was especially weak in the electoral arena, its status is complicated by the emergence into public view of the MBR-200 in 1992. Given the course of later events, the roots and development of the MBR-200 deserve a more lengthy elaboration. The MBR-200 was an informal and clandestine organization formed in the early 1980s by a small group of young military officers (led by Chávez), which grew out of a previous incarnation with similar goals, the Ejército de Liberación del Pueblo de Venezuela. The last part of the organization's name derived from the highly symbolic choice of dates for its foundation, the 200th anniversary of the birthday of Simón Bolívar. Dedicated to the revolutionary pursuit of national renewal, the ideology of the MBR-200 took form as a protean brew of nationalism, militarism, and new left and socialist theory. At a broad level, the principles of the organization were cast in terms of the "The Tree of Three Roots," referring to the Venezuelan historical figures of Simón Bolívar, Simón Rodríguez, and Ezequiel Zamora, each seen as representing a central plank of the movement. Roughly speaking, Bolívar was said to capture the impulse toward liberation and popular mobilization; Rodríguez (also known as Samuel Robinson, and the tutor of Bolívar) was said to symbolize the notion of popular education and social justice; Zamora (a general in the Federalist Wars of the 19th century) was said to symbolize the fight of the people against oligarchic domination.

While the "Tree of Three Roots" was by its nature a highly nationalistic way to frame the organization's program, the influence of leftist ideas was very apparent. Both Che Guevara and Fidel Castro were longstanding heroes of Chávez, and he was by most accounts a voracious consumer of Neo-Marxist writing and criticism. These influences were apparent in both the macroeconomic orientation of the MBR-200, which explicitly rejected accommodation with the neoliberal model, and a heavy emphasis on post-liberal notions concerning Venezuelan democracy. The proposals the MBR-200 offered for political change

Venezuelan working people, he was a fundamental part of the political project and, in some ways, he incarnated or personified La Causa R. Over the years Andrés came to express a collective dream, which had to materialize."

clearly drew heavily on the ideas of LCR and other leftist parties and movements of the time concerning deepening democracy, supporting civil society, and stimulating citizen participation. Chávez advanced the proposal of the MBR-200 most forcefully in a manifesto that came to be known as the “Libro Azul,” written shortly before the 1992 coup (Chávez Frías 2007). The program blasts the Punto Fijo parties for stifling citizen participation and demobilizing and controlling civil society, and proposes an alternative vision of “Bolivarian Popular Democracy – Protagonism and Self-Government.”

While the MBR-200’s avowed goal was the overthrow of the Punto Fijo duopoly through insurrectionary means, the means to achieve this goal was considerably less clear, and the MBR-200 spent much of its early years without significant incident while pursuing two strategies. The first was to expand the movement within the military, largely by recruiting other young officers at the military academy at which the core group was stationed. Various features of the Venezuelan military establishment proved advantageous in this respect. Compared to the militaries of other countries in the region, ideological purges or litmus tests were relatively uncommon during the 1970s in democratic Venezuela (Corrales 2007), and military officers in the country were unusually likely to come from poor and working class backgrounds. Further, a significant rift began to develop in the 1980s between junior and senior officers, creating sources of institutional grievance for would-be revolutionaries (Trinkunas 2002).

The second strategy was to create tactical alliances with political parties and movements of the left. As mentioned in the discussion of LCR, Chávez had a head start in this respect. His older brother Adán had joined the MIR at sixteen and had also been involved in Douglas Bravo’s PVR, one of the few groups on the left to sustain insurrectionary action into the 1970s. Through Adán and other childhood connections, Chávez met numerous prominent figures in leftist politics, including Bravo himself as well as LCR leaders like Medina and the legendary Maneiro.⁴⁵ In his own telling, his brief interactions with Maneiro were particularly critical to the development of Chávez’s evolving political beliefs concerning a “protagonistic” revolution.⁴⁶ While Chávez may have felt affinity with the grassroots orientation of LCR, he and the MBR-200 had more in common with the insurrectionary strands of the fringe left from a strategic standpoint, and engaged in greater coordination. Over the course of the 1980s, the MBR-200 established regular contact not just with Bravo but also with groups like Bandera Roja – against which Chávez had once fought in anti-insurgency actions as a military officer – and radical elements of the student movement in the universities (Blanco Muñoz 1998).⁴⁷ In contrast, relations with LCR seemed to sour over time, especially as the party grew in stature and moved into the electoral arena.

While the MBR-200 was not strictly part of the partisan left, the organization and its leader Chávez became known entities among much of the fringe and radical left in the country over the course of the 1980s. As the MBR-200 moved more aggressively toward planning a

⁴⁵ See Jones (2007), pgs 70-78 for a lengthy recounting of these early connections with the left.

⁴⁶ Chávez described this meeting as “vital to my still developing vision of the idea of the role of the masses, which (Bravo’s) group was not; on the other hand, in the Causa R I felt the presence of the masses.” (Chávez Frías 2005, pg 30)

⁴⁷ Personal interview with a professor at a major Venezuelan university who had been active in the radical student movement during the 1980s.

strike against the government of Pérez, it received logistical help from a host of fringe left groups. As noted previously in the chapter, support from the radical wing of LCR turned out to be minimal. Active support largely derived from very minor sectors of the fringe left – Liga Socialista, Bandera Roja, parts of the radical student movement – that continued to reject electoral contestation. After the coup itself, the MBR-200 sought to expand its reach to include civilian members. Many of the key fringe left activists involved at this stage – Freddy Bernal, Juan Barreto, Tarek William Saab, Adina Bastidas – would later join the organization, with some taking up leadership positions. In sum, the MBR-200 had become increasingly integrated into fringe left circles over the decade preceding the coup, and this process only accelerated in the aftermath. While not a political party per se at this point in time, the MBR-200 must be considered part of the fringe left more broadly.

After the coup, the MBR-200 was also clearly a very high profile organization: Put in military terms, while the coup failed to achieve its tactical objectives, it produced a strategic victory. Led by Chávez, a small group of army units entered Caracas and attempted to seize Miraflores Palace, as well as a number of other sites such as radio and television stations and the defense ministry. The attempt to kill or capture President Pérez failed and the rebellion was put down. However, the operation was successful in another way, in that it thrust the charismatic Chávez into the national spotlight. In particular, he benefited greatly by negotiating, as a term of surrender, the ability to make a televised address to the Venezuelan people. Chávez explained the rationale behind the coup and uttered the famous statement that the MBR-200 had failed in its objectives only “por ahora,” a phrase that would become a rallying call for the movement. Public opinion was surprisingly sympathetic toward the coup, enough so that some politicians took notice. Caldera made statements in the aftermath that implied a degree of empathy with the coup plotters and, once in office, eventually decided to pardon Chávez and his coconspirators in an attempt to bolster support for his flagging government. The intensely anti-systemic mood in the country clearly led to some rather unusual reactions to the coup, both from the public and the political elite.

While there may have been surprisingly strong sympathy for the idea of a strike against the Pérez government, how strongly did the Venezuelan population really support Chávez and throw itself behind the MBR-200? Accounts of the rise of Chávez and the MBR-200 often assume that anti-systemic sentiment naturally shifted into positive affirmation, making it seem like their political ascendance was almost a matter of destiny afterward.⁴⁸ But the data strongly suggests that whatever sympathies might have existed were not strongly translated into active support for Chávez and the Bolivarian Movement. In a public opinion survey fielded in the aftermath of the coup, when asked “Who represents the best of Venezuela,” only 6% of respondents gave Chávez as an answer, which placed him a very distant fourth, behind not only national icon Arturo Uslar Pietri but also behind both Caldera and, shockingly, Pérez.⁴⁹ Even three years later, in a survey with a sampling design that probably inflated the numbers, only 15% of Venezuelans named Chávez as somebody who

⁴⁸ See, for example, the discussion in Jones (2007), pgs 157-160.

⁴⁹ Data drawn from National Opinion Survey 92-1, conducted by Datos C.A. and based on a national probability sample.

had influenced their own political beliefs.⁵⁰ Indeed, as described further in the next chapter, Chávez would spend the next few years in relative obscurity and with negative approval ratings. The MBR-200, which had never actually contested an election, would consistently attract only between 3-5% of support in surveys asking Venezuelans which political party or movement they identified with in the country.

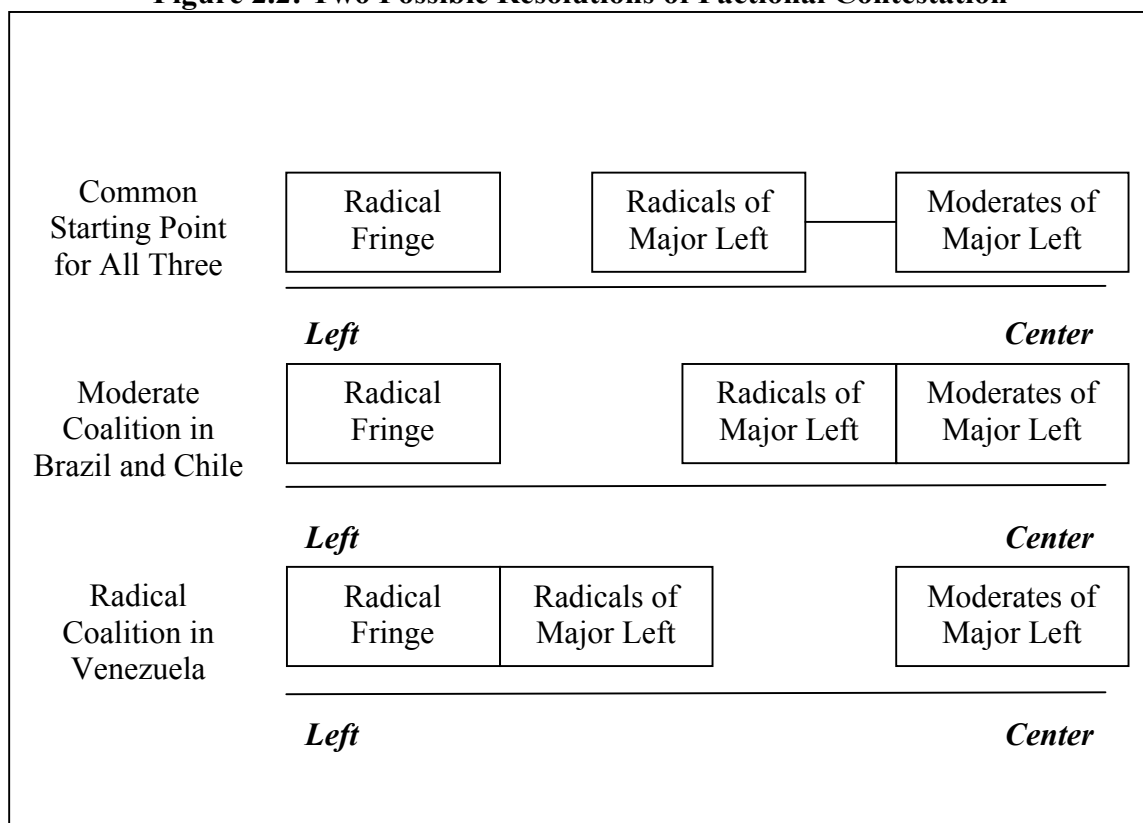
In sum, the MBR-200 should be considered a part of the radical fringe left, given its extensive connections with various small leftist parties during the 1980s and early 1990s. Yet despite the public splash of the 1992 coup, the organization continued to attract miniscule levels of support in the country and Chávez, while enjoying great name recognition, had relatively poor approval ratings and was not taken seriously by the electorate as a potential political candidate. The mere presence of Chávez and the MBR-200 may have given the fringe left a somewhat distinctive character, but the fringe left was no less marginal as an electoral player than that in Brazil or Chile. As in these other countries, a tripartite grouping characterized the left, consisting of moderates within major left parties, radicals within those parties, and a fringe that was not a serious electoral threat and attracted (in aggregate) the support of only about 5% of the population. And as in the other countries, moderates entered the second wave reform period riding high, entrenched in leadership positions of both MAS and LCR and poised to take their parties to new electoral heights and solidify their hegemony over radical factions.

Conclusion: Baseline Conditions

To draw the discussion together in a more analytical way, we can now explicitly compare the partisan left in each country with respect to sets of baseline conditions before the onset or not of legitimacy crisis in the early to mid 1990s. In the following chapter, the study will argue that the fate of subsequent governments shaped the outcome of factional contestation within the partisan left and that, with the partisan left divided in tripartite fashion, two kinds of elite alliances were possible in each case, as displayed in Figure 2.2: A moderate alliance in which moderates extended their power over major left parties and radical factions largely acceded to programmatic moderation paved or radical alliance in which major left parties broke, paving the way for a new alliance between radical factions of major left parties and the radical fringe.

⁵⁰ Calculated from data in Canache (2002, pg 76). The survey design likely inflated the numbers because it only encompassed residents of Caracas and Maracaibo. The MBR-200 drew disproportionate support in its early years from major urban areas. Residents of major cities, in general, are probably much more likely to consider political figures influential, simply because they tend to be exposed to more media than, for example, residents of rural areas or small hinterland cities. It should be noted that these figures were calculated in the original based on two questions. To deem Chávez personally influential, a respondent first had to select his name from a list in response to a question about who the most influential person in the country was, and then to answer affirmatively to a follow up question about his personal influence.

Figure 2.2: Two Possible Resolutions of Factional Contestation



This argument rests on a set of assumptions about the nature of the partisan left in each country. Perhaps most obviously, did major left parties exist and were they really factionalized in such a way that we can see the partisan left overall as tripartite? Equally as important, was the partisan left particularly more likely in one country than another to form a particular kind of alliance? To set up the causal argument, it is therefore useful to address these kinds of questions head on, by extracting and emphasizing several key points from the discussion in this chapter. This process is divided into two steps in the rest of the section below. The first illustrates commonalities that make the partisan left comparable enough to analyze through the approach captured in Figure 2.2. The second shows that key pre-existing differences among major left parties cut across eventual outcomes, and thus cannot logically constitute compelling alternative hypotheses.

Similar Conditions. As emphasized in the discussion above, major left parties in each country were divided into moderate and radical factions. These divisions within major left parties were widely recognized – indeed, in both the PT and MAS factionalism was actually institutionalized in internal party statutes and regulations. And, in each case, these factional disputes reflected significant ideological disagreements concerning both macroeconomic adaptation and commitment to a transformative post-liberal agenda. We can thus think of major left parties actually encompassing two different blocs on the left – radicals and moderates – with distinctive ideal points in the ideological spectrum. And given that minor fringe parties of the radical left also existed in each country, the partisan left as a whole can be

usefully seen as tripartite. The commonality of this tripartite structure for the partisan left is the most basic baseline condition to highlight, but also one of the most important. Table 2.1 below summarizes the parties and factions that constituted the three groups in each country.

Table 2.1: Parties and Factions Constituting the Tripartite Partisan Left

	Radical Fringe	Radicals of Major Left	Moderates of Major Left
Venezuela	MBR-200, PCV, MEP	Halcones (MAS), Medinistas (LCR)	Tucanes (MAS), Velasquistas (LCR)
Brazil	PCB, PSB, PCdoB	Numerous radical tendências	Articulação
Chile	PC	PS-Almeyda	PS-Nuñez

The partisan left was not only tripartite in each country, but also characterized by a similar balance of power. One critical point in this respect is that, in each major left party, moderate factions were able to gain an upper hand during the late 1980s or early 1990s, but in none of these parties were moderate factions yet hegemonic. In Chile, the Nuñez Socialists had most adroitly taken advantage of the shift toward electoral contestation, but still represented only one faction within the PS and had a particularly tenuous connection with much of the party's base level activist groups. In Brazil, Articulação lost its majority in the PT's National Directorate for the first time in 1993, amid a strong challenge from leftist tendências and new alliances between those leftist factions and left-leaning dissidents from Articulação. While Lula remained party president, the position of Articulação and of moderates in general within the PT was in significant peril. Dynamics within MAS were similar to that within the Chilean PS. Petkoff and his allies had assumed a strong leadership position and were advantaged in many ways by their electoral pact with Convergencia, but the choice to moderate and ally with Caldera still elicited skepticism among some wings of the party and elements of its base. The Venezuelan LCR faced a similar situation to the Brazilian PT. The pragmatic faction led by Velásquez – whose story to this point was uncannily similar to Lula's – had been ascendant since his victory in the 1989 Boívar gubernatorial race, but a faction associated with Medina retained considerable strength and remained considerably less sold on the wisdom of programmatic concessions and contesting power through pragmatic institutionalized politics.

The relative electoral strength of left parties is another aspect of the balance of power within the partisan left, and in this area as well the three countries exhibited broadly similar patterns. Major left parties in all three countries made significant gains in the electoral arena after embarking on moderating courses and committing to contesting power through institutional channels. As the second wave reform period began, all four such parties under discussion had won over 10% of the vote in the most recent elections for the lower house of representatives, with the highest vote shares held by the PS in Chile and LCR in Venezuela. Where federal systems existed (Brazil and Venezuela), major left parties also had enjoyed some success in gubernatorial elections. Finally, two of the four parties – PT and LCR –had produced presidential candidates that had come very close to winning elections. Naturally,

one difference between the cases is that there were two major left parties in Venezuela and only one in Brazil and Chile. To some extent, then, they were competing against each other. Yet, critically, this situation did not lead to a splitting of the same vote share that the left had achieved elsewhere, but rather to a doubling of total left vote share amid substantial growth of each party.

Another similar aspect of the balance of power is that the fringe left remained marginal in all three countries, attracting the support of around 5% of the population in each case. In Chile, the PC was the most important fringe left party, yet it was excluded from the 1989 legislative elections and, when allowed to participate in 1993, garnered only 4.5% of the vote. In Brazil, the fringe left was more diffuse, constituted by a variety of very small parties such as PCB, PCdoB, and PSB that combined to win about 5% of seats in legislative elections. In Venezuela, the fringe left was also diffuse, consisting of small parties like MEP or PCV that typically garnered less than 1% of the vote as well as the MBR-200. While this movement had gained widespread attention due to the attempted coup of 1992, and while many Venezuelans expressed some degree of sympathy with the coup due to their extreme frustration with the Pérez government, the electoral strength of the MBR-200 was extremely low: By choice, the movement had never engaged in electoral contestation and public opinion surveys put its level of support between 3-5%.

Divergent Party Characteristics. Major left parties across the three countries quite understandably differed in several ways. One such difference, for example, regards the internal organization of parties, which might plausibly have shaped how factional contestation was resolved within them during the 1990s. The PT and MAS stand out for having highly institutionalized party organizations, in that parties were not only infused with value but internal party governance was largely stable and characterized by routinized procedures laid out by formal statute. Indeed, the high level of institutionalization within these parties has been a focal point of analysis for their chroniclers (Ellner 1986; Keck 1992). Lower levels of institutionalization characterized the PS and LCR, although for somewhat different reasons. While the oldest party among those under consideration, the PS had spent the previous decade formally divided and operating separately, and reunified only very shortly before the start of the second wave reform government. Whether the unification process would hold remained unclear and while unification entailed the promulgation of rules for internal governance, these rules had not been followed or tested, such that they could not be considered routinized. LCR, in contrast, was much more stable yet operated in a highly informal manner. The party lacked a developed and universally recognized set of guidelines for regulating internal governance, and tended to make decisions about leadership and strategy through a method of consensus building among recognized party luminaries, rather than through formal elections.

A second notable difference among the parties relates to their coalitional strategies vis-à-vis the centrist parties and governments that were about to take office. Both the PS and MAS were in coalition with these governments, having entered into strategic alliances with centrist parties. For the PS, this arrangement was a continuation of the Concertación alliance formed to oust the Pinochet regime. The alliance MAS formed with Caldera's Convergencia reflected a different set of calculations, an attempt to give the party a greater foothold in governance and to further prospects for ousting the Punto Fijo duopoly. While born from different circumstances, the two alliances left each party in a similar position: They both

received important and high profile ministerial positions, and found their fortunes tied to some degree to those of the centrist governments coming to power. The PT and LCR, on contrast, were in opposition to the centrist governments taking up the challenge of averting legitimacy crisis. Each had just lost presidential elections to the candidates of incoming centrist governments, each constituted an important sector of the legislative opposition to the new administration, and each had much to gain if the new government faltered.

Summary and Implications. Illustrating these similar and divergent characteristics of the partisan left helps set up the analysis in the next chapter by establishing several key premises. By demonstrating the former, we can establish a shared baseline with respect to the structure and factional tendencies of the partisan left prior to the beginning of the legitimacy crisis period. Doing so allows us to temporally identify when divergence occurred and increases our confidence that divergence was not simply a legacy of prior events. Each of the common conditions displayed in Table 2.2 helps focus attention in this way. Because a tripartite left existed in all three countries, either kind of alliance (between fringe and radicals or between moderates and radicals) was therefore logically possible in each country. Were this not the case – for example, were moderates not to exist in Venezuela or radicals not to exist in Chile and Brazil – then we would instead likely conclude that ultimate outcomes were simply the result of the prior development of the partisan left in each country.

Table 2.2: Similarities in Structure and Balance of Power

	Similarities			Eventual Outcome
	Tripartite Structure	Moderate Leadership	Electoral Success for Major Left Party	
Venezuela	Yes	Yes	Yes	Radical Alliance, Conflictual Contestation
Brazil	Yes	Yes	Yes	Moderate Alliance, Consensual Contestation
Chile	Yes	Yes	Yes	Moderate Alliance, Consensual Contestation

The other two similar conditions, in turn, increase our confidence that nothing about the nature of the partisan left made any given outcome disproportionately likely. Were moderates not in leadership in all three cases, we might conclude that moderates were in fact weaker in some places, and therefore the consolidation of moderate hegemony less likely. It is therefore beneficial for the argument that moderates did actually hold the leadership of all major left parties. The relatively equal electoral strength of major left parties and the marginality of the fringe are likewise fortuitous. Had moderate leadership led to failures at the ballot box in some cases and successes elsewhere, we might conclude that moderates were

more likely to lose their hold on major left parties in the former than the latter. Yet moderates were everywhere successful, and had guided parties to roughly equal standing in each country. Just as importantly, the fringe left remained marginal in all three countries. Were the fringe to be especially powerful in one country, we might expect that the temptations for radicals to break with moderates and join with the fringe would be higher. Yet the fringe left was an electoral non-factor in each country as the second wave reform project dawned.

Another possibility, of course, is that factors other than the structure of the partisan left predisposed outcomes in unequal ways across countries. Most pertinently, other characteristics of major left parties might have made them more or less cohesive, or made different kinds of alliances among the partisan left more or less likely. And, as we have seen and as summarized in Table 2.3, major left parties did indeed differ markedly in several ways – with respect to their level of internal organization and institutionalization, the linkages they possessed with organized social actors, and whether they were in coalition or opposition with centrist parties in government.

Table 2.3: Divergent Characteristics of Major Parties, Cutting Across Outcomes

		Highly Institutionalized Party Organization	Relation to Incoming Government	Eventual Outcome
Venezuela	MAS	Yes	Coalition	Radical Alliance, Conflictual Contestation
	LCR	No	Opposition	
Brazil	PT	Yes	Opposition	Moderate Alliance, Consensual Contestation
Chile	PS	No	Coalition	Moderate Alliance, Consensual Contestation

A critical point about these divergent conditions is that, for each factor, variation cuts across, rather than coincides, with outcomes. This pattern does not prove that these factors did not play roles in how factional contestation among the partisan left was resolved during the 1990s. However, they show that these factors were unlikely to have been decisive in shaping outcomes, and thus do not constitute alternative hypotheses that fundamentally undermine the argument. For example, we might think that major left parties with more institutionalized organizations might be more durable and thus conducive to the continuation of the alliance between moderates and radicals. Yet the moderate alliance was cemented within both highly institutionalized and poorly institutionalized major left parties in Brazil and Chile respectively, and the radical alliance emerged after both highly and poorly institutionalized major left parties fractured in Venezuela.

We might also expect that entering into coalition with centrist parties would predispose major left parties toward the consolidation of moderate hegemony. After all, the very act of joining a centrist coalition is indicative of a propensity toward pragmatic politics and the acceptance of programmatic concessions. That moderates within the left were able to successfully negotiate such deals is assumedly indicative of a great deal of power and an ability to override the objections of radicals. Yet, once again, we find that moderate hegemony emerged within parties that had been in coalition with and in opposition to centrist governments that led the second wave reform project. In turn, in Venezuela radicals in parties in coalition (MAS) and in opposition (LCR) broke with moderates and allied with the fringe left. That this last factor crosscuts the outcome is worth particular emphasis, since this pattern directly contradicts one hypothesis that has been proposed to explain the consolidation of the radical or moderate left across South American countries: That the radical left emerged when left parties joined market reform governments in the early 1990s and were discredited by doing so (Madrid 2009).

In sum, confronting a generational challenge of self-reinvention, major left parties in all three countries adapted to new circumstances and sought new paths to power through institutional channels. This process of adjustment was deeply wrenching, such that sharp factional divisions crystallized within a tripartite partisan left and remained unresolved, constituting lingering sources of discontent and division even as the left looked toward a new era. The means by which these factional disputes were resolved, in turn, cannot be seen as a legacy of past patterns of development: The partisan left in each country shared a similar structure and balance of power, and those differences that were most salient among major left parties cut across eventual outcomes. To understand why a radical alliance on the left consolidated in Venezuela, driving conflictual party system dynamics, while moderate alliances consolidated in Brazil and Chile, anchoring integrative party systems, we must look toward subsequent events, the topic to which the next chapter turns.

Chapter 3: Legitimacy Crises and Divergent Party System Trajectories

The partisan left in Venezuela, Brazil, and Chile entered the 1990s with a similar factional structure and balance of power, divided over what kinds of macroeconomic compromises should be made with the neoliberal model and how ardently to pursue a transformative post-liberal agenda. By the beginning of the next decade, however, different coalitions on the left had consolidated across the three countries, anchoring different competitive dynamics within party systems. A radical left coalition consolidated in Venezuela, inaugurating a conflictual pattern of contestation that would persist throughout the Left Turn. Moderate left coalitions consolidated in Brazil and Chile, anchoring consensual patterns of contestation within party systems that would likewise be maintained in the next decade.

This chapter argues that these divergent party system outcomes were powerfully shaped by the occurrence or not of legitimacy crisis during the era of market liberalization. The transition in economic models that occurred in most Latin American countries during the 1980s and 1990s represented a massive shift that unsettled state-society relations and placed elected officials in the position of needing, even more so than in calmer times, to prove their ability to effectively govern in order to bolster public confidence in state institutions. Where an elected government was able to meet success in this new era, bolstering public confidence in the status quo, in Brazil and Chile, legitimacy crisis was averted. Where consecutive governments failed and public confidence in state institutions eroded, in Venezuela, the country plunged into legitimacy crisis.

The avoidance or occurrence of legitimacy crisis powerfully shaped factional contestation within the partisan left and, by extension, whether party systems during the Left Turn period would be marked by consensual or conflictual competitive dynamics. Where governments met success and legitimacy crisis was avoided (in Brazil and Chile), moderate factions saw their centrist and consensus-oriented inclinations validated and their position strengthened, radicals declined in power and/or embraced the moderate line, and moderate alliances within major left parties consolidated. Consensual dynamics were thus strengthened within party systems as the Left Turn dawned, in that all electorally relevant parties supported the basic contours of neoliberal macroeconomic policy and liberal democracy. Where legitimacy crisis occurred (in Venezuela), moderate factions saw their positions dramatically undercut, radical factions increased in strength and obstinance, major left parties broke amid factional discord, and a radical alliance consolidated as the radicals of LCR and MAS joined with the radical fringe MBR-200, which had previously been only a very marginal player in electoral politics. Conflictual dynamics were thus established within the new Venezuelan party system as the Left Turn began, in that major actors clashed fundamentally in their proposed macroeconomic policies and in their assessments of whether or not Venezuelan democracy required drastic institutional reforms.

The chapter proceeds in the following way. An initial section puts the avoidance or occurrence of legitimacy crisis in explicit comparative perspective and elaborates on why this variable powerfully shaped factional contestation on the left. The bulk of the chapter then proceeds country-by-country. The analysis of each case is broken into three sections - a

discussion of the fate of governments in the early 1990s that either staved off or induced legitimacy crisis, a section that traces the impact on the resolution of factional contestation on the left, and then a section discussing the elections that brought the left to power, showing how consensual or conflictual tendencies were established within party systems as the Left Turn began.

Legitimacy Crises and the Fates of Market Reform Successor Governments

It may be useful at the outset to further discuss, in more general terms, legitimacy crises and how the fates of governments that succeeded initial market reformers determined whether crises would occur or be avoided. Legitimacy crises involve protracted failures of elected governments and steep declines in public confidence in basic state institutions. Such crises are particularly likely to occur during periods of significant policy transition and uncertainty, when governments face especially large challenges and citizen confidence in democracy-as-practiced is put to the test. The transition in economic models that occurred during the 1980s and 1990s across much of South America was one such episode of transition and uncertainty, raising the specter of legitimacy crisis and erosion of public confidence in state institutions if governments did not prove up to the task.

The argument of the study focuses on the fate of governments that succeeded initial market reformers and which came to power in the early to mid 1990s – the Caldera administration in Venezuela, the Franco/Cardoso administration in Brazil, and the Aylwin administration in Chile. Given that legitimacy crisis is defined as the failure of multiple governments attended by erosions of public confidence in state institutions, the fates of these governments would play key roles in whether legitimacy crisis occurred or not. In Venezuela, the Pérez administration had been a dismal failure, ending in public rejection and impeachment, such that it fell to the Caldera administration to prevent a protracted cycle of failed governance. A very similar situation pertained in Brazil, where the Collor administration had ended in disaster, scandal, and impeachment, and the Franco/Cardoso administrations were tasked with staving off legitimacy crisis. In Chile, the Aylwin administration represented the first democratic administration after transition, such that the specter of legitimacy crisis was less ominous. Nevertheless, a successful administration would clearly rule out legitimacy crisis, whereas a failure would at least open the door to the possibility of a protracted series of failed democratic governments.

Table 3.1: Fates of Reform Successor Governments

	Fate of Previous Elected Government	Fate of Successor Government (Pres. Approval)	No Confidence in Institutions (Percent)	Legitimacy Crisis?
Chile	N/A	Success (+40)	15	No
Brazil	Failure	Success (+27)	33	No

Venezuela	Failure	Failure (-50)	46	Yes
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These governments met widely different levels of success, as measured by presidential approval ratings, fates that either staved off or triggered legitimacy crisis in each country. The administrations of Aylwin in Chile and Cardoso in Brazil presided over strong economic growth and/or pulled countries out of grave economic problems, and each garnered healthy positive spreads in public approval throughout their term. The Caldera administration in Venezuela, in contrast, presided over a major financial meltdown and a recessionary economy, and attracted abysmal approval ratings. These disparate fates were attended by divergent levels to which the public began to express no confidence in state institutions, which came to be particularly high in Venezuela, as rejection of the Caldera government and more general anti-systemic sentiment mixed together and became difficult to distinguish.⁵¹

The avoidance or occurrence of legitimacy crisis powerfully shaped factional contestation within the partisan left. Whether successful governance seemed possible in the neoliberal era provided vivid and powerful examples to actors on the left concerning whether or not a centrist accommodation with market liberalism might be good public policy and, perhaps more importantly, whether following such a program constituted the most, perhaps only, viable path to electoral majorities. Successful governance in Brazil and Chile, and popular embrace of the Aylwin and Cardoso administrations, undercut the radical argument for a transformative agenda and an anti-systemic platform. In contrast, the legitimacy crisis in Venezuela hardened opinion among radical groups that a more drastic break from the practices of Punto Fijo democracy was necessary, and reinforced the argument that a strongly anti-systemic message centered on reforming Venezuelan democracy might carry the day in the next elections. In sum, successes or failures of legitimation projects strongly shaped factional contestation on the left, driving divergent coalitional outcomes and, ultimately, different patterns of competition within the party systems that would come out of the Left Turn period

One final point that should be emphasized at the outset is that the occurrence or avoidance of legitimacy crisis did not lead to divergent levels of public support for market reforms. Table 3.2 shows some opinion indicators regarding preferences regarding market liberalism during the mid-to-late-1990s, drawing from the World Values Survey and Latinobarómetro. The first rows show the location of the media voter and the proportion of citizens expressing support for “hard left” positions in each country. For the former, in the top three rows of empirical scores, a value of 0 indicates the extreme left and a value of 10 indicates the extreme right. For the latter, displayed in the bottom rows, values simply reflect the percent of respondents who gave the “hard left” answer in response to a series of

⁵¹ The “no confidence” measure represents the average of level of no confidence in “the government,” “the congress,” and “the public administration” in Latinobarómetro surveys from 1995-1997.

questions about support or rejection for policies or attitudes associated with market liberalism.⁵²

Table 3.2: Societal Preferences for Market Liberalism

		Venezuela	Brazil	Chile
Median Voter (0-10 Scale)	Left-Right	6.7	5.9	5.3
	Redistribution	5.6	5.7	5.2
	Statism	6	5.8	5.1
Proportion Hard Left (Percent)	Anti-Privatization	36	42	40
	Anti-Market	19	21	20
	Anti-IMF	20	36	23

These data underscore two basic points. First, divergent coalitional outcomes were not merely responses to different distribution of societal preferences regarding market liberalism. Electorates in all three countries were largely centrist. Moreover, there is no evidence whatsoever that Venezuelans leaned more to the left than their counterparts in Brazil and Chile during the late 1990s. No median voter measure shows that in Venezuela being furthest to the left and two of the three show the median voter in Venezuela to be furthest to the right, if only marginally so. Further, Venezuela does not score highest on any of the measures of “hard left” respondents.⁵³ Many scholars have invoked a popular backlash against market liberalism as the driver of the emergence of the radical left in Venezuela (Silva 2009; Weyland 2009; Roberts forthcoming). Yet there is no evidence that Venezuelans actually rejected market liberalism more strongly or preferred more radical macroeconomic solutions, making the neoliberal backlash hypothesis implausible or at least, overly simplistic.

The second point is that, in this context, the macroeconomic program of the radical left in Venezuela was represented a debility. The avoidance or occurrence of crisis did not just drive factional dynamics, leading to the consolidation of moderate coalitions in some countries and radical coalitions in others. Legitimacy crisis also directly helped radicals win power, by allowing them to run on their credentials as anti-systemic reformers and help make up for an economic program that was actually out of step with public opinion. Whether legitimacy crisis occurred or not thus not only helps us understand why moderate and radical coalitions consolidated across countries, but also helps explain why both moderates and radicals would meet electoral success during the Left Turn even though electorates did not vary significantly in their programmatic preferences.

⁵² Data on the location of the median voter is drawn from the World Values Survey’s Third Wave, fielded in Chile in 1996, Brazil in 1997, and Venezuela in 1996. Data on the proportion of hard left respondents come from the Latinobarómetro. The former represent answers to a single question from the 1997 surveys. The latter are averages of questions across the 1995-1997 surveys in each country. An average was taken because questions on confidence in state institutions are likely to be highly sensitive to recent news events.

⁵³ It might be noted that the raw data from the WVS utilized for Table 3.2 suggest similar conclusions if histograms are examined, rather than just the location of the median voter. The proportion of ardent leftists in Venezuela is no higher than that in Brazil or Chile, and the population no more polarized overall on any of the three measures of programmatic preferences.

Chile

The legitimation period began in Chile with the 1990 inauguration of Patricio Aylwin and the ascendance to power of the Concertación alliance. The new government consisted of a coalition between the center (the PDC) and the left (the PS and PPD), and reflected an extension of the longstanding pro-democratic alliance between the PDC and the PS-Nuñez. Nevertheless, substantial uncertainty surrounded the question of how the Concertación alliance, formed on the basis of mutual opposition to an authoritarian regime, would translate into a coalition government, which would need to deal with the problems of ideological heterogeneity within the coalition while negotiating the uncharted waters of governance.

The nature of the post-transition atmosphere and the institutional engineering conducted by the Pinochet regime before leaving power induced a cautious approach from the new government. The Aylwin administration was forced to juggle several difficult issues from the beginning, the most salient of which were the question of whether and how to modify the neoliberal economic model implemented by Pinochet and the extremely delicate topics of civil-military relations and the treatment of human rights abuses under the authoritarian regime. Impulses toward confrontational approaches to these issues were curbed by the need to consolidate the transition in the face of suspicion and opposition from the right, and also by the institutional fetters that had been applied by the outgoing regime. In particular, the nine senators appointed by Pinochet ensured that the right controlled that body, and with it de facto legislative veto power, despite the fact that the Concertación had won 22 of 38 elected senate seats and 72 of 120 elected seats in the lower house of congress.

In terms of macroeconomic and social policy, the Aylwin administration pursued a program of “Growth with Equity” which maintained the basic characteristics of the neoliberal economic model imposed by the Pinochet dictatorship while implementing modest reforms that were deemed politically feasible. The most important macroeconomic priorities were to tame inflation (which had been driven up in 1989 by the regime’s pre-electoral spending spree), maintain a balanced budget, and control deficits in the country’s balance of payments (Weyland 1997). The Aylwin government was able to make some significant modifications around the edges. It used the momentum of the transition to pass a tax reform that added to public coffers, mainly at the expense of business and the upper middle classes (Boylan 1996; Fairfield 2010). The funds generated by the reform, as well as those produced by a robust economic expansion, freed up money for additional social spending. While maintaining most features of the open economy, the government also imposed a set of capital controls and regulations on foreign direct investment, a measure that proved astute when other countries in the region were rocked by financial crises later in the decade.

The market reform successor administration in Chile, as in Brazil and in Venezuela, searched for a compromise that would draw back in certain ways from the more extreme form of market liberalism attempted by the previous government. Because market reform had been so extensive in Chile under Pinochet, and because of the unique nature of the post-transition polity, the compromise that emerged was particularly tilted toward a neoliberal orientation. This agenda was controversial, especially among the more radical sectors of the left. Particularly contentious were the government’s hands-off policy toward privatizations that had occurred during the Pinochet years and its labor relations policy. After promising

profound changes in labor relations during the democratization campaign, the Concertación government did implement a series of reforms. Yet most were either cosmetic or so ridden with loopholes that the labor reforms did little to actually shift the balance of power in capital-labor relations (Frank 2002).

While the administration's cautious approach met with criticism from some quarters, the Aylwin government was extremely successful by any conventional measure. The Chilean economy had performed remarkably well during the late 1980s, setting a high bar for the Concertación government to match, and creating worry that the vicissitudes of the business cycle would make its performance middling in comparison. Yet the Aylwin administration presided over one of the most remarkable periods of economic growth in recent Latin American history, with GDP increasing by 32% in aggregate from 1989 to 1994, a figure that well exceeded that of the five previous years. Aylwin himself did not receive spectacularly high approval ratings in the tense post-transition atmosphere, but disapproval was remarkably low, such that the spread between the two stayed over 30 points throughout his term.⁵⁴ The government's success made a continuation of Concertación rule nearly a foregone conclusion. Eduardo Frei won the 1993 presidential election with nearly 58% of the vote, with his closest competitor more than thirty percentage points behind.

Resolution of Factional Contestation. The striking success of the Aylwin administration in Chile strongly shaped the course of factional contestation among the partisan left, consolidating a moderate alliance within the PS. The partisan left in Chile entered the period divided in a tripartite structure. The PC was the most relevant force among the fringe left, but was relatively marginal, hampered by both the dynamics of transition and the initial ban on electoral contestation by parties with Marxist-Leninist origins. The PS was newly reunified still sharply divided among radical and moderate factions, reflecting the legacies of the tumultuous period of dictatorship and transition. The moderate or renovationist wing of the party, primarily descendents of the PS-Nuñez, was itself somewhat internally divided into two groups associated with Nuñez himself and with Jorge Arrate. This divide reflected personal and professional loyalties more than any real ideological split, and the two sides would eventually unite to form the faction *Megatendencia*. The former members of the PS-Almeyda divided in more fundamental ways. A group of relative moderates, led by German Correa, led the faction *Tercerismo*, more willing from the beginning to embrace programmatic moderation and pragmatic politics.

Yet cohesion within the PS only extended so far, a dangerous situation that soon became apparent. A larger sector of the *Almeydistas* maintained remained considerably more skeptical of both the alliance with the PDC and the idea of maintaining programmatic continuity with the neoliberal economic model. This faction eventually took the name *Nueva Izquierda* and was led by Camilo Escalona, a protégé of Almeyda who had only a few years beforehand been a leader of the military insurrectionist wing of the PS-Almeyda. *Nueva Izquierda* was outweighed by the totality of the *renovación* bloc, such that it could not win the party leadership. However, *Nueva Izquierda* constituted the largest single faction within the party, commanding up to 40% of the vote in internal elections in the post-transition years

⁵⁴ Data drawn from polls conducted by the Centro de Estudios Públicos during the first Aylwin administration. See also Navia (2003, pg. 6).

(Roberts 1994, pg. 17). With personal disputes within renovación preventing the bloc from running a unified list in internal party elections beyond those for party leadership, the list proposed by the orthodox wing actually finished first in a series of internal elections in 1990, catalyzing immense concern and debate about the future of the renovación project. As Otano (1995, pg. 133) put it in his chronicle of these events: “A tough blow for Renovation occurred, as all the work of eleven years, since 1979, appeared to be at risk. The Socialist old guard, with its Marxism, its traditional symbols and liturgies, returned to the front lines of the party.”

Factional divisions reflected significant disputes over policy making and the programmatic direction of the PS during the initial years of the Aylwin government. Some degree of policy consensus existed within the administration, but only because PS representatives within the executive branch came entirely from either its renovationist wing or, in the case of Germán Correa, from Tercerismo.⁵⁵ Adherents to Nueva Izquierda were shut out of cabinet posts, and had little congressional representation, despite the faction’s size and support among party militants. Nevertheless, serious disputes and debates played out during party congresses and in public during the early 1990s (Gamboa and Salcedo 2006). In one highly publicized event, representatives from the orthodox wing of the party went so far as to jeer renovación leader Jorge Arrate during a major function held at the Estadio Chile (Chile Hoy 4/30/1990).

One particularly contentious topic was the privatization of state companies during the last years of the Pinochet regime. Not only was privatization anathema to the more hard line descendents of the PS-Almeyda, substantial evidence existed that the privatizations – some of which were hurriedly enacted in the last year of the dictatorship – were marked by irregularities that might have merited investigation. Evidence to this effect was presented to the Aylwin administration but set aside in the interests of maintaining political stability, to the significant consternation of many former members of the PS-Almeyda.⁵⁶ Another particularly contentious issue was the nature of the labor reform conducted by the government and, more generally, the marginalization and demobilization of social movements and organized actors during the initial post-transition years. The PS-Almeyda had been the most active sector of the party in affiliating and working with organized actors during the democratization struggle, and had a particularly strong relationship with the labor sector. The government’s labor reform, which promised much but delivered little, therefore struck at its base and was imposed over the protests of many prominent leaders from Nueva Izquierda.

In sum, factional disputes remained very much inflamed and the outcome of factional contestation among the partisan left had not been resolved during the early years of the Aylwin government. The future of the PS and the ability of its conflicting factions to reach

⁵⁵ While the PS received six cabinet positions in the Aylwin administration, these posts were given exclusively to renovationist or tercerista politicians, many of whom were among the most prominent proponents of the moderate and pragmatic course: Ricardo Lagos, Jorge Arrate, Enrique Correa, Germán Correa, Carlos Ominami, and Luis Alvarado.

⁵⁶ See Gutiérrez González (2003, pg 139-142) regarding the persistence of different programmatic visions between the Nunez and Almeyda sectors in general and the issue of privatizations in particular during this period.

accommodation was a huge topic of speculation in political commentary during this time.⁵⁷ And one persistent line of speculation concerned the possibility that the fragile unified PS would break and that the orthodox wing would instead opt to join with the Partido Comunista. As one writer succinctly put it: “The regrouping of the life of the PS has a rival. There are signs that the Communist Party could launch a surprise twist by joining with, at very the least, the sector of the PS closest to the traditional PC.”⁵⁸

Yet the success of the Aylwin administration greatly advantages moderates within the PS and the consolidation of a moderate coalition within the party. The smoothness of the democratic transition and the spectacularly robust growth of the economy validated the pragmatic orientation of the renovación wing of the party. Even if the distributional consequences of growth were unequal, real inroads were being made into poverty and marginalization. The moderate program also seemed to be benefitting the party overall, as the PS increased its vote share in the 1993 congressional elections. These successes put the orthodox wing of the party on the defensive, and Nueva Izquierda saw its vote share in internal elections steeply decline from 40% to 31% between 1990 and 1992 (Roberts 1994; Gamboa and Salcedo 2006).

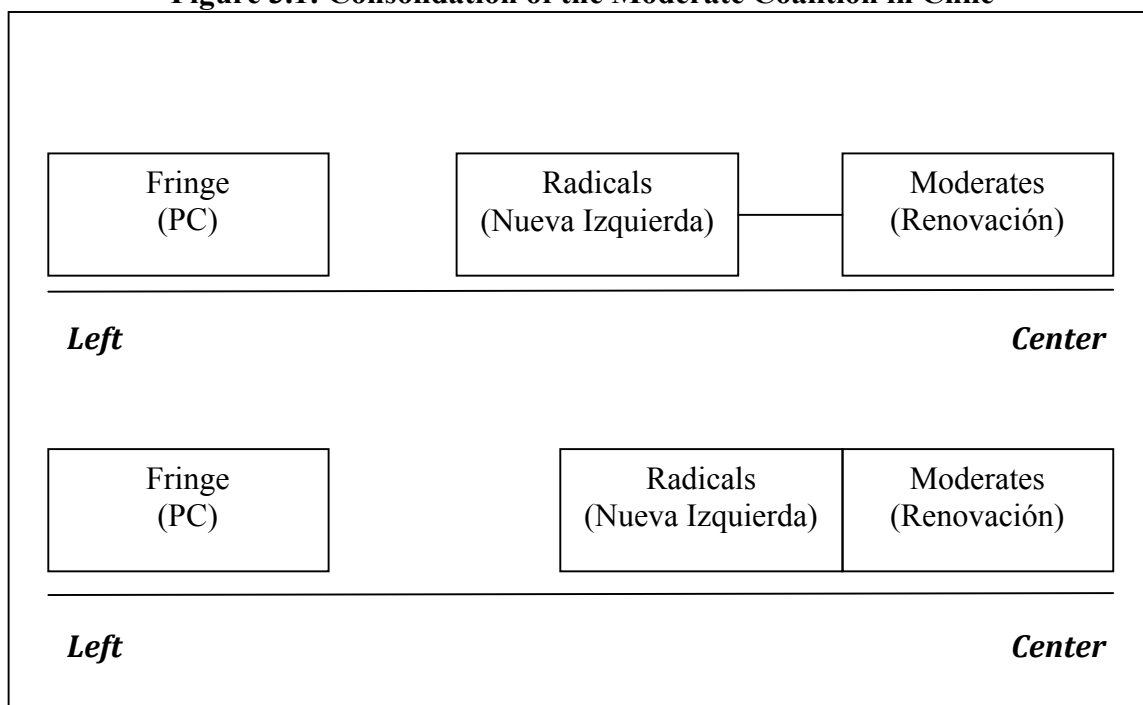
The leaders of Nueva Izquierda also faced electoral/careerist pressures. The entrenchment of the Concertación bloc in government entailed many opportunities for personal advancement. Yet Nueva Izquierda had been shut out of important administrative posts within the Aylwin administration and continued to be marginalized in the new Frei government, despite the PS overall gaining a significant degree of influence (Arrate and Rojas, 2003), having established few connections and little trust with the PDC. The nature of coalition government, combined with the peculiarities of the binomial electoral system inherited from the Pinochet regime, also placed great emphasis on backroom deal making in the selection and distribution of candidates for legislative office, and Nueva Izquierda suffered in this respect. For example, the 1993 congressional elections saw only seven Nueva Izquierda deputies elected, a very low number proportionate to its internal strength vis-à-vis other major factions in the party (Gamboa and Salcedo 2006, pg 686).

In such circumstances, the radical wing of the PS faced the prospect of professional marginalization. Had the Aylwin government failed, the neoliberal model come under increasing criticism, and the possibility of legitimacy crisis loomed, opportunity might have been created for Nueva Izquierda to win back the support of the Terceristas with their roots in the PS-Almeyda and take internal control of the PS. Incentives would almost certainly have increased for forging the much discussed coalition with the struggling PC, or to otherwise create a strong bloc on the left that would be capable of throwing its weight around in the electoral arena. Instead, the success of the Aylwin government and the avoidance of legitimacy crisis made the Concertación alliance and the renovación position close to the “only game in town” for PS politicians motivated by professional goals.

⁵⁷ See, in particular, various articles published in Chile Hoy during this period (4/30/1990, 8/13/1990, 12/3/1990, 10/14/1991, 11/25/1991).

⁵⁸ Quoted from Chile Hoy (4/1/1990).

Figure 3.1: Consolidation of the Moderate Coalition in Chile



A remarkable reversal from Nueva Izquierda resulted. During the first years of the Frei government, Nueva Izquierda converged on the more moderate and pragmatic position advocated by Megatendencia and Tercerismo (Motta 2008). This stunning transformation was led and epitomized by Escalona, a protégé of Almeyda who had been a strong advocate of an insurrectionary course to contesting the Pinochet regime and had remained a staunch opponent of renovación in the post-transition years. Now the ambitious leader of Nueva Izquierda enthusiastically embraced the renovación project and, in return, was appointed to the party presidency in 1994 and elected to the position in 1995 during the XXV Party Congress. The extent of this reversal was evident in the reaction of parts of the PS’s moderate wing, which entertained thoughts of leaving the party completely and joining the PPD before being convinced that Escalona and the former Almeydistas had truly embraced the renovación agenda (Barrett 2000, pg. 20).

The XXV Party Congress thus marked a profound change from those conducted in previous years. As Gamboa and Salcedo (2006, pg. 679) concluded, for the first time “the ideological element played no role, a nearly absolute programmatic consensus existed.” The emergence of programmatic consensus in 1995 reflected a major turning point, lauded as the “The Bad Godesberg of Chilean Socialism” (Ensignia 1996) in reference to the famous 1959 party congress of the German Social Democrats, in which the party explicitly renounced Marxism-Leninism for the first time. As Escalona himself put it during his address, “In the history of the party, this is one of the moments of greatest cohesion and voluntary unity.” Programmatic consensus within the party was largely maintained in future years, with factional disputes taking on the character of personal rivalries among ambitious politicians and blocs, devoid of serious ideological content. Relatively minor dissident movements still

existed that continued to reject the renovación project. Yet, among the major factions with real weight within the party, the scope of contestation and ideological disagreement had been drastically reduced.

Consensual Competitive Dynamics. With the success of the Aylwin administration and the consolidation of a moderate alliance within the PS, the Left Turn in Chile was marked by consensual competitive dynamics, further entrenching a tendency toward policy compromise that had been present in the country since democratization. The 2000 elections that brought the left to power were marked by a striking degree of similarity between the macroeconomic platforms of the two competing candidates, the PS's Lagos and Unión Demócrata Independiente's (UDI) Joaquín Lavín. Both candidates not only promised to maintain the neoliberal model, but each advocated similarly sized increases spending increases in areas such as health and low income housing (Angell and Pollack 2000, pg. 365). Differences were largely found in the details of specific proposals, rather than reflecting substantively disparate visions of how to revive the economy and manage its distributional consequences.

This policy orientation from the Lagos campaign met with the approval of all major factions within the PS. The candidate was not hampered by strong attacks from his left flank, or by sectors of the party whose radicalism might undermine the credibility of his commitment to macroeconomic continuity. Centripetal competition in macroeconomic terms could also be seen in partisan battles within the legislative arena. With the consolidation of moderate hegemony within the PS, all major partisan actors and factions now accepted the basic tenets of market liberalism by assumption, and fought within the narrow ideological ground demarcated by those tenets. And while the Concertación coalition overall remained associated with a somewhat more statist position than the opposing Alianza por Chile, heterogeneity within the Concertación tended to cut across partisan lines (Pribble 2008).

Consensual politics also extended to broad agreement on supporting principles of liberal democracy and eschewing any kind of major institutional change. The moderate leadership coalition in the PS, with its liberal pragmatic orientation, had no interest in asking for a mandate for reform and the Chilean population was not ready to offer one in any case. In the context of a slowing economy and after a decade of Concertación rule, Lagos found it advantageous to adopt a future-oriented message that identified him to some degree as a change agent. As Garretón (2000, pg 79-80) summarized the dilemma, Lagos was forced to be “simultaneously...the agent of continuity and change.” Yet the changes Lagos promised were mainly symbolic, a “sociocultural” change in Garretón’s terminology, and certainly did not extend to significant institutional reform or alteration to the nature of state-society relations. Lagos did propose to address certain aspects of the constitution that had preserved “authoritarian enclaves” in Chilean democracy, such as the continuing presence of non-elected senators and a lack of full civilian control over the military. But these proposals, while controversial in some circles given their consequences for the balance of power in the Chilean senate and the association of the particular provisions with the Pinochet era, were extremely minor when compared to proposals by the left regarding state reform and institutional change advanced in other countries in the region such as Venezuela, Bolivia, or Ecuador.

Brazil

The market reform successor period began in Brazil with the abbreviated administration of Itamar Franco and then continued as the caretaker president's finance minister, Fernando Henrique Cardoso, assumed the presidency and completed a full term. A relatively obscure career politician, Franco had been chosen by Fernando Collor de Mello to serve as vice-president. Franco had publicly broken with Collor over the implementation of drastic market reforms but, after the president 1992 impeachment on corruption charges, was constitutionally designated to finish out the full presidential term.

The new administration inherited an extremely difficult situation marked by grave economic conditions and widespread public dissatisfaction with a government which had been rocked by corruption scandals and whose attempts at drastic economic reform had been deeply unpopular. The country had been in recession for three years and experienced a devastating hyperinflation, which spiraled to over 2000% by 1993. Incredibly, 91% of respondents termed the country's economic situation poor or very poor in a survey conducted in the summer of 1993 (Weyland 2002, pg 224). The new government thus began its time in office between a rock and a hard place. Putting an end to the crisis was an absolute necessity. Yet the public was not disposed to accept drastic reform measures reminiscent of the policies of the Collor government.

Led by finance minister Cardoso, the government devised a strategy for attacking inflation. The Real Plan did not rely on shock therapy, rejected outright for being unpopular and politically infeasible, but consisted of a more drawn out set of measures, lasting more than half a year. This strategy first involved minor budget cuts and measures to reign in fiscal transfers to the states. The administration then focused on reengineering the way in which inflation was indexed through the creation of a symbolic proto-currency, the Unidade Real de Valor, and finally implementing a new currency, the Real, in July of 2004. The entire process was both risky, and required deft coalition building and horsetrading in both the legislature and with organized actors in the business and labor sectors. Yet, in the end, the "Plano Real" was a huge success from a public policy standpoint: Inflation, which had so bedeviled the country, immediately fell to the single digits.⁵⁹

The Plano Real was a political coup for the administration and its principle figures. Franco, who began his presidency as a largely unknown caretaker, ended his term with popularity ratings that surpassed 80%. Even greater rewards would accrue to Cardoso. After trailing Lula in the polls during the early part of 1994, the finance minister saw his polling numbers soar after the achievement of price stability. Cardoso went on to not only win the 1994 election, but to do so in a complete rout, securing a majority in the first round and winning two votes for every one for Lula, his closest competitor.

The new Cardoso administration was marked by a consensual and pragmatic approach to governance and a policy agenda geared toward maintaining economic stability and making incremental changes, selectively privatizing state enterprises, lowering trade barriers in some sectors, and proposing social security reform. The economy grew at only a moderate pace

⁵⁹ For a more detailed exploration of the nature of the Real Plan, including both its successes and some additional fiscal headaches that it eventually created, see Samuels (2003).

during this period, hampered as it was by high interest rates (Weyland 2002, pg. 239). Yet even annual growth rates of 3-4% were robust when compared to the turbulent years of recession and hyperinflation that had marked the late 1980s and early 1990s. A clear majority of Brazilians reported positive changes to their economic wellbeing (Hunter 2010, pg 177) and Cardoso's approval ratings remained high. The favorable position enjoyed by the president continued even as the Brazilian economy began to experience serious troubles in late 1997 and early 1998, in significant part due to aftershocks from the Asian financial crisis. With speculation growing about a potential Brazilian default on sovereign debt, the Cardoso government was forced to accept a \$41.5 billion support program from the IMF, to abandon its crawling exchange rate peg, and to let the Real float against the dollar, culminating in devaluation. Strikingly, however, the escalation of the crisis in Brazil did little to cut into Cardoso's electoral standing. The president secured reelection in another rout in late 1998, winning nearly the same percentage of the vote as he had in 1994. While Cardoso's popularity would decline in his second term, his six-year run from 1993 to 1999 as finance minister and president had been strikingly successful.

Resolution of Factional Contestation. While the major left party was in opposition rather than coalition, as in Chile, the success of the Cardoso administration and the prevention of legitimacy crisis were similarly decisive in shaping factional contestation within the partisan left. The partisan left entered this period also divided in tripartite fashion, and with the position of moderates within the PT perhaps even more tenuous than those within the PS in Chile. Leftist factions such as Força Socialista, O Trabalho, and Democracia Socialista held a majority of the party's National Directorate for the first time. Articulação itself had split, with a substantial proportion of the dominant faction joining forces with those on the left. As Hunter (2007, pg 166) notes, in many ways the party had become more radical and more strident since the 1989 election, reflected in official platforms circulated before the new election that vigorously reaffirmed the party's commitment to "revolutionary struggle." Lula remained party president and its candidate for the 1994 election, but his authority was in unprecedented doubt.

The presidential election, which the PT entered with particularly high hopes, and its immediate aftermath exposed and exacerbated many of these factional tensions. The early stages of the contest were marked by a series of internal conflicts, as Lula fought for the latitude to run a more moderate campaign and sought, largely unsuccessfully, to impose a moratorium on contentious pronouncements from the radical wing.⁶⁰ Nevertheless, prospects seemed propitious for obvious reasons: Lula had come extremely close to victory in 1989, and the subsequent years had been marked by a disastrous economic performance that seemed to lay bare the fundamental contradictions and dire consequences of market liberalism. Lula's trouncing at the hands of Cardoso was thus particularly disappointing. The aftermath witnessed even intensified factional acrimony, as different sectors sought to lay the blame at the feet of the others. In this context, commentators pronounced post-mortems for the party, positing seemingly irreconcilable differences between its moderate wing and radical sectors bent on complete social transformation (Azevedo 1995).

⁶⁰ See various articles in Folha de São Paulo (5/1/1994, 5/2/1994).

Yet the events surrounding the 1994 presidential election turned out to be a blessing in disguise for the moderate wing of the PT. On the one hand, the party had suffered a devastating loss under their leadership at a time of extremely high internal turmoil – a toxic combination to be sure. On the other hand, the nature of the loss itself seemed to validate the moderate and pragmatic position advocated by Lula and other prominent figures like José Dirceu. Key sectors within the party came to the conclusion that the PT had made critical errors in its response to the Plano Real – not taking the necessity of price stabilization seriously enough, and even appearing to root for the plan to fail (Hunter 2010, pg 171). More broadly, the PT was forced to confront some uncomfortable questions. Was the party out of touch with the demands and desires of the Brazilian electorate, who seemed largely receptive to the softer version of market liberalism that the Franco/Cardoso project represented? Had the Plano Real, and perhaps some other neoliberal ideas, actually been good public policy?

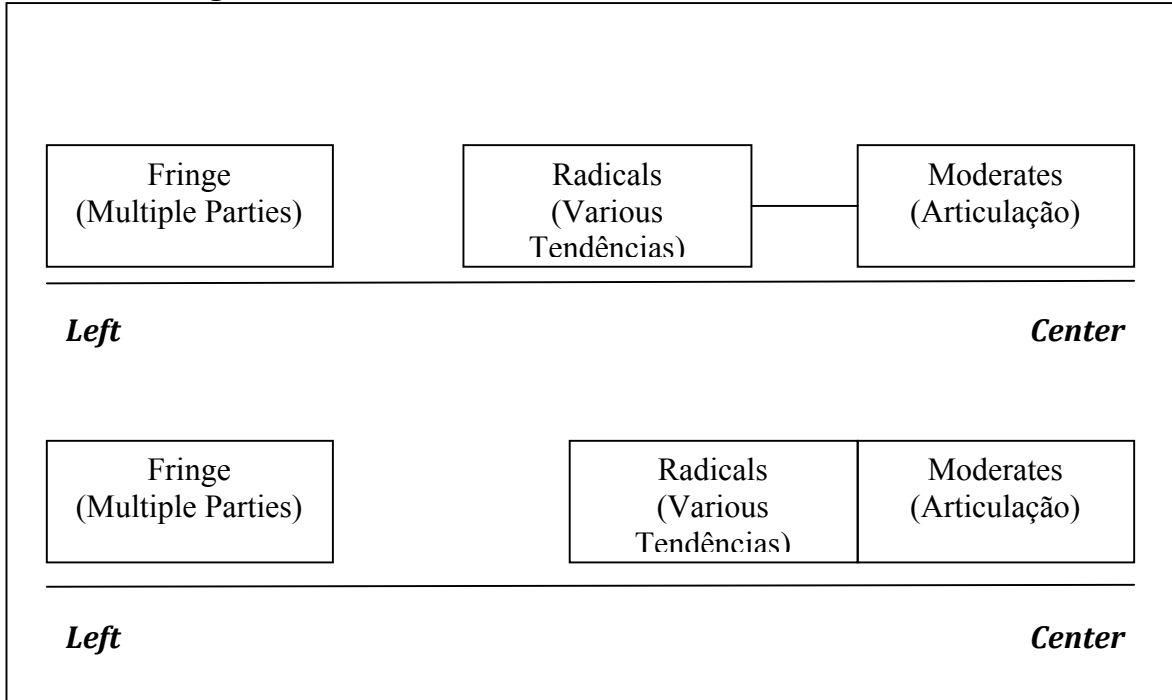
The events of 1993-1994 fundamentally shifted the terms of debate and discussion within the PT. Moderates could make a convincing case for pragmatism for both programmatic and professional reasons. In contrast, radicals struggled to articulate an alternative vision for the party going forward. As leftist intellectual Roberto Mangabeira Unger (1995) eloquently put it in a thoughtful essay on the situation: “The factions of the PT define themselves along a spectrum of radicalization of claims to redistribution. It is as if the more moderate (and ‘modern’) said, in the words of Fernando Henrique Cardoso, ‘we are what is viable,’ while the more radical protested, ‘we want real redistribution, even at the cost of scaring off the moneyed classes.’ What is disturbing is that not even the more radical voices offer a proposal to ground this more or less bold claim to redistribution in a productivist program. They merely share the confusion typical of the left the world over.”

One cannot underestimate the role that professional considerations played as these debates occurred. In the days of crisis, the neoliberal model had seemed unsustainable and doomed to be rejected by the population, such that radical sectors could convincingly argue that a program based around social transformation and fundamental opposition to market liberalism was a viable path to power. In the aftermath of 1994, this notion was increasingly hard to sustain. Yet professional incentives for moderation went far beyond aspirations to govern the country at the national level. Proportional representation ensured that a small cadre of PT politicians could win seats in the legislature even if the party remained niche. But the vast majority of politicians and candidates faced competitive environments, mainly municipal and gubernatorial races, in which the securing of electoral majorities was necessary. The ability to actually win these elections was critical, and not just for the actual aspirants to office. As the PT won control over seats of government at many levels during the late 1980s and early 1990s, it saw a huge increase in the number of individuals depending directly on the party for their livelihoods – as PT officials or employees of the party, of PT administrations, or of PT elected officials.⁶¹ A great many people, throughout the PT’s

⁶¹ This point is made by Baiocchi (2003, pg 217), which also usefully points toward several studies that have chronicled the professionalization of PT activism. For example, as early as 1991, scholars observed that professional activists rather than base constituencies made up the bulk of PT party convention attendees (Novaes 1993). A later study found the professional activists made up the overwhelming majority of the party’s municipal leadership in Porto Alegre (Gaglietti 1999).

infrastructure, had significant personal investments in the party's ability to consolidate and expand its power.

Figure 3.2: Consolidation of the Moderate Coalition in Brazil



As in Chile, then, the success of an elected government during the neoliberal transition and the staving off of legitimacy crisis shifted power to the moderate wing of the major left party. In the 1995 party congress, support for leftist factions declined and, critically, moderate and Lula confidante Dirceu was elected to the party's presidency, narrowly beating out leftist candidate Hamilton Pereira. Contestation over the direction of the party continued, with the PT's loss of the mayoral race in São Paulo triggering particularly vehement reactions from the left wing, which tried to cast the loss as evidence that programmatic moderation and pragmatism was a path to ruin (Folha de São Paulo 12/9/1996). Yet radical factions were fighting a losing battle. In the next party congress, the proportion of left delegates would again decline steeply and Dirceu would again win reelection as president. This pattern would only continue: leftist factions progressively declined in strength in four consecutive elections after their high-water point in 1993, with Articulação reaping much of the benefits (Samuels 2004).

While radical factions did not reverse course and completely embrace moderation, as in Chile, the hegemony of moderates was still enhanced by the defections of some prominent radicals and the grudging acceptance of pragmatic politics by others. Even radical *tendências* were forced to adapt to the changing environment around them and to accede to the logic of supporting cohesion in the push to finally win the presidency (Silva 2003). As Lacerda (2002) notes, factional dynamics began to revolve less around an uncertain split between radicals and

moderates and more around the jockeying for power among different sectors and factions within the moderate bloc. The overall ideological migration of the PT is perhaps best illustrated in a comparison of surveys of PT legislators conducted in 1987 by Leôncio Martins Rodrigues and refiled in 1997 by Timothy Power. These surveys asked respondents to characterize themselves as supporting an economy based around principles described as “radical socialist,” “moderate socialist,” “social democratic,” or “pure market.” In 1987, 62.5% of PT legislators chose the “radical socialist” option and the rest the “moderate socialist” option. By 1997, not a single legislator identified as “radical socialist,” only a quarter chose “moderate socialist,” and the rest opted for “social democratic.”⁶² Even this distribution put the party further to the left than its major competitors within the party system, but the gap had been greatly reduced.

The consolidation of the moderate orientation within the PT was even further exemplified by the programmatic strategies of Lula in his 1998 campaign for the presidency, which saw a significant shift from past practices, both in terms of the party’s programmatic appeals and the image of Lula that it sought to broadcast. The campaign criticized aspects of the government’s privatization program, but promised to uphold the policies. Lula continued to advocate for agrarian reform, but advanced more measured proposals and framed them in the technocratic language of development rather than the incendiary language of class struggle and social justice. Finally, Lula also discussed issues of foreign capital and international financial institutions in positive terms, another striking break from past practices (Hunter 2010, pgs 179-180). These further programmatic adjustments were attended by an attempt to remake Lula’s image as more conciliatory and technocratic, as PT campaign strategists began to copy the image that had made Cardoso successful (Boas 2008).

Consensual Competitive Dynamics. As in Chile, the staving off of legitimacy crisis and the consolidation of moderate hegemony within the PT anchored consensual competitive dynamics in the party system as the Left Turn began. One notable difference with the Chilean pattern is that this outcome represented a greater shift in the electoral landscape. The PT had been in opposition to the government leading the legitimation project, and the party’s moderation had occurred more gradually than that of the PS in Chile. As such, the PT’s eventual role as anchor of centripetal competition was considerably more striking, because the party had spent the 1980s and first half of the 1990s as a driver of programmatic competition and polarization in the country.

An unprecedented level of consensus on macroeconomic issues marked the 2002 elections that brought the left to power. The lessons drawn from the 1998 campaign by the PT leadership were that a deepening of the moderate course and more emphasis on professionalized campaigning might deliver a victory. Lula thus promised broad policy continuity with the orientation of the Cardoso government, positions that differed little from those of major opponent José Serra. Particular emphasis was placed on assuring the domestic and international financial community that a PT government would maintain fiscal responsibility and not seek to move the country in a more statist direction. While Lula dedicated much of his television advertising to policy issues, this strategy was geared not

⁶² See Hunter (2010, pg. 69) for comparisons of the results of the two surveys. For a more extended analysis of PT legislative ideology and change over time, see Power and Zucco (2009).

toward distinguishing himself along programmatic lines but toward projecting an image of a technocratic manager capable of soberly stewarding the Brazilian economy (Boas 2008). The centripetal nature of competition was also captured in the coalitional strategy of Lula and the PT during the election, long a subject of disagreement within the party. Lula formed an alliance with the right-wing PFL and chose businessman José Alencar as his vice-presidential running mate. In making these choices about campaign strategy and macroeconomic program, Lula and other moderate leaders had to fend off some criticism from the left flank of the party, certainly more than Lagos and PS moderates were forced to deal with in Chile. Nevertheless, criticism from the left-wing of the PT was considerably more muted than in the past, and the moderate course was never seriously in doubt.

Consensual patterns of contestation extended to the question of institutional change and the nature of Brazilian democracy. Lula and the PT came to power seeking, and receiving, a mandate for institutional continuity. Much like Lagos in Chile, Lula portrayed himself as a change agent in symbolic terms but stressed the modesty of his agenda and his intention to work within established rules of the game. In the “Letter to the Brazilian People,” the candidate spoke of a “powerful popular will to end the current political and economic cycle” and emphasized the “unfulfilled promises” and “frustrated hopes” of the Cardoso years (Silva 2002). Yet he also declared that “there are not miracles in the life of a people and a country,” that change would have to be the product of a “clear and sensible transition,” and that change could not come from any drastic executive actions, but only emerge from “an extensive national bargaining” in which all sectors of society were included. The public pronouncement has often been interpreted as a letter to the domestic and international financial community and a commitment to maintain the basic contours of the neoliberal model. Yet it was also a commitment to the political class in the country, in that the president promised that he would not seek to use the presidency to impulse any kind of drastic institutional renovation.

Venezuela

The legitimation period began in Venezuela with the election of Rafael Caldera in the 1993 elections. The new president was able to pull off an unusual feat, casting himself as an outsider and change agent despite being a quintessential Punto Fijo insider, one who had contested the 1957 election against Rafael Betancourt, founded Copei, and actually served as president before in the early 1970s. Caldera had broken from Copei only recently, after the loss of a brutal factional fight prior to the 1988 elections.⁶³ Yet he was still able to distance himself from the Punto Fijo parties and capitalize on a rising tide of anti-systemic sentiment. After Chávez’s 1992 coup attempt, Caldera made a heavily publicized speech in which he bordered on excusing the coup plotters. While instigating outrage among political elites, the

⁶³ The Copei primaries for the 1988 elections had been particularly divisive, and culminated with the rout of Caldera by challenger Eduardo Fernandez. Factional disputes within Copei continued over the next five years, with copeyanos who supported Caldera’s continued leadership of the party making up the majority of those who split to form Convergencia (Villafranca 1989)

address resounded with the anti-systemic mood in the country and cast Caldera into the spotlight.

Riding this momentum, the seasoned politician officially formed a new party, *Convergencia*, and announced his intentions to contest the 1993 elections. Feeding on popular rejection of Pérez, who had been removed from office before finishing his term, Caldera ran a reformist campaign. His appeals centered on anti-corruption measures – critical given the scandals of the Pérez administration – and a programmatic agenda that promised to reverse some, but not all, of his predecessor’s initial market reforms. In coalition terms, Caldera was able to polish his outsider bona fides and appeal among the left by entering into an alliance with several parties of the left, most prominently the MAS. In this sense, Caldera and *Convergencia* positioned themselves as centrist reformers, dedicated to charting a new middle and representing a much safer option than Andres Velásquez and LCR.

Yet once in government, the Caldera administration was undone almost from the beginning, with two factors most critical. With the new electoral realignment, the administration found it extremely difficult to cobble together a legislative majority. *Convergencia* and MAS together held only about a quarter of each legislative chamber, and thus were in need of coalition partners. The persistence of bad blood made an alliance with Copei out of the question: indeed, some Copei leaders suspected, not without some justification, that the ultimate goal of *Convergencia* was to kill off Copei altogether and take its place as the second heavyweight in a two party duopoly (Lalander 2004, pg 175). The Caldera government received support from LCR on select legislation. But LCR, still getting used to a greatly expanded legislative role and with its roots as an anti-systemic party, was unwilling to join the governing coalition, preferring to evaluate matters as they progressed. The Caldera administration was thus forced to seek support from AD, at least on certain matters, against whom it had just spent most of the campaign running.⁶⁴ It was a legislature divided in quarters, and the administration, holding only one of these quarters, faced an unreliable partner to the left, an unsavory and discredited partner to the right, and a bitter enemy in the remnants of Copei. The government’s only option was to rely on “ad hoc majorities for specific legislative initiatives,” (Coppedge 1994b, pg 54), a precarious proposition even in good times.

These good times were not to come. The Caldera government was also almost immediately confronted with an enormous financial crisis. Many of Venezuela’s leading banks – especially Banco Latino, the nation’s second largest – had been engaged in imprudent lending, and the recession of 1993 led to a wave of defaults, decimating capital stock, and triggering fears of their collapse that, through a bank run, became a self-fulfilling prophecy. The damage was enormous, with seventeen banks eventually closing that had controlled two thirds of the country’s financial assets and the government ultimately required to provide an enormous bailout to financial interests amounting to roughly 11-12% of GDP and 75% of the

⁶⁴ While the support of AD would prove most important later in Caldera’s term, the administration approached AD about an alliance from the beginning (Lalander 2004, pg 175). Nevertheless, the government was not eager to do so, and would have preferred a stronger alliance with LCR. In the words of Petkoff, “Caldera was forced to give oxygen to AD. Caldera has been obliged to survive and get support; LCR did not understand that, so if AD is still alive it is because of LCR, Caldera was alone he had only two small parties.” (Quoted in Buxton (2001, pg. 170).

national budget for 1994 (Weyland 2002, pg 214). Caldera had only just taken up residence in Miraflores Palace, but the collapse, the bailout, and their ramifications would color the rest of his term. The collapse itself was extremely damaging to the economy, which sank further into recession, as lending was completely disrupted and investment curtailed. The bailout, seeking to limit this damage, decimated the finances of the Venezuelan state.

The Caldera government responded with a series of interventionist measures in an attempt to achieve economic stabilization, imposing capital controls to slow down flight, printing money to finance the bailout, and devaluing the currency. Arguably, no other options, such as drastically slashing public expenditure to finance the bailout, were politically feasible or, perhaps, even economically desirable in the short term. The economy had been in recession for several years, so a drastic reduction of public expenditure would not only impose huge hardships on the population but also run opposite to the logic of counter-cyclical spending. Further, such measures would surely have faced huge opposition from society and other parties in congress, given that they would have been implemented not to save the country from a hyperinflation but specifically to help finance a bailout of irresponsible financial interests. In this sense, the fact that the Venezuelan crisis of 1994 was financial in origin made the politics of its management especially difficult, in a context in which the Caldera government's support in the legislature was already on extremely shaky foundations.

These measures provided only temporary relief, and the Caldera government was forced to eventually embrace market-oriented reforms to reverse spiraling inflation and economic stagnation. Putting together the coalition for such policies was extremely difficult, delaying their implementation. The government did not implement the reforms, known as the Agenda Venezuela package, until early 1996, despite efforts by finance minister Teodoro Petkoff to begin convincing allies within MAS and other parties of their necessity as early as the end of 1994 (Ellner 1998, pg. 128). By the time the reforms were implemented, Caldera's approval rating was already abysmal, and calls had already been made for him to step down. The president's approval ratings actually improved slightly in the year following the reform announcement, but this small uptick proved unsustainable.⁶⁵ Unlike his predecessor, Caldera finished a full term in office, but he did so with very low popularity ratings nearly the entire time.

Resolution of Factional Contestation. The failure of the Caldera government and the onset of legitimacy crisis decisively shaped factional contestation on the partisan left, straining the factional alliances that sustained both MAS and LCR, and ultimately favoring the formation of a new alliance in which radicals broke from these parties and aligned with the fringe left force of the MBR-200 and Hugo Chávez. This turn of events represented a stunning outcome. As in Brazil and Chile, the partisan left had entered this period divided in tripartite fashion (although with two major left parties), involving a fringe left that was marginal and major left parties in which moderates held the upper hand and which appeared on their way toward consolidation in a moderate orientation. Yet both parties, one in opposition and one in coalition, ruptured under factional strain and saw their radical factions seek other alternatives.

⁶⁵ See Weyland (2002), pg 216-232 for a thorough analysis of the reform experience under Caldera and the dynamics of public opinion during this time.

MAS entered the Caldera years riding high, at the zenith of its electoral strength and with historical leaders like Teodoro Petkoff and Pompeyo Marquez holding positions in the executive branch for the very first time. These successes also marked a resounding victory of the moderate position long advocated by its Tucan wing and supported by Petkoff himself. Indeed, in the face of electoral success, the moderate coalition had become even stronger within the party: Marquez was now firmly on board, and some prominent Hawks, including longtime factional leader Freddy Muñoz, had softened their radical stances considerably. Entering into coalition with Convergencia had been somewhat contentious, but even radical sectors within MAS saw the value of gaining power in order to oust the Punjo Fijo duopoly once and for all (Ochoa Antich 1997).

While not enjoying the fruits of being in government, LCR's recent electoral successes were even greater and more striking. After spending most of its existence focusing on basist mobilization but making very little dent in the electoral arena, the party had seen its vote share skyrocket in the 1993 congressional elections and its leader and public face Andres Velásquez very nearly win the presidency itself. As with MAS, these successes were not just triumphs for the party but, more specifically, triumphs of its moderate wing. While LCR remained factionalized, the Velásquez wing of the party was clearly ascendant. A majority of the new congressional delegation sympathized with the moderate orientation, Velásquez himself was the unquestioned public face of the party, and the success of the electoral course presented a powerful counterargument to radicals who believed that power could never be won through institutional channels. Both major left parties, then, seemed poised to follow the route of the PS in Chile and the PT in Brazil toward the consolidation of a moderate hegemonic alliance.

Yet the failure of the Caldera government catalyzed a different pattern of coalitional dynamics on the partisan left, such that an alliance between radicals and the fringe left was ultimately consolidated. For both MAS and LCR, this mechanism took shape in two stages: First, the failure of the government undercut the positions of moderate factions while emboldening radicals, pushing the tenuous moderate-radical alliance within each party to the breaking point. Second, in these circumstances radicals made the strategic calculation that a new alliance with the fringe left force of Chávez and the MBR-200 would be most favorable.

The effects of the Caldera administration's failure were most direct and most immediate for MAS, given that the party was part of coalition and that its most famous leader, Petkoff, was the architect and public face of much of the administration's economic policy. This association with the Caldera government did not particularly hurt MAS at the ballot box: The party won four gubernatorial races in 1995, in contrast to two in 1992, and its legislative vote share hardly budged between 1993 and 1998. Rather, the crisis of the party was internal. As the Caldera government floundered out of the starting gate, and as it then moved inevitably toward market reform, factional tensions within the party became newly inflamed and radical sectors became newly ascendant.

Factional contestation within MAS was grounded in both programmatic and generational divisions. The project of moderation and pragmatism that culminated in joining Convergencia had been led by an older cohort of leaders that had retained control of the party for decades: Petkoff, Marquez, even Muñoz, who, despite nominally leading the Hawk faction, had ultimately acquiesced to the moderate strategy. As dissatisfaction grew with these decisions, a cohort of younger MASistas emerged to challenge for the party leadership.

Traditional factional blocs began to disintegrate and, amid substantial chaos, new divides emerged. Over this period, much of the MAS congressional delegation actually left *Convergencia*, choosing to form a “triple alliance” with *Copei* and *LCR* in opposition and leaving the party in the difficult position of having its founder and public face guiding economic management while other prominent leaders voiced opposition (Buxton 2001, pg 169-170).

An initial wave of change occurred during the 1994 Party Congress, which saw the surprise election of Enrique Ochoa Antich as General Secretary and Gustavo Márquez as President. These new leaders were critics of the party leadership but not full blown radicals. In this sense, their candidacies reflected a generational challenge to Petkoff and other older leaders, a rebuke of the coalitional strategy of joining *Convergencia*, but not a rejection of the notion of a moderate course in the abstract (Ellner 1996). Ochoa Antich had spent much of the previous years laboring as a social activist and organizer. His writings and public pronouncements at the time critiqued the sustainability of the statist ISI model and emphasized the need to find a new kind of sustainable economic model for the country. Indeed, by 1997 Ochoa Antich would eventually become both a harsh critic of the Caldera administration and a supporter of pulling MAS out of the government, yet also one of the most vigorous voices in the country calling for a deepening of market reform (Ochoa Antich 1997). This position on the advisability of a new round of market reforms met much resistance within other sectors of the party, but his call for the abandonment of the *Convergencia* coalition was considerably better received.

If this first challenge reflected more of a generational challenge and an attempt at abstract renewal, latter challenges were grounded in more fundamental opposition to the moderate course of the party. Factional contestation within MAS intensified as the decade progressed, as debate about the direction of the party became more acerbic, and other new aspirants to power looked to seize the opportunity to win control over key positions. Factional divisions were more fluid than in the past, but three groups might be heuristically identified. One group consisted of Petkoff and loyalist sectors, who supported both the moderate programmatic course and the party’s continuing participation in the Caldera government. A second group centered on the Ochoa Antich position, favoring a moderate programmatic course that recognized the desirability of further market reforms but preferring to advocate for these policies from opposition, fed up with the incompetence and failures of the Caldera administration. A final group consisted of newly ascendant radicals, in some ways heirs to the Hawk tradition within the party, was led by the ambitious Felipe Mujica and Leopoldo Pucchi and opposed participation in the Caldera government and the liberal reforms of the *Agenda Venezuela*.⁶⁶ As these groups angled for power, even the scheduling of the new Party Congress became a subject of bitterness and discord, with some sectors launching allegations that Ochoa and Marquez were acting in undemocratic ways and dragging their heels (D’Paola 1997).

⁶⁶ Ellner (2001) makes a further distinction between groups aligned with Pucchi and Mujica, portraying the former as committed radicals and the latter as a more opportunistic group that, at least in part, embraced radical positions and attacks on the *Punto Fijo* status quo for strategic purposes.

The Party Congress was finally scheduled for July 1997, with its elections for Secretary General and President widely seen as a referendum on the future direction of the party. On one side was a duo of moderate candidates supported by the Petkoff wing as well as Ochoa Antich (who himself had resigned the position of Secretary General shortly beforehand): Victor Hugo D'Paola and Gustavo Márquez. Their competition was Mujica and Pucchi, leaders of the more radical sectors within the party. Amid serious allegations of fraud and irregularities, the latter group triumphed, with Mujica becoming secretary general and Pucchi president. In the aftermath, Márquez launched a formal legal appeal – to no avail – asking the courts to investigate, and invalidate, the results of the internal election. These events marked the definitive failure of the attempt to consolidate a moderate leadership coalition within the party and strained ties between moderate and radical groups to the breaking point.

While the party was not in coalition with *Convergencia*, the onset of legitimacy crisis was ultimately no less devastating to moderates within LCR and prospects for the extension of moderate hegemony. Electoral success had brought with it a new set of challenges for LCR to confront. A party that had grown on a strongly outsider message was now operating within institutionalized politics, a new orientation that was encapsulated in its very participation in the opposition Triple Alliance, which brought the party into a great deal of legislative maneuvering and for which LCR gained control of congressional committees and the vice-presidency of the congress for Medina (*El Universal* 11/27/1996; Buxton 2001, pg 173). Working within the system was double-edged: It gave LCR a high-profile platform to pursue an oppositional agenda, but it also carried the risk of tarnishing its own brand as an anti-systemic party (López Maya 1998). Much like the experience of the PT in Brazil, new tensions arose between the party's new responsibilities in government and its historical orientation as a basist party that was in some ways also a social movement (Hellinger 2003, pg. 36-37).

Partly due to these difficulties, LCR met with mixed, although certainly not disastrous, electoral results during the early years of the Caldera presidency. The party's electoral fortunes in the 1995 gubernatorial and municipal elections were undercut by its policy of eschewing alliances with other parties, in the context of races in which such alliances were clearly advantageous. In these elections, the party lost the governorship of Bolívar, a significant blow given that capturing the post in 1989 had represented LCR's first big electoral victory and the state was supposedly a bastion of support. Nevertheless, LCR was able to win the governorship of Zulia, a much bigger prize in the overall scheme of Venezuelan politics, and its aggregate vote share across all gubernatorial races increased from 8.7% in 1992 to 12.7% in 1995. The party lost a critical race for the mayor of Caracas but, again, its overall number of mayoral victories increased from five in 1992 to seven in 1995. Overall, the results were somewhat disappointing, in that LCR seemed to lose momentum after its heady results of 1993. However, the party still managed to improve on its standing in many respects, and the difficulties it faced were in large part due to the kinds of elections being contested: Legislative elections utilizing proportional representation, for example, would clearly offer more advantageous terrain for a party intent on eschewing alliances.

As with MAS, the bigger problem was internal factional dispute, which had been reinvigorated by the struggles of the Caldera administration to put the country on a firmer

economic course and demonstrate the viability of a moderate version of the market model. The two main factions of the party fundamentally disagreed about the wisdom of a moderate program and about how to position themselves vis-à-vis the administration and its project. The Velásquez faction of the party appreciated the necessity of some liberalizing reforms in the context of an economic crisis. While remaining in opposition, it leaned toward the more constructive position of MAS and Copei, and lined up behind the embattled Caldera government on several key votes (Buxton 2001, pg. 170). The Medina faction, in contrast, took an increasingly hardline stance as the Caldera government floundered, opposing the administration at almost every turn, and with its leader referring to plans for structural adjustment as portending a “social catastrophe” (United Press International 10/20/1995). The privatization policies of the government, supported by the Velásquez wing and opposed by the Medina wing, were especially controversial, as they struck directly at enterprises such as the state-run steel company SIDOR whose workers had made up LCR’s original base. Rather than tipping the balance in favor of moderates, the failure of the Caldera administration and the onset of legitimacy crisis left the two camps within LCR at an impasse over the programmatic direction of the party. Both conciliatory and harshly oppositional stances seemed defensible as public policy and as means by which to broaden LCR’s electoral appeal.

The legitimacy crisis also exacerbated tensions with respect to the more general strategic direction of the party and the nature of party leadership. The factionalization of LCR reflected both personalistic rivalries as well different visions concerning how the Punto Fijo duopoly might be undermined and the advisability of working within institutional channels, forming alliances, and making pragmatic compromises with other parties. That the party was entering institutionalized politics in force for the first time made these tensions particularly salient. The Velásquez and Medina factions held different degrees of enthusiasm and optimism regarding LCR’s chances for displacing the Punto Fijo parties through institutional channels. While the 1993 election results would seem to validate the Velásquez position, the presidential election was also marred by allegations of fraud, such that in the aftermath the two factions clashed bitterly about whether or not to recognize the results (López Maya 1996, pg. 144). The wisdom of the institutional course thus remained an open question for many in the party.

Even though LCR was in opposition, the success or failure of the Caldera government would weigh heavily on this internal debate, because the administration was fundamentally an experiment in attempting to displace the Punto Fijo duopoly through the electoral process. The struggles of the Caldera government raised the possibility that such a strategy might be doomed to fail and that, in particular, it might even strengthen AD – the party that, for many within LCR, represented the true enemy. AD had historically been the dominant party in the country, the embodiment of oppressive clientelistic practices for many LCR leaders and militants, and the major obstacle against which LCR had to fight for the democratization of the labor movement. And with the floundering of the Caldera administration, AD for some time appeared remarkably resurgent. The party won 12 governorships in 1995, almost double the seven that it had won in 1992, and more than the 11 it had won in 1989 after the advent of elections for governors. Likewise, AD achieved its best ever results in municipal elections in 1995, winning 190 of the 330 mayorships up for election. The specter of a resurgent AD,

given momentum by the failure of the Caldera government, thus seriously called into question the Velásquez-wing strategy of contesting power through institutional channels.

In this context, disputes over candidate selection and control of the party became increasingly heated. A particularly contentious series of events unfolded surrounding the 1995 gubernatorial election in Bolívar. The question of who would succeed Velásquez as the party's candidate was controversial and highly contested between the two main factions. Two of the main contenders, Clemente Scotto (a strong Medinista) and SUTISS president Víctor Moreno (whose sympathies towards Velásquez), had previously fought over the party's nomination for the Mayor of Caroni, which had been widely seen as a proxy battle between the factions.⁶⁷ Now the same candidates were in the mix for the gubernatorial nomination, which Moreno eventually won. Hampered by this debilitating process, Moreno lost by a nose to the AD candidate Jorge Carvajal in an election that was once again characterized by allegations of fraud. As with the 1993 presidential elections, in the aftermath the Medina wing of the party demanded that the party to reject the result and contest the validity of the elections, while the Velásquez wing advised a more conciliatory approach. In Medina's account, the aftermath of the race in Bolívar hardened factional divisions in a party already greatly divided (Medina 1999, pg 50).

The power struggle within LCR accelerated in 1996 when the Velásquez wing, now on the defensive, attempted to retrench by successfully supporting the candidacy of Lucas Matheus to replace Medina as General Secretary of the party (López Maya 1996). A period of internal conflict and dispute ensued, which spilled over into the public realm with the publication in February 1997 of an interview with Velásquez, in which the party leader blasted the Medinistas, blamed them for the ongoing difficulties faced by LCR, and formally proposed that the party split.⁶⁸ From this point on, the two factions within the party essentially acted as separate entities, splitting nearly down the middle in terms of its congressional representational: The Velásquez faction maintained the loyalty of five of nine senators and 13 of 40 deputies while the rest aligned with Medina (Buxton 2001, pg 178). The split was formalized after the resolution of legal wrangling, with the Velásquez faction maintaining ownership of the LCR moniker and the Medina faction reconstituting itself as a new party, Patria Para Todos (PPT).

For both MAS and LCR, then, the failure of the Caldera administration hurt moderate factions and empowered radicals because this failure undercut the notion of moderation itself: A program similar to that which moderates in each party had staked their fortunes had produced results that were difficult to defend on public policy grounds and was now associated with a huge failure on electoral/careerist grounds, given the widespread public rejection of the Caldera administration. Given the breaking of the radical-moderate alliance and the implosion of LCR and MAS, what emerged in the immediate aftermath was a partisan left that remained tripartite but in which all three groups were relatively autonomous, as displayed in Figure 3.x. In the abstract, this situation might have led to several possibilities. Stasis might have set in, with different groups on the partisan left continuing to go their own

⁶⁷ See *El Universal* (3/10/97). For more on this point, see the discussion in Salamanca (2004).

⁶⁸ *El Universal* (2/23/1997).

ways. The other obvious possibility was a new alliance between the radicals of LCR and/or MAS and the fringe left represented by Chávez and the MBR-200.

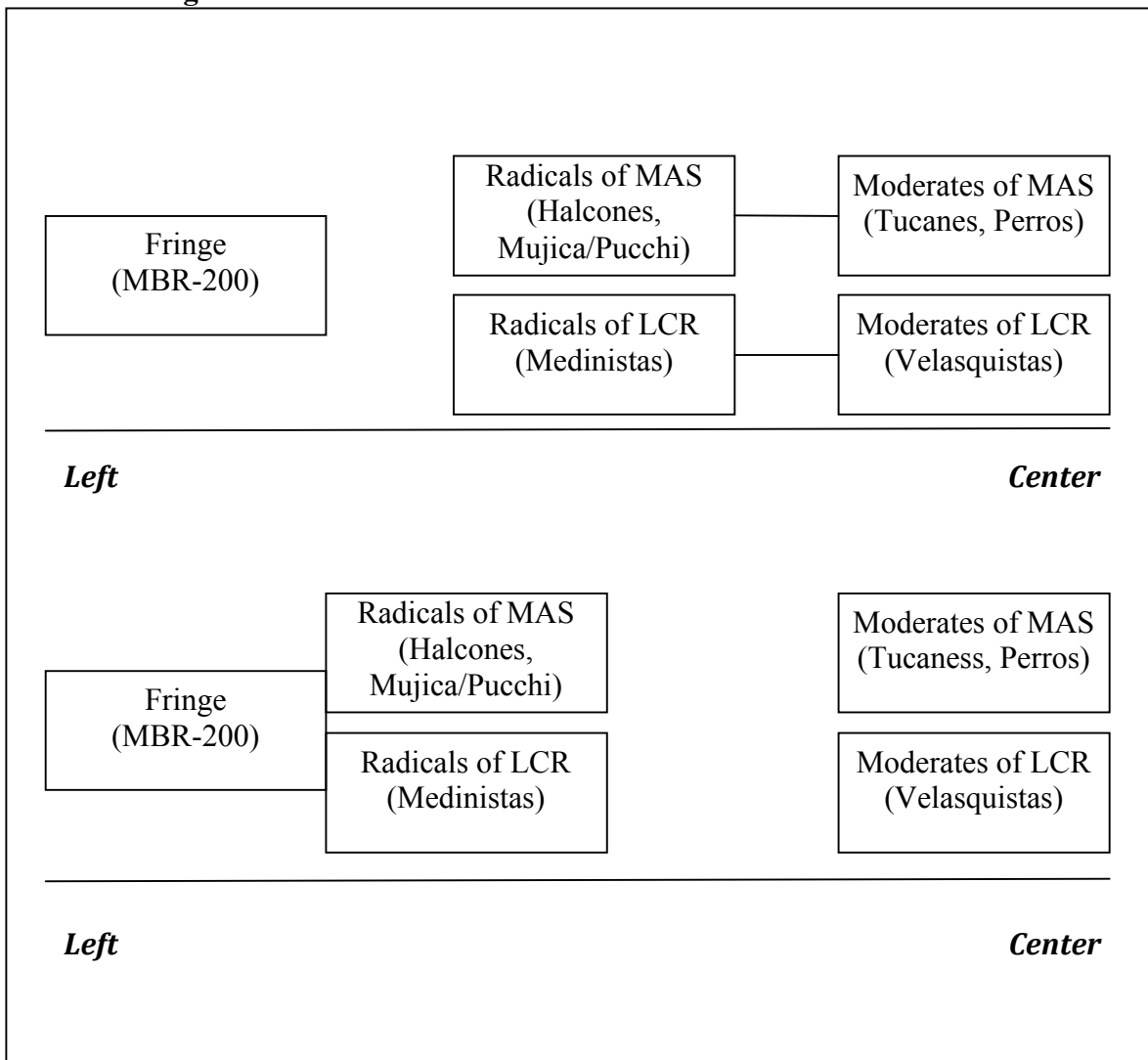
While the spatial logic of a fringe-radical alliance is evident, prospects for such an alliance did not seem good for much of the 1990s, owing mainly to the widespread perception that Chávez and the MBR-200 were not viable electoral contenders and serious suspicions of Chávez held by radicals within both LCR and MAS. A tendency toward retrospective mythmaking has obscured many of the facts surrounding the position and popularity of Chávez and the MBR-200 during most of the 1990s. Both chroniclers of Chávez's rise to power, as well as the semi-official narrative of the Bolivarian Movement itself, have pushed the notion of "Hurricane Hugo," portraying Chávez and the MBR-200 as an unstoppable force who gained momentum over the course of the 1990s as the Punto Fijo system crashed down around him.

The reality is that Chávez and his MBR-200 spent the mid 1990s treading water at best, indecisive about how to proceed after their release from prison, and making little inroads in terms of winning support among a highly skeptical population. While Chávez had garnered much sympathy in the wake of the 1992 coup, his approval ratings saw a steady decline thereafter – moving from a +28 spread (percent approving minus percent disapproving) in early 1993 to a -10 spread by late 1995 (López Maya 1996). Other surveys conducted at the time suggest that only a small minority of Venezuelans considered Chávez to be "personally and nationally influential."⁶⁹ Similarly, for most of the 1990s the MBR-200 struggled mightily to gain traction with the electorate. In surveys during the middle of decade asking Venezuelans whether they sympathized with any political party or movement and including the MBR-200 in a list of options, less than 5% of Venezuelans reported doing so (López Maya 1996). For good reason, then, some of the most cogent observers of Venezuelan politics writing in 1996 and 1997 gave Chávez and the MBR-200 little chance of making an electoral impact.

As the 1998 elections approached, coalitional politics on the left remained very much in flux. The infighting and, eventually, implosion of both LCR and MAS essentially precluded either party or its constituent factions from making a serious bid for the presidency. The only candidate on the left was thus Chávez, but he seemed unlikely to be a serious contender, polling as little as 7% in early 1997 (Roberts 2003b, pg. 66) and hardly improving this figure by January 1998 (Marcano and Tyzka 2004, pg. 17). The early favorite instead was Irene Sáez, a former beauty queen and mayor of Chacao, with Henrique Salas Römer, a businessman from Zulia, also considered a legitimate contender. In these circumstances, both radical and moderate factions in each party were initially undecided about whom to back. Initial discussions within MAS revolved around a choice between Sáez or Salas Römer, with the radicals led by Pucchi and Mujica preferring the former and the moderates such as Petkoff preferring the latter (Ellner 1998). The moderates within LCR chose to endorse Sáez, while the radicals, now newly constituted as Patria Para Todos, opted to remain on the fence, giving serious consideration to each of the three possibilities.

⁶⁹ See Canache (2004, pg 46). Note that these figures actually come from a survey only conducted in Caracas and Maracaibo. It seems likely that a national sample, including many hinterland areas, would have produced an even smaller proportion of respondents who considered Chávez influential.

Figure 3.3: Consolidation of the Radical Coalition in Venezuela



As Sáez made a series of blunders and Chávez inched up in the polls, however, the logic of a broad coalition of the left became more apparent, and radicals within each party reconsidered their options. Prominent leaders of the MBR-200, now reconstituted as the MVR, lobbied heavily for support from the radical wings of LCR and MAS, explicitly pitching the idea of a grand coalition of the “true left” in the country. After the party’s first congress in January 1998, PPT eventually decided to formalize an alliance with the MVR, under the grand coalition rubric of the Polo Patriótico.⁷⁰ A meeting between Chávez, other MVR leaders, and leaders of both wings of MAS occurred in early 1998, after which the

⁷⁰ See Buxton (2001), pg 185-186 for the best account of the PPT’s decision making process. It is noteworthy that a majority of the directorate opposed backing Chávez and joining the Polo Patriótico, and that this decision was made only grudgingly, and partly due to the unattractiveness of other options.

radicals of the party eventually decided to join the Polo Patriótico as well. The two factions within MAS had been stretched to the breaking point already, but the issue of Chávez's candidacy irrevocably split the party. Petkoff publicly renounced MAS, while a large group of other prominent figures, including D'Paola, Ochoa Antich, Pompeyo Marquez, and Luis Manuel Esculpi, formed a new electoral vehicle, Izquierda Democratica, that would back Sáez and then Salas Römer.⁷¹

There is much reason to believe that the endorsement from PPT and the radicals of MAS was ultimately critical to Chávez's success. Both PPT and MAS were widely entrenched parties with significant mobilizational resources, backed by large groups of longstanding left activists, and who attracted many party identifiers across the country, while the fledgling MVR had none of these advantages. They had also become reputable actors in institutionalized politics, and their endorsement of Chávez and alliance with the MVR likely conferred a degree of legitimacy on their insurgent bid for power. Finally, Chávez's rise in the polls from single digits to serious contender essentially coincided with the formation of the Polo Patriótico, and the consolidation of the new radical alliance in Venezuela.

Conflictual Competitive Dynamics. With the onset of legitimacy crisis and the consolidation of a radical coalition on the left, the Left Turn in Venezuela was characterized by conflictual competitive dynamics. Chávez and the Polo Patriótico alliance, despite some ideological heterogeneity in the latter, would present a macroeconomic program that differed greatly from major competitors. The 1998 presidential election was ultimately contested between Chávez and Salas Römer, as a series of blunders and the strategic mistake of accepting support from Copei led to a plunge in Sáez's popularity and, ultimately, her withdrawal from the race. The contest presented Venezuelans with clearly distinct options in terms of macroeconomic programs. Salas Römer, a Yale-educated businessman who had gone on to a successful career as governor of Carabobo, expressed support for the Agenda Venezuela but suggested that the country needed to take even more drastic measures to establish a more stable macroeconomic footing. The candidate proposed a new regimen of shock therapy that would last 200 days, marked by severe cutbacks in spending, the further elimination of price controls, and the shrinking of the state bureaucracy (Buxton 2003, pg. 124).

The macroeconomic alternative offered by Chávez and the Polo Patriótico differed greatly. Consistent with his past positions and that of the MBR-200, Chávez denounced the Agenda Venezuela and inveighed against the neoliberal model in general terms, portraying the reform agenda of the Pérez and Caldera governments as inhumane and geared toward enriching the country's oligarchy at the expense of the people. As the campaign progressed, Chávez made an effort to soften his message for certain audiences, referring to the Polo Patriótico option as a "third way," comparing himself to British Prime Minister Tony Blair, and promising to court foreign capital and maintain fiscal responsibility. Nevertheless, the candidate kept of his scathing attacks on the neoliberal model in front of other audiences.

⁷¹ D'Paolo (2008) wrote a vivid account of these internal decisions during the last days of the unified MAS, including the first meeting of the party's leadership with Chávez. In addition, see Notitarde (7/3/1998) for a more contemporary account of Petkoff's break from the party and the factional tensions that precipitated the split.

Most chroniclers of the election have therefore still emphasized its high level of programmatic competition and polarization regarding the neoliberal model (Lander and López Maya 1999; Ellner 2003, pg. 16; Roberts forthcoming, pg 320).

Conflictual dynamics extended to state reform and contrasting visions of the principles around which Venezuelan democracy should be based. Chávez and the Polo Patriótico would also seek, and ultimately receive, a mandate for institutional reform. Denunciations of the corruption and moral bankruptcy of the Punto Fijo system were staples of campaign speeches, as was an emphasis on building a more “protagonistic” democracy that would support greater citizen participation and an enhanced role for civil society. Chávez also made the concrete proposal that, if elected, he would convene a constitutional assembly to write a new constitution and symbolically refound the Venezuelan state. This proposal came naturally, having been a core of the MBR-200’s platform since their emergence from clandestine existence, and a central feature of the post-liberal agenda of the Venezuelan left more generally. These were not proposals cadged in the language of consensus building. Chávez made it abundantly clear that the goal of state transformation was not just to reform institutions, but also to sweep out Punto Fijo politicians and appointees. During one campaign speech, the candidate declared that opponents of the constitutional reform process would be put in jail (Jones 2007, pg. 218).

This reform agenda, while both vague and inherently aggressive, met substantial popular approval, and was almost certainly the key to his victory. As the data presented earlier in the chapter suggest, the Venezuelan electorate was lukewarm to the idea of extreme macroeconomic policies that would break with market liberalism. It seems unlikely that macroeconomic radicalism really helped Chávez win. If Venezuelans were not particularly prone to supporting radical macroeconomic policies, however, they were clearly unusually dissatisfied with the functioning of state institutions and status quo Punto Fijo governance. Chávez and the Polo Patriótico’s credentials as outsiders to the system were particularly strong, and their change message of refounding the Venezuelan state, eliminating corruption, and empowering civil society clearly differentiated them from the tepid reform proposals of fellow outsiders Saez and Salas Romer. Research has shown that corruption perceptions and disenchantment with state institutions strongly influenced voting behavior in the election on an individual level and that these concerns were highly salient among the electorate (Seawright 2006, pgs. 202-212; Hawkins 2010, pg. 114-115). It seems only reasonable that such factors were critical in making the difference in the result in aggregate.

Conclusion: Alternative Hypotheses

This chapter made the argument that the fates of successor governments, such that legitimacy crises occurred or were avoided, powerfully shaped the kind of coalition that would consolidate on the left and, by extension, whether the future party system would be marked by conflictual or consensual competitive dynamics. Before moving on, a few comments might be added regarding prominent alternative hypotheses for the consolidation of the radical and moderate left. The discussion has raised several points that directly undercut alternative theories, which might be more explicitly drawn out.

As already noted, numerous scholars have posited that societal backlash against market liberalism drove the emergence of the radical left in Venezuela and not in other countries (Silva 2009; Weyland 2009; Roberts forthcoming). Yet, as the chapter has shown, there is very little evidence that Venezuelans were more opposed to market reforms or more radicalized than Chileans or Brazilians. A variant of this theory might hold that while public opinion may not have been anti-market reform, Venezuela did experience high profile protests against market reform, which propelled the radical left to power. Yet even this idea holds little water when the case is examined in greater depth. The most explosive mobilization against market reform was the *caracazo* of 1989, while the frequency of protest peaked between 1991-1994 (López Maya and Lander 2005, pg 95). Yet it was the moderate factions of MAS and LCR that consolidated their leadership and reached their zenith during this period. Social mobilization then declined over the course of the decade, at the very same time that radicals were ascendant. In sum, the temporal relationship of social mobilization to changes in the partisan left is the exact opposite of what the hypothesis would predict.

The discussion in the chapter also underscores the limitations of Madrid's (2010) "generational theory" centered on whether or not left parties were involved in market reform governments during the early-to-mid 1990s, thus opening ideological space for the emergence of the radical left. The PS was involved in such a government, yet the moderate left consolidated, rather than the radical left, a case that has been acknowledged by Madrid as problematic for the hypothesis. Yet the Venezuelan case is equally problematic because, as we have seen, the involvement of the left in the Caldera government was minimal, and there was certainly little ideological space to be had as long as MAS (which quickly went into opposition to the government) and LCR (which was always in opposition) remained cohesive. To claim that the established left embraced market reform in Venezuela, opening the way for the MBR-200, is a misreading of events in the country during the 1990s. If ideological space did eventually open, it was because both MAS and LCR fell apart due to internal strife, not because a few MASista leaders like Teodoro Petkoff and Pompeyo Marquez, estranged from their own party, stayed in the Caldera government.

A final alternative hypothesis has focused on the breakdown or deinstitutionalization of the party system in Venezuela and not in countries like Brazil and Chile (Flores-Macias 2008, 2010; Roberts MS). As noted in the introduction of this study, this hypothesis has been frequently criticized on the basis of the sequencing between cause and outcome. The discussion here should underline that point, especially with respect to the Brazilian and Venezuelan cases. The swing towards moderate hegemony within the PT occurred during a period (roughly 1994-1995) in which the Brazilian party system was seen as uninstitutionalized and inchoate (Mainwaring and Scully 1995). Moderation thus occurred before institutionalization, or at the very least roughly simultaneously. In Venezuela, the breakdown of the Punto Fijo party system in 1993 coincided with the greatest moment of moderate triumph within both MAS and LCR. These parties were perfectly poised to succeed the Punto Fijo parties and establish their position as the major partisan forces on the left, and clearly they had no trouble gaining strength in a context in which established parties were losing ground. The party system institutionalization hypothesis offers no real explanation for why the extremely marginal MBR-200 ultimately ascended in power rather than the

moderate-led MAS or LCR. Puzzingly, these parties are hardly mentioned at all by scholars that have advanced the party system breakdown theory.

While the explanation presented here seems more plausible than these alternatives, it is useful to stress that the study does not claim that no other factors were important or that the occurrence or avoidance of legitimacy crisis was necessary or sufficient for producing outcomes. The study simply seeks to show, through process tracing, that these variables strongly influenced outcomes. But other factors might also have been influential. For example, numerous studies have suggested that features of the Chilean institutional environment handed down by the Pinochet regime, especially the binomial electoral system, were conducive to a consensual and centripetal politics after democratization (Rabkin 1996; Carey and Siavelis 2005). Other research has suggested that the particularly brutal nature of the Pinochet regime and the nature of the Chilean transition lent themselves to moderation on the left thereafter (Roberts 1998). The chapter should not be taken as an argument that these other factors had no relevance whatsoever.

Chapter 4 – Venezuela: A Mass-Organizational Strategy by the Left

Hugo Chávez and the MVR entered Miraflores Palace decrying the persistence of poverty and social exclusion. In Chávez's inaugural speech, he referred to a "social time bomb" in the country and declared it a "mathematical mystery" that a country so rich in oil wealth could be characterized by so much poverty, pointedly asking his audience: "Who can explain this? What scientist can explain this?"⁷² Over the next decade, the Chávez government would adopt an mass-organizational strategy for lower class political mobilization, marked by two characteristics. First, the government designed new social programs to incentivize and sponsor participation and community-based organization among the beneficiaries. Second, great emphasis was also placed on forming and institutionalizing party-organizational linkages – relationships between the organizations sponsored through social policies and the parties of the Bolivarian Movement, which took the form of a variety of formal and informal relationships.

This chapter discusses this mass-organizational strategy of political mobilization and makes the argument that it was linked to the occurrence of legitimacy crisis. The radical alliance that consolidated on the left in the form of the Polo Patriótico clearly had an ideological proclivity to mass-organizational strategies. Radical groups within the partisan left, both from the MBR-200 and the radical factions of LCR and MAS, had long been particularly committed to social mobilization, and they identified the formation of alliances with social organizations and party-organizational linkages as a strategic cornerstone of their political project. Put simply, this part of the legacy accounts for why the new left government wanted to pursue a mass-organizational strategy.

The second legacy was that the radical alliance came to power with a mandate for institutional reform in the wake of the legitimacy crisis. The new administration arrived in Miraflores Palace facing severe constraints on its policy-making authority, which made the realization of mass-organizational strategies difficult, as opponents were liable to block measures overtly geared toward organizing and institutionalizing a base of support for the left. Yet the mandate for institutional reform allowed the Chávez government to contest and, eventually, drastically reduce these constraints by leveraging popular support for institutional renovation into a prolonged and high-stakes battle regarding executive authority, especially influence over the legislature and control of the state-run oil company PDVSA. In sum, if the first legacy accounts for why the new left government would pursue a mass-organizational strategy, the second legacy was critical in allowing the Chávez government to eventually implement the policies and strategies that it desired.

Tracing the influence of legacy variables on the mass-organizational strategy in Venezuela involves some complications not found in the Brazilian and Chilean cases. As we will see in Chapter 5, where the moderate left took power with mandates for institutional continuity, governments were able to immediately begin work on pursuing their catchall agendas, even if the actual legislative process took time. In Venezuela, the process of institutional reform, and the extremely conflictual political reactions that ensued, delayed the

⁷² These remarks were reportedly quite widely at the time, making a significant splash in the country and abroad. They are specifically quoted in Jones (2007, pg. 227).

full realization of the radical left's agenda of a mass-organizational strategy. During this institutional reform period, which lasted through the oil strike of early 2003, the administration remained hemmed in by policy-making constraints and had little incentive to invest in party-organizational linkages, given that threats came from outside the electoral arena. Only afterward, once the fight over institutional reform had been resolved in favor of the government and the country returned to electoral contestation, would the fully realization of the mass-organizational strategy occur, with mobilizational policies that were sweeping in scope and marked by huge investments in the formation of party-organizational linkages.

The chapter is organized slightly differently than the analogous Chapter 5, in order to better illustrate these dynamics. A first section discusses the radical alliance's prior orientation toward popular mobilization, setting up the argument that the consolidation of a radical alliance accounts for the new government's desire to pursue a mass-organizational strategy in office. A second section examines the institutional reform period, showing that the mandate for reform enabled the Chávez government to contest policy-making constraints but that, while this process was ongoing, the mass-organizational strategy could only be implemented in a limited fashion. The bulk of the chapter then turns to the new environment period, dividing analysis into two further sections. One illustrates how the lowering of policy-making constraints and the return to electoral contestation produced two mobilizational initiatives of unprecedented scale, the Bolivarian Missions and Communal Councils. The last section then explores the massive efforts of the Chávez government to form party-organizational linkages in this environment.

Proclivity Toward the Mass-Organizational Strategy

Chapter 2 showed that the partisan left in Venezuela during the 1980s and early 1990s was divided not only by macroeconomic questions, but also with respect to the viability and advisability of a post-liberal agenda centered on institutional transformation. While Chapter 3 made the argument that the failure of the Caldera administration and the legitimacy crisis led to the consolidation of a radical coalition, it did not fully elaborate on the implications of this outcome with respect to the radical alliance's hardening of the post-liberal stance. This section demonstrates that this outcome produced a coalition on the left with a strong orientation toward mass-organizational strategies of political mobilization. This section briefly reviews this orientation and also discusses some of the particular problems that arose with regard to the Polo Patriótico and the integration of political parties into the Bolivarian Movement, issues that would continue into the Left Turn period and complicate early efforts to create linkages between social organizations and the MVR.

While members of the MBR-200 constituted most of the inner circle of the new Chávez government, many important leaders also had their roots in the radical factions of other parties of the Venezuelan left, especially LCR. The post-liberal orientation of these factions was particularly apparent. The municipal administrations of radicals had been most active in launching innovative policies to spur popular mobilization. In Caroni, the municipal government led by Scotto made explicit efforts to foster the growth and democratization of neighborhood associations (Harnecker 1994, pg 52). In Caracas, the administration of Aristobuo Istúriz launched programs to sponsor new local level participatory organizations

such as Mesas Técnicas de Agua (Arconada Rodríguez 1996). These experiments not only made an impression on many in the wider Venezuelan left, serving as learning experiences, but some of the programs, such as the MTAs, would be simply extended and expanded by the Chávez government.⁷³ More generally, many members of LCR's radical wing and other smaller movements of the radical left in Venezuela would come to occupy important posts during the Fifth Republic, and some would be particularly influential in pushing for social mobilization and for the establishment of linkages between new social organizations and the partisan apparatus of the Bolivarian Movement. These included Isturiz, Jorge Rodríguez, Ali Rodríguez Araque, Alberto Müller Rojas, William Izarra, and many others.

The MBR-200 was also clearly geared toward a post-liberal vision, involving deep emphasis on popular mobilization as an abstract value. The "Libro Azul," written even while the movement remained clandestine, clearly already contained the basic elements of ambitious initiatives that the Chávez government would eventually launch such as the Communal Council program. A core idea is that "Communities, neighborhoods, towns, and cities should have the mechanisms and the power to rule themselves through a system of self-government... That is to say, the people should have sufficient channels of information and decision-making organs inside their anatomy, which permit them to choose their goals and objectives, to correct their own course whenever it is off track and, finally, to produce changes in their internal composition, as they are required by historical processes." In this system, local neighborhood level assemblies would become the new fundamental units of participation and representation, with a series of councils at the municipal, state, and federal level serving as aggregating mechanisms.

For the MBR-200, the emphasis on mobilization was also reflected in the strategies embraced to grow the movement after the release of Chávez and other leaders from prison. Transforming the MBR-200 from a clandestine conspiracy of military officers to a national movement of civilian members and activists presented a significant challenge. One aspect of the MBR-200's strategy involved drawing upon its extant military officers and leftist civilians to create an organizational structure. After the release of Chávez and other figures from jail in 1994, the MBR-200 quickly established an organization that included formal offices and officers at the municipal, state, and national levels. Building and institutionalizing support in the broader population was a trickier proposition, and the MBR-200 looked toward grassroots strategies for doing so. The group announced an initiative to encourage and institutionalize the formation of *Comités Bolivarianos* in neighborhoods, workplaces, and universities across the country, small activist groups that would serve as the base-level units for the movement. The MBR-200 offered instructions to its supporters regarding how to set up a *Comité Bolivariano*, how to register with the national office, and how to liaise with local representatives of the organization. The group also laid out a list of suggested activities, including, among others, organizing local assemblies in a given community to spread the

⁷³ LCR's experiments with deepening democracy had also been extensively studied by prominent public intellectuals on the left such as Marta Harnecker, who would later play a role in advising the Chávez government regarding initiatives to spur citizen participation as part of the government or through the government-sponsored think tank Centro Internacional Miranda. See, for example, El Troudi, Harnecker, and Bonilla (2005).

Bolivarian political message and work towards solving and addressing community needs in the realm of basic services.⁷⁴

With an alliance forming between radical factions of LCR and MAS and the MBR-200, the lionization of popular mobilization retained great emphasis, rather than waning with the consolidation of moderate hegemony on the left, as occurred in Chile and Brazil. However, the circumstances by which this coalition came together left the Bolivarian Movement relatively uninstitutionalized and with a very weak partisan expression as the Left Turn began. These factors likely led some observers to initially conclude that popular mobilization and the pursuit of party-organizational linkages were not important to the Bolivarian Movement. As we will see, this initial impression would prove quite erroneous, as the new government would pursue a highly mobilization project. Before discussing the left in power, however, a further note on the problems of party building and institutionalizing the movement is necessary, which better contextualizes why the orientation toward mobilization was not so obviously as Chávez and the Polo Patriótico came to power.

A Note on Party Organization and Development. While the MBR-200 was oriented toward grassroots of mobilization, the movement was largely uninstitutionalized and weak throughout much of the 1990s, only formally creating a political party in late 1997 and remaining highly dependent on the personalistic leadership of Chávez. In its initial years above ground, the MBR-200 was not easily categorized as either a social movement or a party. While movementist in its grassroots orientation, the MBR-200's agenda went far beyond the issue advocacy or local struggles of most social movements, instead revolving around a fundamental transformation of state-society relations that could only be realized through taking state power. On the other hand, the MBR-200 abstained from electoral politics and firmly rejected the party label, the latter choice reflecting an awareness of the depth of anti-party sentiment in the population as well as a deep ambivalence within the Bolivarian Movement toward political parties in general, which were frequently portrayed as hierarchical and bureaucratic.⁷⁵ As the opportunity presented by the 1998 elections became apparent, however, Chávez and other MBR-200 leaders decided to reverse course and enter the electoral fray. Doing so required the formation of a political party, and the MVR was formally registered in October 1997. Naming the party the MBR-200 was not a possibility, as the law banned the use of the word "Bolivarian" in party monikers. But the different name also served the purpose of allowing the newly formed MVR and the MBR-200 to remain distinct, a situation intended to mollify activists opposed to the notion of partisan transformation. In Chávez's words, the idea was that the MVR would become a "central motor of an electoral campaign" while the MBR-200 would remain "the driving force behind the political party" (Chávez 2005, pg. 159)

This attempt to have it both ways was more successful in theory than in practice. The MBR-200 became largely defunct, especially as almost all of its major leaders had now taken up positions in the party leadership and the elections of 1998 were the overwhelming focus of

⁷⁴ See the document titled "Comites Bolivarianos" collected in Garrido (2002a) for a more extended elaboration.

⁷⁵ As Chávez (2007) put it in the Libro Azul, "The political parties preach participation with the concept of a "tip," such that they condemn it to be an end in and of itself, with limites so narrow and limited that they impede civil society from intervening in political decision making."

attention. The MVR, in turn, grew extremely rapidly, but in ways that worked against a basist orientation, deepened suspicion of the party among many activists, and left the party's structures relatively weak. The formal statutes of the MVR laid out a complex organizational structure, involving executive and steering committees at the national, state, municipal, and parish levels, as well as base-level activist units that would be called *Círculos Patrióticos*, roughly analogous to the *Comités Bolivarianos* of the MBR-200. In reality, however, the MVR developed very little organizational presence at levels below their municipal offices. The rapid construction of the party also was conducive to a lack of internal democracy. Power at the national level was given to three executive councils or committees. Technically, the highest organizational body within the party was the *Consejo Patriótico Nacional*, a large body composed of representatives from other leadership councils, as well as those elected by party offices at subnational levels. In practice, however, power was vested in the *Comando Táctico Nacional*, composed largely of the inner circle of the leadership of the Bolivarian Movement. This body exercised a dominant role not only in charting strategy for the 1998 elections, but also in selecting candidates for legislative and subnational office, an arrangement that which bore similarities to *Punto Fijo* practices.⁷⁶

The initial weakness of a party so hastily constructed was abetted by two other factors. First was the dominant presence of Chávez within the Bolivarian Movement, which hampered the independence of the MVR and led many observers to question whether the organization should be viewed as a real political party or simply a personal electoral vehicle for a charismatic leader. Chávez was in no position to make all the decisions for the MVR, but nevertheless held ultimate authority, an unsurprising situation given his long dominant role in the Bolivarian Movement (Hawkins 2003). This authority was only strengthened by the power of his coattails in the 1998 elections. The MBR-200 had attracted less than 5% of support only a year beforehand, the party organization itself had been thrown together at great speed and without the backing of significant resources, and MVR candidates largely had little name recognition or track record in electoral politics. That MVR candidates ended up winning 19.7% of the congressional vote was striking, and almost certainly driven to substantial extent by their identification with Chávez.

More broadly, the very future of the *Polo Patriótico* was uncertain. Was the coalition just a temporary measure to unite the forces of the radical left in 1998 in order to finish off the *Punto Fijo* regime? If so, perhaps the *Polo Patriótico* would remain simply an informal alliance of leftist parties working toward common goals. Yet other possibilities also abounded and were discussed. Alternatively, the coalition might cohere into a more formalized alliance akin to the *Frente Amplio* in Uruguay. The formation of a new unity party on the left that would unite those parties in support of the Bolivarian Revolution also was another obvious possibility that had been floated in some circles from the beginning, although many smaller parties in the *Polo Patriótico* were less than enthusiastic about giving up their autonomy. Simply put, there were unresolved issues that fed internal contestation as well as a high degree of uncertainty about the future of the coalition, such that it was not

⁷⁶ The discussion in this paragraph draws heavily on the insightful analyses of Hawkins (2003) and Pereira Almas (MS) regarding the early organizational development of the MVR.

completely clear whether the MVR, the Polo Patriótico, or some other vehicle was actually the future of the partisan wing of the Bolivarian Movement.

In sum, the radical coalition that consolidated on the left was deeply committed to a post-liberal vision that lionized popular mobilization, both as an abstract value and as a political strategy for building support. However, by its nature, the formation of this new coalition centered on a previously marginal radical fringe left, the MBR-200, involved a relatively low level of institutionalization and many unresolved questions concerning how and what kind of political party would be integrated. These circumstances worked against popular mobilization and the formation of party-organizational linkages in the 1998 election.

Reform Period: The Mass-Organizational Strategy on a Limited Level

The chapter now turns to the initial years of the left in power in Venezuela, marked by battles over institutional reform and executive authority that lasted until early 2003. This discussion proceeds in two sections. A first section illustrates that the mandate for institutional reform facilitated a broader challenge to constraints on executive policy-making authority, but that this period was marked by high constraints and low electoral pressure, given that power was being contested outside the electoral arena. A second section shows the government clearly wanted to pursue mass-organizational strategies during this period, but that this temporary combination of high constraints and low electoral pressure led initiatives to be limited in nature.

High Constraints, Low Pressure. Chávez and the MVR arrived in power with a mandate for refounding the Venezuelan state and closing the book on the Punto Fijo era. The new president had made reform of the Venezuelan constitution a central plank of his election campaign, and wasted little time in declaring his intentions after winning office. Rather than giving the traditional oath when sworn into the presidency, Chávez broke with precedent and instead declared: “I swear in front of my people that over this moribund constitution I will push forward the democratic transformations that are necessary so that the new republic will have an adequate magna carta for the times.”⁷⁷ This project of constitutional reform enjoyed massive popular support, and Chávez’s approval ratings soared to 80-90% in the initial months of his presidency. Yet while wildly popular, the president’s reform agenda was also vague and open-ended. The mandate for institutional reform allowed the Chávez government to catalyze a process of contestation over the boundaries of executive policy-making authority. While this process played out, however, policy-making constraints remained high and electoral pressure was low, with the government and the opposition locked in a struggle that primarily occurred outside the electoral arena.

The mandate for reform was critical to the implementation of the new government’s agenda for the simple reason that Chávez and the MVR came to power highly constrained by forces of the opposition, despite popular disenchantment with the Punto Fijo system. The MVR was not even the plurality party in the legislature and the Polo Patriótico fell well short of a majority in both chambers. Politicians from the opposition occupied nearly all the governorships and mayorships in the country. The courts and the bureaucratic offices of the

⁷⁷ Quoted from Jones (2007, pg. 226).

Venezuelan state were staffed almost entirely by officials appointed under Punto Fijo, many of whom maintained overt loyalties to the Punto Fijo parties of AD and Copei. Chávez and the MVR also had little de facto power over PDVSA, a serious limitation in a rentier state dependent on transfers from oil revenue for a larger part of its financing.

Chávez announced that constitutional reform would be his first priority on the eve of his election victory, and spent a significant part of the following year and a half consumed by this process. This process of constitutional reform entailed a symbolic politics of national renewal, but also represented the first stage in a hardscrabble struggle with the opposition over control of the state. That the reform process was being used to dislodge the opposition and widen the government's policy-making authority was overtly evident before the constitution itself was even written. The administration first telegraphed its intentions by manipulating the process by which delegates to the constitutional assembly would be chosen, mandating that these elections would occur on a plurality basis within defined districts. This practice was not only highly unusual in Venezuela – where proportional representation had been the norm – but was widely interpreted as a strike against the disorganized and uncoordinated forces of the opposition. While winning only 53% of the vote, Polo Patriótico delegates ended up occupying 97% of the seats for the Constituent Assembly.

It soon became clear that the goal of writing a new constitution was geared not just to replace the magna carta, but also to dislodge the opposition from positions within the state apparatus. After the election of the constituent assembly, an intense conflict ensued concerning the authority of this new body over that of established institutions. The constituent assembly swiftly declared its own power to remove judges at will and to dissolve the legislature, prompting a chaotic scene outside the National Assembly as opposition legislators tried to enter the building to resume their posts but were prevented from doing so. The approbation of the new constitution in December 1999 resolved the situation in Chávez's favor, as in its wake the National Assembly was officially dissolved, to be elected anew in July 2000, with formal legislative authority temporarily passing to a "mini-Congress" appointed by the Constituent Assembly.

These events represented the first major strike against the opposition, but did not immediately result in the freeing of the administration's hand in policy-making. The "mini-Congress" was an unelected lame duck body, and attempting to use this group to pass major legislation would have been politically problematic, and liable to inspire backlash in advance of the July 2000 elections. Further, while theoretically appointed by the Constituent Assembly, the "mini-Congress" was effectively chosen in backroom deals led by key MVR power broker Luis Miquilena. This process, carrying with it the unmistakable whiff of of Punto Fijo politics, set off howls of protest from both the opposition and supporters of Chávez alike. Most importantly, it catalyzing the defection from the government's ranks of three long-time leaders of the MBR-200 and key members of the Bolivarian movement: Francisco Arias Cárdenas (then Governor of Zulia), Jesús Urdaneta (head of DISIP, the national intelligence agency), and Yoel Acosta Chirinos (nominally head of the MVR itself), who shocked the country by announcing by accusing Chávez of compromising the Bolivarian revolution and empowering the likes of Miquilena, who they portrayed as a thinly veiled agent of the

oligarchy.⁷⁸ Faced with criticism from both outside and within, the idea of actually passing any major legislative initiatives through the appointed “mini-congress” was politically untenable.

The megaelections of July 2000 represented the only other electoral contest that the Chávez government had to face during this first phase. The large number of positions up for a vote made the elections critical, but circumstances related to the opposition also made them relatively free of pressure for the new administration. Opposition parties such as AD and Copei experienced great difficulties coordinating, given the longstanding animosity between them and their mutual wariness of new entrants such as Primero Justicia. At the same time, the opposition as a whole was undercut by abstentionist groups, which argued that the best way to oppose the Polo Patriótico was not to legitimate the elections through full participation. In the end, the opposition was unable to agree on a unity candidate and eventually forced to throw support behind Arias Cárdenas, a figure at the top of the ticket who elicited little enthusiasm among the opposition base. The elections thus produced a relatively easy victory for the Polo Patriótico, with Chávez elected by a wide margin, the MVR picking up 76 of the 165 seats in the new unicameral National Assembly, and other PP parties winning enough seats to form a slim majority. By resetting the electoral calendar all at once, the nature of the process was also to take elections off the horizon for the next several years.

Yet while this victory greatly strengthened the hand of Chávez and the MVR, they still faced several obstacles that greatly limited its policy-making authority. First, the president lacked de facto control over PDVSA and the state’s oil apparatus, which instead leaned toward the opposition. While the president had the power to appoint the president of the company, PDVSA had long retained – by design – substantial autonomy from elected politicians, with power regarding production, distribution, and investment held for the most part by its board and upper management. In a rentier state dependent on transfers from PDVSA for a large portion of its financing, these powers amounted to a huge degree of influence over budgeting and fiscal policy.⁷⁹ Over the next few years, the battle to exert greater control of PDVSA would be a primary axis of conflict in the country.

A second ongoing constraint was that, despite the victory in the megaelections, the Chávez administration still could not rely on a stable legislative majority, a situation owing to internal disputes within the Polo Patriótico coalition and the MVR, as well as the president’s lack of control over his own party. The MVR lacked a majority position and thus was dependent on alliances with smaller parties within the Polo Patriótico for even a tenuous majority. Moreover, the MVR itself, which had grown so quickly, was heterogeneous and not

⁷⁸ Urdaneta was actually one of the three founding members of the MBR-200, while Arias Cárdenas and Acosta Chirinos joined the group during the 1980s and played central roles in the attempted coup of 1992. All three had developed reputations among supporters as heroes and principle protagonists of the Bolivarian Revolution.

⁷⁹ In deciding how much oil revenue will be reinvested in the industry and how much transferred to the government, the company effectively has control over one of the biggest budget lines of the state. Further, PDVSA plays a critical role in actually setting the overall national budget, because expected revenue numbers for the government – which form important baselines in the legislative budget process – are based off forecasts for the price and production-level of oil, which themselves are produced by PDVSA management. If PDVSA forecasts are low, the legislature will either have to curb spending or announce a plan to run a deficit and to borrow in the credit markets. The politics of those forecast numbers can thus be highly contentious.

all legislators were eager to toe the party line. Particularly divisive was the figure of Miquilena, who had been the central in selecting MVR candidates, and had emerged as the de facto institutional power broker within the party. Many legislators owed their jobs – and thus their allegiance – more to Miquilena than to Chávez, and his civilian background and pragmatic centrism appealed to those within the coalition who supported the Bolivarian Revolution but were wary of its military and radical influences. Others within the coalition – like the Arias Cárdenas group that had already broken away – saw in Miquilena the embodiment of Punto Fijo politics, and viewed his power as a sign that the Bolivarian Revolution was going astray. In this situation, legislative policymaking was slow and contested and the administration faced great frustrations in working with the legislature. Indeed, rather than simply walking lockstep with Chávez, the MVR leadership in the National Assembly devoted considerable energy to building a broader and more moderate policy coalition through horse-trading with legislators from Proyecto Venezuela, MAS, and AD (Hellinger 2003, pg 47-48).

Ongoing struggles over policy-making authority created a combustible situation. In November 2000, Chávez asked congress for enabling powers in order to enact policy change, which would last 12 months. Just before this time period ran out, the president announced a set of 49 decrees, the most controversial of which were a land reform and a change to the laws regulating foreign investment in the oil industry. These actions, particularly the underhanded strategy of announcing the decrees by surprise at the 11th hour, elicited public dissatisfaction – with Chávez's approval ratings falling precipitously during the last months of 2001 – and alienated moderates within the Polo Patriótico coalition. After unsuccessfully pleading with Chávez to step back and reverse the enabling laws, Miquilena resigned his position within the government, a blow much heavier than the defections the previous year of Arias Cárdenas and other MBR-200 members. With many MVR legislators owing their primary allegiance to Miquilena, the government's tenuous majority in the National Assembly was put into even more doubt and the allegiances of individual legislators (as well as Supreme Court justices) became a matter of much public speculation.

In this context, the opposition turned to extra-democratic strategies to oust Chávez from power, creating a chaotic milieu in which major policy initiatives were effectively impossible. The previous year had already seen a steady increase in street mobilization, with opposition groups taking to the streets to protest educational reforms and attempts by the administration to exert control over the labor sector. Chávez's use of the enabling law and Miquilena's defection ratcheted up the tension even further. The opposition announced a small strike in December 2001 and the surge in street mobilization took on a more ominous tone amid reports that both sides were arming supporters. Despite the tense situation, Chávez continued undeterred with his brinksmanship, appointing a new president of PDVSA firmly opposed by the company's management and adding five new members, all close MVR allies, to the board of directors. In response, oil workers announced a general strike that began on April 9th. On the third day of the strike, a clash between opposition and loyalist demonstrators in central Caracas turned violent, with twelve people left dead. In the confused aftermath, a coup was launched against Chávez by an alliance of dissident military officers and business leaders, with the president forcibly removed from office and – if he is to be believed – at one point on the verge of execution. In a complicated series of events that moved very quickly,

the interim government made several key mistakes, turning public opinion and some wavering factions within the military against the coup, and Chávez was stunningly returned to Miraflores and reinstated.⁸⁰

While Chávez was eventually returned to power, the aftermath of the coup neither dissipated the political tension in the country nor improved Chávez's room for maneuver. The regime crisis continued to effectively monopolize politics in the country for the rest of 2002, with the two sides battling over various judicial proceedings in the aftermath of the coup, and with armed conflict occasionally spilling over into small-scale violence in the street. Chávez was no more popular after the coup than before. His approval rating had plummeted from 56% in July 2001 to 35% that December after his use of the enabling law, and post-coup polling revealed a slight decline to 32%.⁸¹ This continued weakness undercut attempts to reassert control over the legislature. Chávez's continued his attempts to exert influence over PDVSA, appointing arch-loyalist Alí Rodríguez Araque (previously envoy to OPEC) as president in July 2002, but continued to find his efforts blocked by opposition on the board and in upper management. In December 2002, the management of PDVSA, the CTV, several opposition parties, and several business groups launched a general strike to protest the government and announced that the strike would continue until Chávez resigned and called new general elections. Chávez remained unwavering, and the country plunged into a state of economic chaos marked by widespread shortages of basic goods and a steep decline in productive activity.

Limited Mass-Organizational Strategies

The section now discusses mass-organizational strategies during this period, simultaneously making two arguments. The first is that from the beginning the Chávez government displayed an orientation toward a mobilizational approach to social protection, using state policy to sponsor social organizations. Indeed, the government immediately and explicitly rejected the notion of a more technocratic approach to social protection, similar to those policies implemented by the left in Brazil and Chile. Demonstrating this orientation provides further evidence that the mass-organizational strategy was a legacy of a radical left coalition coming to power with a post-liberal agenda. The second argument is that high constraints and a lack of electoral pressure limited mobilizational initiatives during this period, such that programs had little funding and party-organizational linkages were weakly developed. Demonstrating these points offers supports to the general argument in the chapter that the mandate for institutional reform, which would eventually be used to remove policy-making constraints, was critical to realizing the mass-organizational strategy in full.

⁸⁰ The events of April 11th-12th remain highly contested in the country, especially the origin and nature of the violence in the streets, the role of the United States in the coup plot, the internal politics and dissolution of the elite coalition backing the coup, and the role of popular mobilization and support for Chávez in aiding his return to power. In subsequent years, both opponents and supporters of the regime have adopted their own, largely incompatible, narratives of the tumultuous events. For a detailed investigation by an author critical of the government, see Nelson (2009). For a contradictory interpretation by a supporter of the government, see Wilpert (2007, 2009)

⁸¹ Data are drawn from Datanalisis's Encuesta Omnibus.

Minor Mobilizational Programs. The new government's orientation toward a mobilization approach to social protection was overtly evident in the first major policy document outlining a development agenda for the Fifth Republic. In order to present its vision to the Venezuelan population, the Chávez administration, through the Ministry of Planning and Development, produced an expansive program called the Plan de Desarrollo Económico y Social de la Nación 2001-2007 (PDESN). In the area of social policy, the PDESN firmly disavowed technocratic approaches to addressing basic needs only through redistribution: "The search for social equality definitively abandons the policies of 'combating poverty' or of the 'protection of vulnerable groups' insistently utilized in the past within a veneer of apparent political neutrality." Instead, the plan placed emphasis on the need to marry redistribution to the promotion of citizenship, organization, and participation, which would make "legitimately valuable the participation of society, communities, and families in the formulation, execution, and evaluation of public decisions, and in the appropriation of accounts and public funds."⁸²

This orientation toward mobilization was apparent in several initiatives launched during the institutional reform period, yet none attracted substantial funding and institutional support in a context of high policy-making constraints. The first initiative was Plan Bolívar 2000, a temporary anti-poverty program that was enacted extremely hastily and which had the least developed mobilizational component. Looking to deliver on his campaign promise of poverty alleviation, Chávez announced Plan Bolívar less than a month after taking office. Prominent features of the program included "popular markets" selling basic staples at subsidized prices (anticipating in many respects Misión Mercal), temporary health clinics providing services like vaccinations and very general consultations, and projects to build or repair roads, domiciles, and water and sanitation infrastructure in poor communities.⁸³ The program was implemented largely through the military and the timing of its announcement – on February 27th, the ten anniversary of the caracazo – was intended to symbolize the new relationship that the military would have with the citizens of Venezuela under the Chávez government.⁸⁴ Yet, even with the military the focal actor in distributing resources and implementing the program, the initiative did have characteristics that reflected commitment to community participation. For example, one of the program's stated goals was to spur

⁸² Ministerio de Planificación y Desarrollo (2001, pg 92-93). See Rodríguez (2006) for commentary on the PDESN and its mobilizational and participatory elements.

⁸³ See Ministerio del Poder Popular de Placificación y Finanzas (ND) for some basic information about the projects and administrative structure of Plan Bolívar 2000. While one must remain circumspect about the reliability of such figures, the government has claimed that, over the course of its nearly three year existence, the achievements of Plan Bolívar included the establishment of over 1000 popular markets; the vaccination of over two million children against polio, tetanus, and measles; and the performance of over six million basic medical consultations. These numbers have been reported in several government outlets, with minimal detail and elaboration.

⁸⁴ The heavy role of the military facially represented a significant redefinition of the military's role in the country (Trinkunas 2002). In media coverage in Venezuela, a more frequent focus of analysis was the lack of oversight accompanying a program implemented through such unusual channels. Plan Bolívar was dogged by allegations of corruption from its inception, which exploded in early 2001 with a leaked report from the Comptroller General's office suggesting that millions of dollars had gone missing. Subsequent investigations publicized other internal audits reporting high levels of inefficiency and waste (El Universal 4/20/2001).

community organization and participation in development projects, especially in infrastructure and housing, as well as to provide training for community leaders (Maingon 2006).

While attracting significant attention in the country, Plan Bolívar 2000 was miniscule in cost compared to later programs and almost completely uninstitutionalized. The program received approximately \$59 million in 1999, \$70 million in 2000, and \$163 million in 2001, paltry sums compared to the expenditures of later programs, which were to run in the multiple billions.⁸⁵ Both the relatively small size of the program and the heavy presence of the military were, in some ways, responses to the difficult political environment, in which passing major social policy initiatives through the legislature was likely impossible and the government had more pressing issues to consider.⁸⁶ As Chávez (2005, pg. 74) himself stressed in discussing the orientation of the program: “Imagine February 2, 1999, with almost all the state and municipal governments opposing us; the Congress against us; the Supreme Court against us; a budget written by the previous regime...Now add a party structure engaged in the political struggle; the constitutional assembly was coming, all of that was coming. So I decided to turn to the armed forces.”

The mobilization orientation of the Chávez administration, as well as the limitations inherent to the reform environment, can also be seen in two other policy initiatives launched in its initial years of government. As the MVR came to power, lack of access to potable water and improved sanitation presented a serious and all too common problem, especially in rural communities. The most concerted action of the government to support community organization as a means of fighting poverty was the extension of a program to sponsor the formation of Mesas Técnicas de Agua (MTA), community-based associations that would work with government agencies to improve water and sanitation infrastructure in underserved neighborhoods. In a pattern that would be repeated in the future, the initiative grew out of a municipal-level pilot program started by the PPT’s Istúriz when he was mayor Caracas during the early 1990s. During Chávez’s first months in office, the government organized a series of workshops and meetings to discuss the national expansion of the program (Arconado Rodríguez 2005).

Attempts to translate plans into policy action proved difficult, given that they required larger-scale changes to the regulation of water provision in the country.⁸⁷ With politics dominated by the context of constitution reform and with the government lacking a legislative majority, plans were put off until late 2000 or early 2001. Eventually, the National Assembly a new water law that would devolve provision to the municipal level and sponsor the mass formation of MTA, by actually putting in place the institutions for them to engage local authorities. However, the legislation did not provide truly substantial funds for actually building new water and sanitation infrastructure. The program did led to a rise in community-

⁸⁵ See El Universal (8/18/2001).

⁸⁶ In this sense, given the limited resources of the government and opposition within the legislature, a significant advantage afforded by using the military was that the program involved minimal labor costs, not a minor consideration given that many aspects of the program – such as infrastructure projects like paving roads and digging wells or health services like providing vaccinations – required substantial labor inputs.

⁸⁷ Several useful pieces been written about the development of the MTA in Venezuela (Arconada Rodríguez 2005; Lacabana and Cariola 2005; Lopez Maya 2008a; Matos, Coquies, and Núñez 2008)

based organization, but the widespread proliferation of MTA did not truly take off until later in the Fifth Republic.⁸⁸

The new government's interest in sponsoring community-based organization as a means to combat social exclusion was also apparent in the area of housing. One of the more ambitious initiatives to emerge in the first year of the Chávez administration was El Programa de Habilitación Física de Barrios, a comprehensive policy agenda developed by El Consejo Nacional de la Vivienda (CONAVI), a national entity established a decade previously to address the systemic housing problems in the country. In laying out a new approach for dealing with housing problems, CONAVI declared that "to incorporate and support the organizations of residential communities" should be a central aspect of the process of addressing housing problems.⁸⁹ This plan would eventually lead to a program to support and sponsor thousands of Comités de Tierra Urbana (CTU), neighborhood organizations in poor areas devoted to dealing with housing issues such as land titling and infrastructure.

As with the MTA, however, implementation of these plans was slowed and complicated by the government's lack of policy-making latitude, and resulted in a program that was underfunded and lacking in institutional support. During the next few years, legislation that would support the formation of community-based organizations in this area was discussed in the National Assembly, with both loyalist and opposition parties attempting to shape the process, and with the opposition Primero Justicia party actually first introducing a legislative proposal in January 2002 (García-Guadilla 2007b, pg. 56). Chávez countered with an executive decree shortly afterward to begin and impulse the program. However, the initiative still needed legislative backing and funding to have teeth – with alternative proposals debated within the legislature later in 2002 – and the program ultimately attracted little financial support and would have to wait until the launch of Misión Vivienda in 2004 to receive significant resources. Once again, then, the program reflected an overtly mobilizational orientation to addressing poverty problems and was ambitious in its vision of fostering community-based organizations across the country to deal with land titling and infrastructure, yet its launch was delayed and its funding curtailed by constraints imposed on the Chávez administration by the legislature.⁹⁰

The Chávez government also launched a final initiative in these years that even more overtly reflected its mass-organizational strategy, the push to form Círculos Bolivarianos (CB). This program represented an attempt to organize supporters as the country teetered on the brink of civil war, but also involved an orientation toward community development and social work. Chávez called for the formation of the CB in mid-2000, but the initiative really picked up steam the next year, as opposition to the government began to increase, with the president conducting a massive rally in December 2001 to swear-in members, publicize the

⁸⁸ According to official documents from HIDROVEN (ND), the number of MTA rose from 100 in 2001 to 960 in 2003. The greatest expansion of the program occurred afterward, such that the agency reported 6,600 MTA by 2008.

⁸⁹ The quotation was taken from Giménez, Rivas, and Rodríguez (2008), which provides a useful overview of the new orientation of housing policy. For a more critical perspective on housing policy and its achievements under Chávez, see Pérez de Murzi (2008).

⁹⁰ Data comes from Gimenez, Rivas, and Rodríguez (2007). For other studies on the expansion of the CTU program, see Antillano (2005), Garcia-Guadilla (2007b), and Pérez de Murzi (2008).

initiative, and galvanize support. Estimates of the total number of CB formed have varied widely, partly due to the program's informality and the unreliability of claims by government officials, but there is little doubt that this was a very large – if short lived – initiative.⁹¹ Generalizing about the activities of the CB has also proven difficult due to the decentralized and informal nature of the program. The only large-scale survey of the CB found that their most common activities were explicit activism in support of the Bolivarian Movement – proselytizing in the community, participating in or organizing events and mobilizations in support of the government – and engaging in voluntary community development projects or forms of collective provisioning (Hawkins and Hansen 2006).⁹²

While ambitious in scope, the CB initiative received very little funding from the state. The aforementioned survey found that the CB tended to have very small budgets, with less than 10% of their operating expenses covered by the government. In part, the lack of state support simply reflected the program's orientation: Cast as a means to reinvigorate the MBR-200 in a time of crisis and confrontation, the CB initiative was not backed by legislation and, unlike the other initiatives discussed above, not truly conceived as social or development policy, even if it had an orientation toward community development and poverty relief. But the lack of funding and support for the CB was also a reflection of the constraints faced by the Chávez government, which clearly desired to buttress the program through some forms of state support and to distribute money to the CB in order to fund their activities and incentivize their formation and endurance. The initiative represented one of the primary gambits of an administration under siege and facing existential threats from a determined opposition. That the CB ultimately received such low levels of financial support suggests that the government had very few options for funding them.

Weak Party-Organizational Linkages. While policy-making constraints limited the financing and scale of new initiatives, the electoral climate was not conducive to the formation of linkages with the MVR. The paucity of electoral pressure meant that forming such linkages for the purposes of electoral mobilization was simply not a major priority. More broadly, the lack of electoral pressure during this period contributed to a situation in which the inherited problems and unresolved tensions regarding the integration of a party apparatus into the Bolivarian Movement remained largely unresolved, and these issues themselves posed obstacles to the formation of party-organizational linkages. These problems were in some ways exacerbated in the early years of the Chávez government. In the compressed time frame between the inauguration and the July 2000 megaelections, the party focused on the immediate issue of candidate recruitment rather than on building its base-level presence. Further, with primaries difficult to organize, a small group of internal power brokers, led by Miquilena, ended up controlling the process of candidate selection. The lack of internal democracy within the MVR spurred the high-profile defections of Arias Cárdenas, Urdaneta, and Acosta Chirinos, and led to substantial disaffection among activists and base

⁹¹ Coordinators of the Bolivarian Circle program at times claimed as many as 200,000, numbers that seem unrealistic. In contrast, Hawkins and Hansen (2006) estimate that the true number is more likely between 9,500 – 11,000 active circles at the height of the program.

⁹² The CB also acquired a reputation for violence, or for at least serving as organizations ready to defend the Bolivarian Revolution by violent means if necessary (Arenas and Gomez Calcaño 2005). It seems likely that this reputation likely derived from the activities of a small minority of the organizations.

supporters. Finally, other fissures arose due to internal contestation between parties of the Polo Patriótico as the July 2000 elections approached, with the PPT temporarily leaving the coalition over a dispute over candidate selection for a united slate and a faction of the party, including Pablo Medina, actually breaking from Chávez completely.

The aftermath of the 2000 elections – when the minor mobilizational initiatives of the Chávez government gathered steam – were thus marked not only by a lack of electoral pressure and a rise in street mobilization and extra-democratic contestation, but also by a problematic party situation marked by numerous unresolved tensions. Creating linkages at the local level between the MVR and social organizations would have been difficult in any case, given that the party continued to have only presence at the base level. Further, suspicion of and discontent with the MVR among the base of the Bolivarian Movement made a major push to create party-organizational linkages inadvisable, especially at a time when the government was facing enormous threats and could not afford the widening of internal fissures. The result was a situation in which, spurred by mobilizational policies, grass-roots organizations with some informal affiliation to the Bolivarian Movement flourished but remained largely disconnected from the party apparatus (Roberts 2006).

While also true of the MTA and CTU, this dynamic was best captured in the CB program, which was explicitly cast as a means to revive the MBR-200 and the “Comités Bolivarianos” that the movement’s leadership had urged its supporters to form in the mid-1990s. Chávez took pains to emphasize that the CB were independent from the MVR: “Not a party nor was it the patrimony of any party; it was the people organizing to defend and drive forth the revolution.”⁹³ The national coordinator of the CB program expressed similar sentiments in a widely publicized interview with the international press, explaining: “President Chávez has made permanent calls for people to get organized and to fight for their rights. Political parties were not the best way to guarantee people's participation in the democratic process because of their infighting and struggle for positions of leadership.”⁹⁴ Autonomy from political parties was also an emphasis for many CB members, who often maintained overtly critical stances toward the MVR.⁹⁵

In sum, the institutional reform period saw an emphasis on mass-organizational strategies that centered on mobilizational approaches to expanding social protection, a clear consequence of a radical coalition on the left coming to power with a post-liberal agenda. However, the high policy-making constraints on the Chávez government – particularly the lack of a stable legislative majority and an inability to control PDVSA – led these policies to be largely piecemeal in nature, while the lack of serious electoral pressure provided few incentives for the Bolivarian Movement to resolve the party question or to make a serious push to create linkages between social organizations sponsored through mobilizational policies and the MVR. Viewing these organizational dynamics, some observers have claimed that they reflect a fundamental property of “populist organization” or of the Bolivarian Movement (Roberts 2006; Hawkins 2010). A broader perspective would suggest, in contrast,

⁹³ See the discussion in Chávez (2005), pgs 160-163.

⁹⁴ See Green Left Weekly (6/4/2003).

⁹⁵ This critical stance comes out in Hawkins and Hansen’s (2006) research and is apparent more anecdotally in news reports about disputes between CBs and the MVR. For example, see El Nacional (12/6/2005).

that these organizational tendencies were the product of a specific set of political circumstances during the first years of the Chávez government. As we will see, once circumstances changed, mass-organizational strategies occurred on a much larger scale and with much more extensive and more institutionalized linkages between social organizations and parties.

Post-Reform Period: The Mass-organizational Strategy on a Grand Scale

The aftermath of the oil strike saw two significant shifts in the political environment in Venezuela. The Chávez administration emerged victorious from the battle over executive authority in the country, and the opposition gave up on extra-democratic strategies for ousting the government, instead opting to take the fight back to the electoral arena. This turning point thus marked the normalization of political contestation, but within a new institutional environment in which the government had wide policy-making latitude. In this phase, the influence of the legacies of the legitimacy crisis in shaping a mass-organizational strategy crystallized. With policy-making constraints drastically reduced via the mandate for institutional reform, it was now possible to launch mobilizational initiatives on a truly massive scale. With the Chávez government facing real electoral pressure for the first time, the mass-organizational strategy now also manifested in concerted attempts to create party-organizational linkages as a major strategy for building and institutionalizing support.

The first part of the section describes the new political environment marked by low constraints on executive policy-making authority and high electoral pressure. While these developments occurred simultaneously, they are easier to illustrate separately and so the section focuses first on the former and then on the latter. The second part of the section then shows how these changing conditions catalyzed forms of mobilization that were massive in scale and highly integrated with the partisan structures of the Bolivarian Movement. Given the centrality of these party-organizational linkages to the argument that will follow in Chapter 6 regarding the effect of mobilizational initiatives on catalyzing aggregate change in the electorate, a new section then specifically focuses on illustrating the depth, variety, and strategic importance of these relationships.

Low Constraints, High Pressure. The aftermath of the oil strike saw a marked freeing of the administration's hand from policy-making constraints. This change was most immediate and dramatic with respect to executive control over PDVSA. Widespread public disapproval of the strike opened up an opportunity for the administration to move against the PDVSA management and workers in ways previously impossible. Citing a provision within the Organic Labor Law that allowed for such actions in the defense of the public interest, Chávez fired 19,000 of the striking workers, who came disproportionately from those sectors of the company – middle and upper management, research and development – that had been most opposed to the government and presented the most significant obstacles to the administration's exertion of executive control. The government also used the opportunity to replace most of the PDVSA board, and to detain several of the key strike leaders such as CTV president Carlos Ortega and FEDECAMARAS president Carlos Fernandez, moves which incited protest and denunciation from the opposition but which greatly helped the government consolidate its hold.

The assumption of control over PDVSA led to a major reorientation in the company's official mission, involving the active involvement of PDVSA employees in new and unfamiliar roles, often in conjunction with the management and implementation of social and development programs. More importantly, executive control of PDVSA eliminated what had been a critical fiscal veto player and afforded Chávez, despite constitutional limitations on such activities, the ability to directly appropriate and utilize government funds in ways previously impossible.⁹⁶ The means for doing so was provided by social funds, several of which already existed in the country as mechanisms for channeling resources to development projects: FONVIS (established in 1990), FIDES (established in 1993), FUS (established by Chávez in 1999, and responsible for managing many of the funds for Plan Bolívar 2000), and FONDEMI (created by Chávez in 2001 to manage investments in micro-finance, but previously never possessed of significant resources).⁹⁷ Having exerted control over PDVSA, the Chávez government began to transfer more resources to these established funds and to create a series of new funds. In May 2004, FONDESPA was created to hold transfers from PDVSA and disburse them to government agencies and in 2005 this fund was merged into a new institution of similar purpose called FONDEN.⁹⁸ In early 2006, the government added FONDENDOGENO, dedicated to funding cooperatives and other small enterprises, as well as FONACC, a fund created to specifically administer resources directed to the incipient Communal Council program.

The Chávez administration's ability to utilize PDVSA and social funds in this way represented a major increase in policy-making authority and, more generally, entailed nothing short of a significant restructuring of the fiscal apparatus of the Venezuelan state. The operation of the social funds was not subject to legislative approval or oversight or independent monitoring, and the funds reported data on their resources, financing, and expenditures on a voluntary basis. These channels were particularly useful to the government in the 2003-2005 period when control over the legislature was still somewhat uncertain, but they were maintained even afterward. Control over PDVSA in effect allowed the government to fund its new social agenda autonomously, as well as to determine how much revenue would be allocated for secret expenditure through the social funds and how much would be transferred to the national government to finance the formal budget.

While control over PDVSA allowed the administration to skirt the legislature, its control over the National Assembly was steadily increasing anyway, which would eventually

⁹⁶ Article 314 of the Bolivarian Constitution is relatively clear on this point: "There will be no kind of expenditure that has not been provided in the National Budget Law."

⁹⁷ For an enlightening overview of the history of social funds in Venezuela and changes in the use of social funds in the first years of the Fifth Republic, see D'Elia and Maingon (2006).

⁹⁸ The unusual system of financing was all the more remarkable when one considers the obstacles inherent to doing so in a situation in which the funds derive from a source like PDVSA that receives the overwhelming majority of its revenues in dollars, rather than national currency. Government agencies cannot make use of foreign currency – to pay salaries, buy supplies, disperse cash transfers, etc – unless it is first converted to bolívares, the province of the BCV. Perhaps distrusting the BCV to play a critical intermediary role in the process, the government arranged for a second institution just established in 2001, the Banco de Desarrollo Económico y Social de Venezuela (BANDES), to expand its traditional role from simply financing small-scale development projects to acting as a major converter of foreign exchange and an intermediary between PDVSA and FONDEN or FONDESPA.

make the point somewhat moot. The administration's influence improved markedly in the aftermath of the oil strike as wavering members of the PP coalition, especially those who had been followers of Miquilena, entertained second thoughts about breaking with Chávez, now that the president appeared to have emerged triumphant from regime contestation. The expansion of executive control over the legislature was manifested in changes in leadership. Willian Lara, the previous president of the National Assembly, was certainly a staunch supporter of Chávez, but he was also a legendary figure on the Venezuelan left with his own network of support and influence. Lara ceded the post in 2003, replaced by a succession of more pliable figures, first longtime Chávez ally Francisco Ameliach, then Nicolás Maduro and, eventually, his wife Cilia Flores. Executive influence was also manifested in a series of important legislative victories over the next two years. Of particular note was the Ley del Banco Central de Venezuela, passed in July 2005 under considerable pressure from the administration, which greatly undercut the independence of the central bank and gave the president the unprecedented ability to use foreign exchange reserves in order to finance public expenditure.⁹⁹

If the administration already held a very strong position vis-à-vis the national assembly, this position became essentially hegemonic after the 2005 congressional elections. The opposition, citing lingering concerns about fraud that had emerged in the recall referendum and with polls indicating the likelihood of another major defeat, decided to boycott the election at the last minute. As a result, the MVR won 68% of the seats, with all other seats going to smaller parties in the PP. The abstention of the opposition had two effects. For one, the opposition completely ceded an important institutional space in which to promote an alternative platform. Just as importantly, the opposition of the abstention tipped the balance of executive-legislative power toward Chávez. The legislative leadership already effectively served at the pleasure of the president. Now, with the PP holding every seat in the assembly, the matter of finding the votes to support the executive agenda became trivial. Defection or opposition not only risked punishment – as in most legislative coalitions – but offered nothing but symbolic rewards, as there were no alternative coalitions to construct or opposing parties to join and the leverage of would-be defectors was reduced to zero.

After December 2005, the legislature in Venezuela effectively became powerless for the rest of this period. Naturally, legislative proceedings continued, committees continued to work, and many bills were passed. But by almost all accounts, the body functioned largely to either rubber stamp an executive agenda or to generate legislation over which the president would hold effective veto power before it ever came up for a vote. Activity on the floor of the National Assembly thus took on a largely symbolic role, providing a venue for PP politicians to publicly comment on and frame new legislative initiatives or, as some dissenters did emerge (most prominently the handful of deputies from the PODEMOS party), a forum for somewhat farcical debates, the outcome of which were never in doubt.

An important point is that the opposition's boycott of the 2005 legislative elections represented an exception to the rule in this period, which was marked by serious, indeed nearly unrelenting electoral pressure. This pressure was applied immediately in the form of

⁹⁹While the Bolivarian Missions were not developed through legislation, but rather through executive fiat, legislation such as this greatly contributed to Chávez's ability to expand and finance the programs over time.

the opposition's pursuit of a referendum on Chávez recall, drawing upon a provision in the constitution allowed for referenda on the recall of any politician who had served at least half their term. Starting in early February, the opposition began to gather signatures (the "firmazo") for a referendum. The threat posed by the referendum was grave and the president's chances for survival initially seemed slim (Hellinger 2005). A sequence of legal wrangling ensued, with the Consejo Nacional Electoral (CNE) initially rejecting the opposition's petition and then eventually accepting the validity of signatures gathered during a second petition drive held in the fall of 2003.¹⁰⁰ These delays ultimately were greatly helpful to Chávez, giving him more time to build support and wait for the economy to recover. Against the expectation of much polling, the president ultimately survived recall in an election that attracted a huge amount of international attention and observation, but which was still marred by allegations of fraud.

While Chávez's victory in the recall referendum was a decisive event, it did not ease electoral pressure on the government. Gubernatorial and municipal elections were held only a few months later, in late 2004. Subsequently, major elections or referenda were held every year through 2010 and, for the most part, electoral fights during this period were highly contested and represented significant threats. The exception was the legislative election of 2005, from which the opposition abstained at the last minute.¹⁰¹ Subsequently, however, the opposition recommitted itself to the electoral course and, painfully and gradually, was able to largely overcome its own internal disputes and present a unified front against the government. This process involved increased coordination in the 2006 presidential election and 2007 constitutional reform referendum and, ultimately, the creation in January 2008 of the Mesa de la Unidad Democrática (MUD), a formal electoral coalition of the major opposition parties, including AD, Copei, Primero Justicia, Un Nuevo Tiempo, Proyecto Venezuela, and Podemos.

Every election after 2005 was thus fully contested by an increasingly unified opposition. While the 2006 presidential election turned into a rout in the context of a booming economy and a relatively weak opposition candidate in Manuel Rosales, every contest afterward produced fairly close results. In 2007, the government attempted to pass a series of sweeping changes to the constitution through popular referendum, which the opposition was actually able to win, representing a major setback for the government. In the 2008 gubernatorial and municipal elections, the PSUV won only about 54% of the national vote versus roughly 45% for opposition candidates, and the opposition was able to capture many important races, including the mayorship of Caracas and the governorships of Zulia, Miranda, and Carabobo, arguably the three most politically important states in the country. In 2009, the government sought another popular referendum on the elimination of presidential term limits, and squeaked by with about 54% of the vote. Finally, the 2010 legislative

¹⁰⁰ The CNE ruled that the original 3.2 million signatures obtained by the opposition were invalid, as they had collected before the mid-point of Chávez's presidential term. Many of the 3.6 million signatures collected by the opposition in its second petition drive were also ruled invalid for various reasons, but the Supreme Court eventually ruled that enough were valid to trigger the recall referendum.

¹⁰¹ Even in the 2005 legislative elections, the MVR and Polo Patriótico faced real pressure for most of the process, as the opposition did not boycott until the 11th hour. The preceding months of campaigning were thus still taken very seriously.

elections saw a virtual tie between the PSUV and the united opposition forces in the popular vote, although the PSUV won significantly more seats.

Major Mobilizational Policies

With policy-making constraints stripped away and electoral pressure now high, the character of mobilizational social protection changed dramatically. Two initiatives, the Misiones Bolivarianas and Consejos Comunales, were implemented that dwarfed previous endeavors in terms of expenditures, and which required considerably more institutional restructuring within the state to administer the programs. These new endeavors were clearly enabled by the elimination of constraints on policy making. In both cases, the new competitive environment also led the government to expend much greater energy in forging party-organizational between the organizations created by programs and the party/electoral apparatus of the Bolivarian Movement, first the new campaign organization, Comando Maisanta, built to contest the recall referendum, then the MVR, and later the PSUV. This section first traces the development of the Bolivarian Missions and Communal Councils, then turns to outlining the extensive pattern of party-organizational linkage that came to characterize each program.

Misiones Bolivarianas. Between the middle of 2003 and the middle of 2008, the Chávez government implemented a number of policy initiatives known colloquially as the Misiones Bolivarianas. In total 29 different missions were launched by the government during this time period, mostly addressing diverse areas of social policy but also extending to other policy areas such as environmental protection, indigenous rights, or the creation of military reserves. In this sense, the term “Misión Bolivariana” served as a catch-all rubric for a variety of post-oil strike policy initiatives of the Chávez government. While the missions were numerous and heterogeneous, a subset geared toward social protection came first, were significantly more costly and politically salient, and thus have become synonymous with the concept of the “Misiones Bolivarianas” for most Venezuelans.¹⁰²

These larger and more politically salient programs are the focus of analysis, consisting of a set of programs in the area of health, Barrio Adentro I, II, III, and IV, and the group of missions combining adult education with cash transfers or other forms of material support, Robinson I, Robinson II, Ribas, and Sucre. The basic characteristics of both health and education programs, especially their mobilizational orientation, are first discussed below. The section then moves on to make the argument that the missions were launched in clear response to electoral pressure and their national rollout and financing was only possible due to the steep decline in policy-making constraints on the Chávez administration.

¹⁰² Some of these other missions are not really social policy initiatives per se, such as Miranda (military reservists), Identidad (voter registration and formal citizenship), Ciencia (support for scientists and scientific research, or Revolución Energetica (support for energy efficiency). Other missions are more clearly social policy initiatives, but have generally been targeted toward more limited populations and/or never received significant organizational and financial support from the government: Vuelvan Caras and Che Guevara (training and temporary employment for informal workers), Vivienda (housing), Guaicapuro (indigenous rights), Piar (sustainable development in mining communities), Zamora (land redistribution in rural areas), Cultura (support for cultural events), or Madres del Barrio (special support for poor households led by women).

Misión Barrio Adentro grew out of a program first launched at the municipal level in Libertador, the largest municipality in Caracas. In late 2002, the municipal administration began to design what was termed “Plan Integral Barrio Adentro para Caracas.” The centerpiece of the plan was to establish “Casas de la Salud y la Vida”, later renamed “Consultorios Populares,” in underserved neighborhoods across Libertador to provide preventative health care and address basic needs. Cuban doctors staffed the health clinics, most of which were already in the country, and in mid-April the program was officially launched in 10 of the 22 parishes of the Libertador municipality.¹⁰³ Barrio Adentro was explicitly designed to sponsor local organization and participation in the health sector. The plan encouraged the formation in each community of a “Comité de Salud,” a community-based organization that would liaise between the clinic and the community. As Rubén Alayón Monserat (2005, pg. 240), coordinator of Barrio Adentro in Libertador from April 2003 to May 2004, described the program’s goals: “Thus Barrio Adentro was born as an organizational proposal for the communities; a plan that sought, on the one hand, to provide distinct tools for community organization..on the other hand, to offer policies that satisfied the basic needs of the communities.”

In the next few months, the Chávez government made the decision to expand the program to the national level. In its national variant, Barrio Adentro maintained the same basic components as its localized version in Libertador, centered on a community-based and participatory vision and staffed by medical personnel from Cuba. As a practical matter, the program was expanded very quickly and in an extremely decentralized and informal manner. By September of 2004, over 8500 “Consultorios Populares” were functioning in underserved communities, staffed by the over 13,000 Cuban doctors now in the country (MSDS 2004, Convite A.C. 2008). As the program was expanded, administrators continued to place explicit emphasis on the formation of a Comité de Salud as a requirement for establishing new clinics.¹⁰⁴ According to official government statistics, over 8500 health committees had been formed and registered, suggesting that committees attended about three quarters of clinics. The centrality of the health committees and community participation to the program was affirmed in several interviews conducted for this project, and was also a central finding of arguably the largest independent study on the subject, based on ethnographic and original survey research (Briggs and Mantini-Briggs 2007).¹⁰⁵ Another data point confirming the centrality of the health committees comes from the LAPOP survey. Strikingly, 11.5% of

¹⁰³ A contingent of Cuban doctors had been brought to Venezuela to aid in the aftermath of the devastating mudslides that struck the state of Vargas in December 1999. This small group of doctors had stayed afterward to help with social relief and local health in that area, an arrangement formalized in 2000 in the Convenio de Cooperación Integral Cuba-Venezuela. For more details about the pact, see D’Elia et al (2006, pgs 17-19). The Barrio Adentro program initially simply brought this group of doctors to Caracas. On its national rollout, more Cuban medical personnel – as well as medical supplies – came to Venezuela. Most of these arrangements were made in exchange for Venezuelan oil.

¹⁰⁴ Personal interview with a high-ranking official in the Ministerio del Poder Popular para La Salud, April 2008.

¹⁰⁵ Personal interviews with several doctors and nurses working at Barrio Adentro modulos in the areas of Caricuao, 23 Enero, and Petare, conducted between January-June 2008. As one nurse explained: “Everything we do at the Barrio Adentro modulo has to be linked to the Health Committee and the Communal Councils. We meet with the Communal Council, we meet with the Health Committee to discuss the principle problems that we have in the community and on this basis we try to solve these problems.”

respondents reported participating in a health committee at least once a month and 17.5% at least once a year. A very sizeable proportion of Venezuelans thus not only came to depend on Barrio Adentro for health services, but also became actively involved in community organization and participation through the program.¹⁰⁶

Around the same time, the Chávez government launched a series of educational programs, which grew out of plans that had been percolating within the administration since the PDESN.¹⁰⁷ These programs combined adult education with financial support for some participants in the form of cash transfers or other more informal means of material aid. The first program, El Plan Nacional Extraordinario de Alfabetización Simón Rodríguez, better known as Misión Robinson, was announced in June 2003 and addressed illiteracy.¹⁰⁸ This program was quickly followed by Plan Extraordinario de Prosección Educativa al Sexto Grado, known as Misión Robinson II, intended to provide basic education up to the sixth grade level and targeted mainly at graduates of the first program. In July, the government added Misión Sucre, providing a decentralized form of tertiary education. Finally, the government then announced the launch of Plan Extraordinario José Félix Ribas, better known as Misión Ribas, offering high school equivalency programs. As with Barrio Adentro, the educational missions were grown extremely quickly across the country through a decentralized and often ad hoc process.

Benefits included both schooling and material aid to beneficiaries, mainly in the form of scholarships. Initially, Misión Robinson I and II provided only token financial assistance to enrolled students, but a scholarship of approximately 160,000 bolívares per month was later instituted for students with particularly demonstrated economic needs. Misión Ribas also provided scholarships, some of considerably greater value, to a larger subset of enrollees.¹⁰⁹ As with data on total government expenditures for the program, reliable data simply does not exist concerning the number of scholarships given out by each program over the 2003-2010 period under consideration here. The totality of the evidence suggests, however, that scholarships were offered to a large subset of the enrollees in each program. In this sense, for at least some participants, these educational programs can be understood as a form of conditional cash transfer. Whereas most such programs are centered on the cash benefit, with recipients required to adhere to certain other regulations (such as keeping their children in school) to maintain eligibility, the educational missions are centered on adult education, with enrollment necessary to receive the cash benefit.

As with Barrio Adentro, the educational missions – especially Robinson and Ribas – were designed to operate at a very localized level and were geared, somewhat more indirectly,

¹⁰⁶ For an in-depth look at the operation of several Barrio Adentro clinics and Comites de Salud in the state of Zulia, see Alvarado Chacín (2009).

¹⁰⁷ In response to the PDESN, the Ministerio del Poder Popular para la Educación had been developing ideas concerning how to further social inclusion through literacy programs and adult education. These ideas were not implemented into policy, but had taken shape in several detailed proposals by early 2003. See D'Elia et al (2006, pgs. 77-79) for more detail on these early plans from the established bureaucracy.

¹⁰⁸ Gaceta Oficial, 37.702, June 2nd, 2003.

¹⁰⁹ Some scholars have cited figures for the 2003-2004 period, (Penfold-Becerra 2007). The reliability of such figures is doubtful, however, given the opacity of the program and the lack of any kind of external auditing. More to the point, aggregate figures for the 2003-2010 period – reliable or not – are largely unavailable.

toward sponsoring grassroots organization and community participation. The expansion of the programs involved an ad hoc process marked by cooperation and consultation between local communities and program officials (as well as the helping hand of the armed forces). For Misión Robinson, administrators established only the most bare bones requirements for physical locations, and the program was generally set up in private houses, local schools, warehouses, or other public spaces that could accommodate a class. Requirements for Misión Ribas were somewhat more extensive, given that the program is larger, requiring multiple class spaces. But the program was still established at the local level, usually in public school buildings that were going unused during the evenings but sometimes in other public spaces.¹¹⁰

Both programs combined an educational curriculum with overt attempts to promote citizen participation and organization outside the classroom. This orientation was most pronounced and explicit in Misión Ribas. A key part of the mission is “El Programa de Formación de la Ciudadanía,” to which one course is devoted each semester. One aspect of this citizenship program involves learning about Bolivarian ideas concerning citizenship and their expression in the constitution and other official documents and laws.¹¹¹ But a second, major, portion involves arranging and encouraging participation in community service activities, exhorting enrollees to form “working groups” to address the needs of their communities, and encouraging students without stable sources of income to design plans for forming cooperatives. As with Barrio Adentro, then, a key function of Misión Ribas is not just to establish a local space in the community for providing services, but also to use that space as a tool for spurring organization.

The national launch of mobilizational programs of unprecedented size and ambition quite clearly depended on the loosening of policy-making constraints on the Chávez government. Both programs were launched and funded (at least during an initial critical period) entirely outside of legislative channels. They were also implemented with little to no participation from established government ministries that theoretically should have held sway over the health and education sectors, such that they represented “parallel forms” for social provisioning within the state, a development that was readily acknowledged – even lauded – by the government.¹¹² This striking use of executive power to remake the social welfare system was enabled by the weakness of the legislature, which offered no defense to Chávez’s repeated use of presidential decrees to launch new programs, but particularly reliant upon the president’s control over PDVSA, which allowed him to actually fund his new initiatives.

All of the health and educational missions were launched, implemented, and funded through a similar process. First, Chávez typically utilized a Presidential Decree to announce a new program and appoint a Presidential Commission to “study, formulate, coordinate, pursue,

¹¹⁰ For a more extensive discussion of the rollout and space requirements for both of the educational missions, see D’Elia (2006).

¹¹¹ See Hawkins (2010, pgs 204-205) for a more detailed discussion of the curriculum of Ribas and other educational missions.

¹¹² As Ali Rodríguez Araque (2004) put it, “Before a great obstacle, which is the bureaucratic state, inefficient and ineffective, (the missions) are rising, parallel forms materializing from new institutions as instruments for realizing the principles of the Constitution.”

and evaluate” the new initiative.¹¹³ These commissions would typically consist of loyalists from a variety of state institutions, such as relevant ministries, the armed forces, and PDVSA, as well as a few members representing pro-government civil society groups like the Frente Nacional Francisco de Miranda. Second, the president would create administrative organs – for example, Fundacion Samuel Robinson, Fundacion Jose Felix Ribas, Fundacion Misión Barrio Adentro – in order to oversee and run each program, which were often nebulously tied to an existing ministry but were under the leadership of the Presidential Commission and able to operate largely independently.¹¹⁴ The legality of these actions was hazy. The government claimed power to launch such programs under Articles 226 and 236 of the constitution, which set out the presidential powers in very general terms. It also framed the new initiatives as temporary “planes extraordinarios” in response to the desperate circumstances faced by the country, rather than as massive proposed changes to the nature of the social welfare system. While these actions occurred in a legal grey area, the de facto result was a massive assertion of executive power, to which the timid legislature offered little opposition.

The implementation and national rollout of the Missions was even more clearly dependent on the Chávez administration’s newfound control over PDVSA. As described earlier in the chapter, the Chávez government had supported many small mobilizational initiatives in the past, such as the Mesas Técnica de Agua or Comités de Tierra Urbana. Coming up with ideas for new programs and appointing people to run them was never really the obstacle faced by the administration. Rather, the larger problem was how to fund such programs, in a context in which the president was mainly reliant on legislative appropriations. Chávez’s newfound control over PDVSA allowed him to circumvent this problem in two ways. First, the president was now able to channel much larger sums of money from the oil company directly to social funds, which were then utilized to finance the Bolivarian Missions. Second, control over PDVSA facilitated the government’s ability to trade oil to Cuba in exchange for the participation of Cuban doctors in Barrio Adentro, a great deal of Cuban-manufactured medical equipment and supplies for supporting the nascent health program, as well as many Cuban-made educational materials like books and curriculum guides that would be utilized in the educational missions. These deals represented a roundabout way for the Venezuelan government to finance the missions through PDVSA, because obviously the programs would have otherwise had to pay for these materials and services themselves.¹¹⁵

An important point is that the launch and financing of these programs in the critical period before the recall referendum was not dependent on sky-high oil prices. Indeed, oil prices in 2003 were not appreciably different than prices in 2000. In the next few years, prices would rise substantially, enabling an expansion of expenditure on these and other programs. However, the launch and initial financing of the Missions was not constrained or

¹¹³ For Barrio Adentro, see Gaceta Oficial 37.865, January 26th, 2004. For Ribas, see Gaceta Oficial 37.798, October 16, 2003. For Robinson, see Gaceta Oficial 37.711, June 13, 2003.

¹¹⁴ See D’Elia (2008, pgs. 5-6) for an insightful summary of how executive authority was utilized in various ways to set up the institutional structures that would run and administer the Bolivarian Missions.

¹¹⁵ An important point is that the launch and financing of these programs in the critical period before the recall referendum was not dependent on a rise in oil prices. Indeed, oil prices in 2003 were not appreciably different than prices in 2000. In the next few years, prices would rise dramatically, giving the Chávez administration much

enabled by variation in resource rents, but rather dependent on the president's ability to control and channel the country's that oil wealth. In a moment of candor, Chávez himself acknowledged the absolutely critical role of control over PDVSA: "Thanks to the control that we now have over PDVSA and the equitable distribution of these revenues, we have resources available for special programs."¹¹⁶

Over time, the administrative organs of the major Misiones were further integrated into established state ministries in the appropriate areas (although in some cases, such as Barrio Adentro I, still retaining substantial autonomy) and the funding of the Misiones became predominantly the province of the legislature, with the vast majority of funds dispersed through standard budgeting procedures. Bureaucratic changes were made to address the obvious inefficiencies, redundancies, and difficulties posed by actually having "parallel structures" of social provision within the Venezuelan state.¹¹⁷ As the programs grew in size, the idea of funding them primarily in ad hoc ways through transfers from PDVSA also became less tenable, although such arrangements continued to play a secondary role. Critically, however, during this period, executive authority over the legislature was widening and ultimately to become hegemonic. A shift to the legislative arena in the financing of the missions thus did not undercut the Chávez administration's ultimate power over the programs.

Communal Councils. After victory in the recall referendum, the Chávez government began searching for new ways to deepen the Bolivarian Revolution and consolidate its base of support. A series of high-level meetings were organized by the president's office in November 2004, the product of which was a new policy and strategic agenda for the Bolivarian Movement, termed the "Nueva Mapa Estratégico," listing ten goals moving forward. One was to continue to eradicate social exclusion and poverty. A second was to "advance quickly in the construction of a democratic model of popular participation."¹¹⁸ The Chávez government began to consider a broader and more comprehensive approach to supporting community organization and participation, looking for inspiration to a variety of local initiatives that had sprung up in municipalities in the previous years.

This new initiative of the government was eventually promulgated through the Ley de Consejos Comunales, passed by the National Assembly on April 9th, 2006 after barely a month under consideration. The law established regulations by which small communities of 200-400 families in urban areas (or 20-50 in rural areas) could form Consejos Comunales, local participatory organizations, and set forth a set of processes by which, once formed, these councils could design local development projects and apply to various entities of the government for funding. This initiative thus reflected another attempt to combine material distribution and the sponsorship of social organization, but one that made the community-organizational component particular central and which provided material benefits of mainly in the form of local public goods rather than to individual beneficiaries. While any community

¹¹⁶ See Radio Nacional de Venezuela (7/22/2004).

¹¹⁷ Not only did such a system pose problems of coordination among different entities working in the same area (like health), but it also created significant problems for beneficiaries. For example, one widely noted difficulty was that doctors working within the Barrio Adentro system faced difficulties in referring patients to specialists working within the established health system.

¹¹⁸ For information about these meetings and an overview and analysis of the "Nueva Mapa Estratégico," see El Troudi (2005).

could form a council and apply for resources, funds were distributed to substantial degree on the basis of need, with the program geared toward providing resources to poor and low-income neighborhoods lacking basic services. One particular large survey of Consejos Comunales suggests that projects mainly fell into five categories: improving water and sanitation systems, housing projects, improving access to electricity, fixing roads or other common infrastructure, and the renovation of local public spaces like community centers.¹¹⁹

The Consejo Comunal program was in some ways the culmination of the Chávez government's longstanding orientation toward sponsoring social organization. The councils were designed to be much more highly institutionalized than other community-based organizations that the government had supported and, indeed, to subsume or coordinate many of those other organizations within a given community. The Ley de Consejos Comunales established an extensive set of formal procedures for forming a council, requiring communities to define exactly which households would be represented, to conduct a socioeconomic census of the community being encompassed, and to follow strict procedures regarding the election of council officers. The internal governance structure of the Consejos Comunales was also highly regulated, with each entity expected to elect officers to a predetermined set of basic positions and, depending on community need, to also create formal committees for dealing with a variety of areas, such as health, housing, infrastructure, sports and recreation, and security. The idea encouraged by the legislation was thus that extant community-based organizations specializing in these areas – for example, Mesas Técnicas de Agua or Comités de Tierra Urbana – would be incorporated as council committees, subsuming their activities under the broader organizational umbrella of the Consejo Comunal.¹²⁰

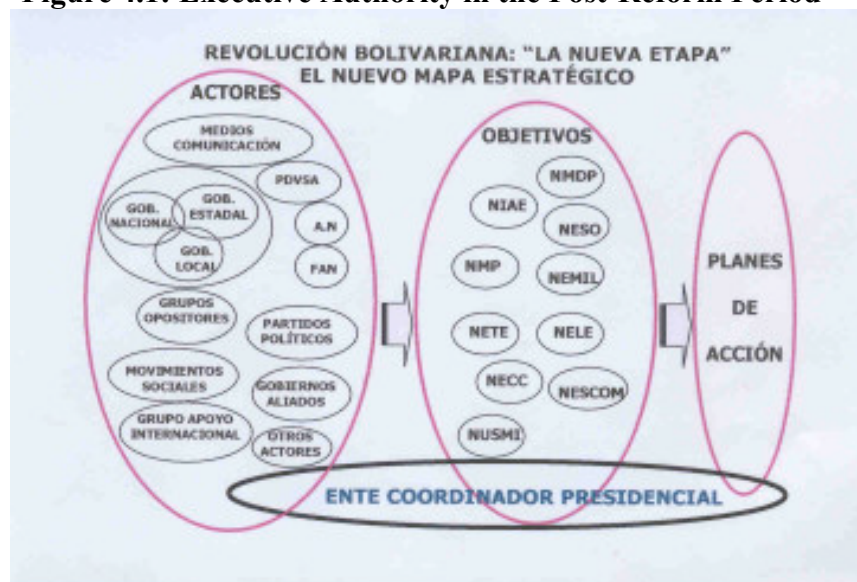
Like the Bolivarian Missions, the Consejo Comunal program was made possible by the loosening of constraints on policy-making authority, which allowed the executive to drive the extremely sweeping program and fund it on a massive level. As noted above, the initiative's origins can be traced to the high-level meetings that produced the Nueva Mapa Estratégico in November 2004, which had defined the search for a broader participatory model as one of ten key objectives. In those meetings, Chávez himself presented a diagram, displayed in Figure 4.1, displaying the administration's vision for how these objectives were to be pushed forward and translated into plans of action (El Troudi 2005, pg. 29). This diagram is an interesting artifact, displaying quite strikingly how the Chávez administration understood its own role vis-à-vis other actors in the process moving forward. On the left hand side are a group of heterogeneous actors within or sympathetic to the Bolivarian Movement, whose role is to push forward the objectives defined in the Nueva Mapa Estratégico (the acronyms in the middle oval each refer to these objectives). The legislature (the AN) is only one among these heterogeneous actors, on equal footing with PDVSA, the armed forces, social movements, and others. In contrast, the role of the executive branch – the much larger bottom oval – involves coordinating the whole process as well as translating objectives into

¹¹⁹ Data comes from Machado (2008, pg. 32), based on a survey of Communal Councils conducted by Fundación Centro Gumilla. New categories for the project areas were created from the reported raw frequencies for ease of presentation.

¹²⁰ A personal interview with Deputy Rafael Delgado, head of the Comisión de Participación Ciudadana, made this very clear.

“plans of action.”

Figure 4.1: Executive Authority in the Post-Reform Period



While we should be careful about reading too much into a diagram, the roles for different actors were not that dissimilar to the actual reality of executive authority with the council program. The idea evolved in the executive branch and executive ministries, involving explicit attempts to draw lessons from the failures of the *Consejos Local de Planificación Pública* program as well as various experiences with municipal initiatives that had sprung up around the country in the intervening years. After the boycott of the 2005 legislative elections gave the *Polo Patriótico* a monopoly of the National Assembly and consolidated executive hegemony over the body, at the administration's behest, the legislature's *Comisión de Participación Ciudadana* began discussing legislation that would serve as the legal basis for the council program.¹²¹ This new initiative of the government was eventually promulgated through the *Ley de Consejos Comunales*, passed by the National Assembly on April 9th, 2006 after barely a month under consideration. There was certainly opportunity for deputies within the legislature to exert influence over the details of the program, but there is little doubt that the executive branch and executive agencies played the most important role in driving the initiative.

The Chávez administration supported the new initiative with more restructuring to channel funds and coordinate the program, another striking example of executive authority being utilized to remake the institutional basis of the Venezuelan state. As with the Bolivarian Missions, Chávez created a presidential commission to oversee the program, led

¹²¹ Personal interviews (both May 2008) with Diputado Rafael Delgado, head of the *Comisión Permanente de Participación Ciudadana de Decentralización y Desarrollo Regional*, and Leandro Rodríguez, of the permanent staff of this commission. See also *Green Left Weekly* (11/30/2006) for some interesting commentary from Marta Harnecker about how past experiences in grassroots community organization in Venezuela shaped the direction of the program.

by the former general Jorge Luis Garcia Carneiro, then also heading the Ministry of Participation and Social Development (MINPADES). By decree, Chávez also formed another social fund, Fondo Nacional de Los Consejos Comunales (FONACC), to channel transfers from PDVSA and the national government to the councils. The agency FUNDACOMUNAL, which had existed since the 1980s to support decentralization and community development, was given the massive responsibility for organizing and coordinating the program, amounting to a major repurposing. With offices in almost every municipality in the country, FUNDACOMUNAL became responsible for working with communities as they navigated the process of forming a council, processing applications for funding that were then passed on to FONACC or other social funds, visiting communities to check up on projects and mediate disputes, and organizing roundtables for councils to discuss their problems and work toward solutions.¹²² The national government also struck deals to make significant fiscal transfers to state, municipal, and parish governments, as long as these funds were earmarked for the Consejo Comunal initiative, either to fund projects or to finance local support structures.¹²³

In sum, the Misiones Bolivarianas and the Consejo Comunal program were massive initiatives in mobilizational social protection, which dwarfed previous ones in terms of cost and ambition. Funding the programs on such a great level would have been impossible without the initial ability to control PDVSA and, eventually, to ride roughshod over a compliant legislature. Further, both programs involved – indeed, effectively required – a series of institutional changes within the Venezuelan state, including the creation of new government agencies and substantial alterations in fiscal institutions. Doing so required a level of executive policy-making authority and freedom commensurate to that which Chávez himself had outlined in Figure 4.1.

Party-Organizational Linkages

The combination of policy-making freedom and electoral pressure that marked the second half of the Fifth Republic was not just conducive to the launch of massive mobilizational programs, but also to sustained efforts to form and institutionalize a variety of linkages between the Misiones or Consejos and the party apparatus of the Bolivarian Movement. With wide latitude over the design and implementation of programs, the government could more easily spur or facilitate working party-organizational relationships. Electoral pressure offered incentives for doing so: Formal and informal party-organizational linkages would allow Chávez and other elected politicians to better claim credit for programs and utilize the new institutional infrastructure as a vehicle for mobilizing beneficiaries into the world of electoral politics at a time when a new electoral strategy was desperately needed.

This period was marked by substantial change in the partisan apparatus of the

¹²² Personal interview with high ranking official in FUNDACOMUNAL's National Office.

¹²³ As a result, a striking number of state offices and agencies are involved in supporting the program. For example, field work conducted for this project showed that in Petare – a parish home to many of the largest barrios in Caracas – the contingent of state officials actively involved in supporting the council program include those from FUNDACOMUNAL, from the office of the State of Miranda, from the mayor of Greater Caracas, from the Municipality of Sucre, and from the Parish of Petare.

Bolivarian Movement, first with the creation of a new campaign organization with a large ground presence, Comando Maisanta, to contest the recall referendum and later the formation of a new party in the PSUV that united much of the PP parties and developed a massive membership and very extensive organization. The Misiones and Consejos would play important roles in these processes, recruiting activists and signing up members for Comando Maisanta and the PSUV, engaging in campaign coordination with them, and ultimately forming more institutionalized forms of regular coordination with the PSUV. To better understand how these relationships developed and the role they played in the process, it is first necessary to outline changes in the Bolivarian Movement's partisan expression.

Resolving the Party Question. The new climate of constant electoral pressure required a solution to the longstanding weaknesses and unresolved tensions that plagued the Bolivarian Movement's partisan wing. As we have seen earlier in the chapter, several problems existed, which had their roots in the initial formation of the radical coalition in the last years of Punto Fijo and remained unaddressed during the institutional reform period. First, while the MVR was conceived to be a basist mass party, in practice the party had very weak local organization. Second, many activists within the movement were wary of an expansion of party influence and control, and specifically critical of the MVR, which was seen as hierarchical, lacking meaningful internal democracy, and reproducing many of the pathologies of the Punto Fijo era. Finally, the PP coalition had proven difficult to control and often undermined by internal squabbling, especially with respect to electoral strategy and candidate selection.

Resolving these issues was especially pressing because electoral pressure was immediately applied, with the opposition moving rapidly toward forcing the recall referendum. An initial attempt to forge a working alliance of the PP parties to coordinate the recall campaign, Comando Ayachuo, failed. The solution for Chávez and his inner circle was to construct a campaign organization, Comando Maisanta, for the referendum that would be independent of any particular party, a project eventually dubbed Misión Florentino. Comando Maisanta would develop an enormous ground presence, focused on the establishment of local campaign committees called Unidades de Batalla Electoral (UBE) and even smaller base-level activist groups called Patrullas Socialistas.¹²⁴ Chávez claimed the establishment of 50,000 patrols, each consisting of ten activists, as a goal.¹²⁵ While it is difficult to determine how many of these groups were formed, there is little doubt that the organization had an extremely extensive ground presence, much greater than that which the MVR had ever developed. Comando Maisanta was critical to winning the recall referendum and maintained afterwards in order to help PP candidates in the gubernatorial and municipal elections of 2004 and then revived for the 2006 presidential elections.

The formation of the Comando Maisanta campaign organization allowed for the rapid construction of a more robust partisan ground presence despite the difficulties posed by the longstanding problems surrounding the party question. Yet this solution also created an even more confusing articulation of the Bolivarian Movement in the partisan realm. Now there

¹²⁴ For commentary on the process of forming Comando Maisanta and the development of its ground organization, see Harnecker (2004) and Hellinger (2005).

¹²⁵ See Radio Nacional de Venezuela (6/26/2004).

were not only a set of loyalist parties in the PP without robust organizations, the largest of which was viewed with suspicion by much of the base, but also a quasi-independent and informally routinized campaign organization that had ground penetration but which was not itself a political party. Finding a more permanent solution was a priority highlighted in the Nueva Mapa Estratégico developed at the high levels of the Chávez administration after the 2004 elections. While the nature of this solution was uncertain, one obvious possibility was the formation of a new party, an idea that Chávez eventually floated publicly in advance of the 2006 presidential election.

Shortly after his sweeping victory, the president formally announced the dissolution of the MVR and the intention to form the PSUV as a new umbrella party for the Bolivarian Movement. Initial steps were taken very quickly. The MVR was disbanded, a committee was formed to oversee the process of creating the PSUV, and the first series of largely symbolic membership inscriptions were held in January 2007. The process of party formation, however, proved to be drawn out. One issue regarded whether loyalist parties other than the MVR would agree to disband and integrate themselves into the PSUV. Over the first half of 2007, most of these parties held congresses to discuss the proposal and vote on their future, with some deciding to join and others, including PCV, Podemos, and PPT, choosing to remain independent. Notably, however, many of the highest profile individual politicians within those parties still broke ranks and joined the PSUV.¹²⁶ Overall, the process was largely successful in uniting the diverse forces that had formed the PP and remained loyalist over time.

While the formation of the PSUV is often discussed in terms of party unification, an equally, if not more, important process was the construction of a more durable and broad party organization. In this sense, the process reflected not just the unification of loyalist parties, but also the integration of Comando Maisanta into a formal party with similar basist organizational structure but much more ambitious goals. Indeed, many of the UBEs that had been formed as part of the Comando Maisanta organization provided the basis for the ground organization of the party. The PSUV launched an enormous membership drive, beginning in May 2007 and continuing intermittently over the next two years. By June 2009, the party claimed over seven million members, an astounding number in a country with a population of only 28 million (Partido Socialista Unido de Venezuela 2009b). As the party ranks swelled, so did an extensive organization of party activists. The party formed thousands of “Brigadas Socialistas,” matched to each of the 11,007 voting centers in the country. Following standard military nomenclature, each of these brigades coordinated and was constituted by a number of “Batallones Socialistas,” in theory equal to the number of tables at that voting center. Finally, Socialist Battalions were themselves made up by multiple “Patrullas Socialistas,” base level units consisting of 20-30 activists and operating in small neighborhoods. By 2009, the PSUV would claim over 100,000 Patrullas Socialistas, a simply massive number.¹²⁷

¹²⁶ For example, Artistóbulo Istúriz and Alí Rodríguez Araque, previously affiliated with PPT, both joined the PSUV once it became clear that their party would not.

¹²⁷ See Partido Socialista Unido de Venezuela (2009a) for more details about the activities and nature of the Socialist Patrols and other entities within the new organizational hierarchy.

The process of establishing and implementing party rules and internal institutions was marked by significant tensions, and took longer than creating the membership and base organization. Given that the MVR was so heavily criticized for lacking internal democracy and being overly controlled by established power-brokers, addressing these issues was critical to securing the support of base activists and younger politicians. At the same time, naturally, important players within the Bolivarian Movement saw the process as an opportunity to expand or consolidate their own power. To some degree, these base-elite conflicts were also layered onto ideological conflicts within the Bolivarian Movement, with base activists groups accusing some established figures, especially those from its military wing, of representing a “derecha endogena” within the movement.¹²⁸ Leaders like Jorge Rodríguez and Alberto Müller Rojas, both legendary LCRistas who had been part of the PPT rather than the MVR and who commanded significant respect of the leftist base but knew how to navigate high-level Bolivarian politics, were given leading roles in the process.

Despite these difficulties, within a relatively short time frame the PSUV had established and routinized procedures for party governance and candidate selection. A founding congress was held in early 2008, at which elections for the party’s national directorate were held. This process did not escape internal criticism, but was nevertheless marked by a level of base participation nearly unprecedented in the country and produced a leadership reflecting diverse tendencies within the movement.¹²⁹ Notably, only six of the 15 positions on the national directorate went to former leaders of the MVR. A series of work committees were also established in order to run the day-to-day operations of the party and carry out longer term planning. Finally, a primary system was established and put into action in advance of the 2008 gubernatorial and municipal elections, attracting the participation of 2.3 million party members cast votes. To nobody’s surprise, Chávez was elected president of the PSUV and continued to play a dominant role in guiding strategy. Nevertheless, the creation of a party with routinized governance procedures and robust forms of internal democracy represented a major shift. For the first time, a highly institutionalized and popularly accepted political party existed to lead the Bolivarian Movement, representing the resolution of the long-standing party question.

Party-Organizational Linkages. Formal and informal relationships with the Misiones and Consejos were integral to buttressing the MVR, building Comando Maisanta, and constructing the PSUV and, once, the new mass party was built, these relationships became increasingly institutionalized. Measuring the number or density of party-

¹²⁸ These internal tensions were reflected in several high profile conflicts in the first year after the party formation began. Longtime MVR insider Francisco Ameliach was sharply reprimanded by Chávez, and his case recommended to the party’s disciplinary committee for potential expulsion, for suggesting that the MVR might be resurrected if the PSUV did not have its organization in place in time for the 2007 constitutional reform referendum. A major conflict, widely interpreted as representing the struggle between the base/left and the elite/military wings of the party, also ensued after Luis Tascón levied corruption charges against Tax Superintendant José David Cabello, brother of arch-power broker Diosdado Cabello. Tascón was ultimately expelled from the PSUV.

¹²⁹ Over 100,000 delegates, selected by base-level groups, cast votes in the founding elections, which were widely seen as fair and transparent. Criticism, especially from the far left, centered around the nominating process for candidates, which involved nominations being sent to Chávez and other provisional party leaders, who then selected 69 candidates to go on the ballot for the 15 directorate slots.

organizational linkages is very difficult. Comparative survey-based evidence presented in Chapter 5, however, demonstrates two general points. First, the level of popular participation in community-based organizations in Venezuela shot up over the Left Turn period and came to greatly outpace that in Brazil or Chile, indeed to be roughly equal to the level in those two countries combined. Second, participation in community-based organizations came to have a very strong statistical relationship with PSUV partisanship, while analogous relationships did not exist in Brazil and Chile. These data should be seen as observable implications of the project of directed mobilization in Venezuela and the massive push to create party-organizational linkages. The rest of this section, in contrast, presents a variety of more qualitative evidence regarding the nature of these informal and formal relationships between the Misiones and Councils and partisan structures of the Bolivarian Movement. We can usefully think of these party-organizational linkages involving three kinds of relationships or activities: Party activist and member recruitment through the Missions and Councils, campaign coordination, and regularized coordination.

A first form of party-organizational linkage involved the Misiones Bolivarianos and, later, Consejos Comunales aiding in efforts to sign up party members and recruit for the base-level activist groups of Comando Maisanta and the PSUV. As Chávez and the MVR prepared for the recall referendum, they sought ways to expand registration among core constituencies, increase MVR registration, and integrate activists into the burgeoning UBEs and Patrullas Socialistas central to the Comando Maisanta organization. The Bolivarian Missions came to play a critical role in these respects, serving as a point of contact with millions of lower income Venezuelans. Receipt of benefits through Barrio Adentro or the educational missions was made contingent on possession of an official identity card, which was also necessary to vote. Chávez launched a program called Misión Identidad to facilitate the distribution of these identity cards to the many Venezuelans who had never been integrated into the system, so that would-be beneficiaries could easily receive identification and become potential voters. As a result, the Venezuelan voting rolls grew by millions.¹³⁰

The Missions were not only used to incentivize registration, but also to increase MVR registration and to mobilize beneficiaries into electoral activism. As the programs got off the ground, Chávez explicitly stated in a closed door meeting that the membership roles of the MVR needed to grow and that the Misiones should be utilized to sign up party members (El Universal 9/1/2003). As the recall referendum approached, the MVR and Comando Maisanta relied heavily on the missions as points to proselytize for the “No” option and to sign up volunteers for election day activities. Tee shirts expressing support for the “No” were given away to beneficiaries of both Barrio Adentro and the educational missions. Fake voting machines were actually found inside the Misión Ribas, reportedly to teach beneficiaries how to vote (Radio Nacional de Venezuela 8/22/2004). Ribas officials openly acknowledged encouraging beneficiaries to join local UBEs and coordinating with Comando Maisanta in voter mobilization.¹³¹ And local MVR officials collected the names of all mission

¹³⁰ Many reports suggest that it was not just Venezuelans without identification who received identity papers, but also foreign nationals living in Venezuela whose eligibility for Venezuelan citizenship was dubious. For an example, see El Universal (1/23/2005).

¹³¹ An interesting and detail-rich account of one such experience can be found in Angulo and Rondón Lucero (2005), written by two local Ribas coordinators.

beneficiaries within their jurisdiction, to form contact lists.¹³² And information of this kind was also integrated into the infamous “Maisanta Database,” used for voter contacting and activist recruitment.¹³³

These kinds of party-organizational relations again marked the process of forming, expanding, and institutionalizing the PSUV. Branches of the Misión Ribas appear to have been particularly active, helping organize PSUV membership drives, and took active roles in mobilizing their members to join Socialist Patrols and other campaign activist groups.¹³⁴ The Comités de Salud formed attending Barrio Adentro clinics also seem to have been involved in similar activities.¹³⁵ In other instances, several of the Bolivarian Missions appear to have worked together to organize events at which PSUV membership drives would also be taking place, or to jointly mobilize their members into PSUV activist groups.¹³⁶

By this point, the Consejo Comunal initiative was well established, and the councils also took on a role in PSUV membership drives and activist recruitment. While major government officials took pains to emphasize that the Consejos Comunales represented autonomous entities not to be organizationally integrated into the PSUV, other comments made clear that the councils were seen as a key source of support in party building. As Aristobulo Istúriz noted during the initial phases of organizing and launching the PSUV, “The Communal Councils represent the base of the party.” The intertwined relationship between supporting the council initiative and building the PSUV was also readily confirmed by high-ranking officials in FUNDACOMUNAL, one of whom noted that, “It is all part of the same process....CC=PSUV.”¹³⁷ Much of this activity seems to have been largely informal, with councils serving to spread the word about PSUV membership drives and about the sign up process for local Patrullas Socialistas. However, at times the councils also appear to have taken a more active role, actually helping to plan and organize PSUV sign up events in the communities they represent.¹³⁸

A second form of party-organizational linkage has involved coordinated activities during electoral campaigns, relationships that became especially pertinent once the PSUV had been formed. An active role for the Misiones and Consejos in campaign events was promoted from the top, with Chávez and other leading PSUV figures often explicitly emphasizing the

¹³² As one MVR official openly stated (La Region 8/8/2006), “We need to have the exact number of Mission participants in all of Miranda state, with the full name and the address of each one so that we can speak with them afterward.”

¹³³ While the Maisanta database is most famous due to allegations, unfortunately largely credible, that it was later used to persecute opponents of the government, it is sometimes forgotten that the original use of the database was as a massive voter file for Comando Maisanta, such that the organization could target core and swing voters for electoral mobilization and get out the vote activities.

¹³⁴ For some examples, see *El Diario de Guyana* (5/22/2009), *El Diario de Guyana* (7/31/2009), *El Diario de Yaracuy* (2/6/2009), or *Agencia Bolivariana de Noticias* (11/20/2007).

¹³⁵ Not coincidentally, the first detailed public announcement concerning the PSUV’s ground strategy for the 2008 gubernatorial elections, with extensive information about the activist organization the party wished to form, was made by then PSUV president Jorge Rodríguez at a major convocation of representatives from Comités de Salud. See *La Guia de Venezuela* (6/14/2008).

¹³⁶ For example, see *Agencia Bolivariana de Noticias* (1/13/2009), *Aporrea.org* (5/29/2009), *Agencia Bolivariana de Noticias* (1/15/2009), or *Entorno Inteligente* (5/19/2009).

¹³⁷ Personal interview with a high-ranking official in FUNDACOMUNAL, April, 2008.

¹³⁸ For example, see *Diario de los Andes* (6/1/2009).

need for coordinated action between PSUV campaigns and the missions and councils.¹³⁹ This form of linkage is most relevant to later elections, such as the 2008 gubernatorial races and the 2009 referendum, that were fully contested by the opposition and in which the PSUV was particularly active in organizing campaign mobilization on the ground.

One general form of activity involved PSUV politicians campaigning at the local level in conjunction with one of the Misiones or a Consejo. These kinds of campaign activities are not particularly unusual in Latin America. But they are difficult to arrange at the local level if a party lacks a presence in a given community, a local partner to help in logistics, planning, and communicating with the population. Because the Misiones Bolivarianas and the Consejo Comunal initiative were designed to set up this kind of organizational infrastructure, and staffed with loyalists amenable to working for partisan purposes, the PSUV has had the advantage of recourse to local partners. Joint local campaign activities between PSUV politicians and communal councils seem to have been the most prevalent. Media reports and interviews with officials in the communal council program attest to the commonality of PSUV politicians and councils jointly organizing events to clean up the neighborhood or refurbish local structures. The same sources also suggest the prevalence of councils helping to organize “puntos rojos,” local events, often with food and music, in which PSUV politicians gave stump speeches and distributed information and propaganda in the last weeks of the campaign season.¹⁴⁰ Various local campaign activities with the Misiones Bolivarianas also seem to have been relatively common, such as PSUV politicians using Barrio Adentro installations to give stump speeches and holding events organized in conjunction with Comités de Salud.

Another form of campaign coordination involves the missions and councils mobilizing their beneficiaries or members to major PSUV campaign events, such as the rallies often held in larger Venezuelan cities. These larger rallies are a hallmark of the Bolivarian Movement, with tens if not hundreds of thousands of attendees. A common site at such rallies are large groups of people all wearing tee shirts or holding banners expressing their affiliation with an organizational entity of the Bolivarian Movement, such as one of the Misiones Bolivarianas, a Consejo Comunal, or other organizations. Informal interviews conducted with participants at rallies suggest that they are not just expressing support or affiliation, but that the Missions and Councils have actually played active roles in mobilizing them to the rally.¹⁴¹ The organizations arrange the trips, sometimes providing food and transportation for groups traveling significant distances. These activities may be undertaken on their own initiative, or in consultation with the PSUV, which may also provide funding to defray costs in some instances.¹⁴²

¹³⁹ Such calls have been extremely common in public events, producing innumerable quotations and examples. For two representative examples, see Agencia Bolivariana de Noticias (7/16/2008) or Agencia Bolivariana de Noticias (1/12/2008).

¹⁴⁰ Agencia Bolivariana de Noticias (11/13/2008).

¹⁴¹ These informal interviews and conversations were conducted during numerous rallies and mobilizations in Caracas, some which were surrounded the December 2007 referendum on reforming the constitution and others of which were more generalized PSUV rallies held in the first half of 2008.

¹⁴² Rumors or reports of the PSUV or PDVSA financing these trips are common in Venezuela. When asked about this topic, respondents tended to claim that they did not know where financing was coming from, which may be honest ignorance – they simply signed up for the trip and weren’t concerned with who was ultimately

A final type of party-organizational linkage has involved more regularized forms of coordination and institutionalized relationships between the PSUV and high-ranking officials in the Misiones Bolivarianas or those running the Consejo Comunal programs. The PSUV, like many political parties, has a variety of official committees dedicated to specific areas of operations. Strikingly, several committees were also formed at the outset that would be specifically responsible for managing relations with the Consejos and at least some of the Misiones. The Committee on Social Movements and Popular Power was established to manage relations with the communal councils and other organized groups.¹⁴³ The PSUV also formed a Committee of Action in Public Management, leading members of which actively pushed for its involvement in oversight of and coordination with the Bolivarian Missions.¹⁴⁴ As the PSUV has evolved, these committees have been reshuffled and other subcommittees have been formed, a complicated and largely opaque process that does not seem to have reached a stable conclusion as of this writing.¹⁴⁵ The larger point is that the party is actively attempting to set into place a set of institutional arrangements for coordination with the Misiones and Consejos, arrangements which bear similarities to labor councils and committees formed by many Latin American labor-based parties in the 20th century. As Bernal, now a member of the PSUV's national directorate, put it on announcing a recent reshuffling of these committees: "The party called upon the Missions, the Communal Councils, the Urban Land Committees, and the other groups of social organizations and all their leaders, man or woman, who has love for the fatherland and for the process, to work full time for the Revolution and for social mobilization."¹⁴⁶

The regularization of coordination can also be seen in a variety of activities that PSUV officials have begun to undertake jointly with the missions or councils, even when an election is not looming. One class of activities involves joint responses to issues of the day. A good example is the PSUV's role in late 2009 in "relaunching" Barrio Adentro, which had suffered from years of neglect and mismanagement. The PSUV organized a national day of work, in which militants from the Socialist Patrols would dedicate time and resources to refurbishing and outfitting clinics as part of a larger government effort to improve the program.¹⁴⁷ Another major issue in recent years has involved the undersupply of staple goods due to the government's price control regime and concomitant efforts to enforce those price controls in a context of scarcity. Many examples can be found of the PSUV working jointly with Consejos Comunales to investigate and report violations of the price control regime in local supermarkets and bodegas.¹⁴⁸ Another kind of coordination involves the regularization of participation of PSUV officials and politicians in the activities of the organizations or the holding of events at PSUV offices. PSUV politicians often serve as guests of honor or

footing the bill – or may reflect a concern for evasiveness when discussing what is generally seen as a touchy subject in the country.

¹⁴³ Radio Mundial (3/29/2008).

¹⁴⁴ Agencia Bolivariana de Noticias (2/16/2008).

¹⁴⁵ For example, in January 2010, the PSUV was debating the formation of a committee specifically to liaise with the Communal Council program. See Fundacion Televisora de la Asamblea Nacional (1/25/2010).

¹⁴⁶ Agencia Bolivariana de Noticias (1/21/2010).

¹⁴⁷ Agencia Bolivariana de Noticias (10/5/2009)

¹⁴⁸ For example, see Agencia Bolivariana de Noticias (1/11/2010).

commencement speakers at graduation ceremonies for the educational missions.¹⁴⁹ The exchange can also work the other way, with special events organized at the PSUV offices in which the missions or councils participate. At times, these events have taken the form of “mega jornadas” in which a variety of special services are provided and signups encouraged for the missions.¹⁵⁰ In other instances, the national coordinators of programs have chosen to make major public announcements from PSUV party headquarters.¹⁵¹

With respect to all these forms of party-organizational linkage, it should be again emphasized that determining the prevalence of these activities is difficult, given the decentralized nature of the missions and councils and the implausibility of any kind of systematic survey on the topic. However, evidence strongly suggests that all three forms of party-organizational linkages have been encouraged as a matter of course not only by Chávez and high-ranking MVR and PSUV leaders, but also by officials running the programs themselves. Further, the number of examples concerning single events is remarkably widespread in the mass media, especially given that much of this activity involves informal relationships and small-scale localized activities – events not necessarily “newsworthy” by the standards of some media outlets.

Conclusion

This chapter developed the argument that two legacies of the legitimation crisis in Venezuela – the consolidation of a radical left alliance and a popular mandate for institutional reform – led to an outcome in which the new left government pursued a mass-organizational strategy for political mobilization, implementing social programs that would incentivize organization among beneficiaries and fostering linkages between sponsored organizations and the political parties of the Bolivarian Movement. A first section in the chapter illustrated that the radical left was already oriented toward the mass-organizational strategy before entering office. The rest of the chapter then explored the attempts of the Chávez administration to put this agenda into practice. A particularly critical argument was that the mandate for institutional reform allowed the new government to contest, and eventually drastically reduce constraints on its policy-making authority. While this process was ongoing, the mass-organizational strategy took only limited reform. Once the battle over institutional reform was resolved, massive mobilizational initiatives marked by extensive party-organizational linkages were launched, representing the realization of the radical alliance’s longstanding goals.

Tracing these processes presents difficulties not relevant when analyzing cases of Brazil and Chile. A few points might be added regarding the approach taken in this chapter. For one, it should be emphasized that the victory of Chávez in the battle over institutional reform was not predetermined. We can imagine other scenarios in which these events produced a successful coup or some other means of ousting Chávez from power, in which

¹⁴⁹ A few examples include: Agencia Bolivariana de Noticias (1/9/2008); Venezolana Television (6/29/2008); Agencia Bolivariana de Noticias (7/26/2008).

¹⁵⁰ Agencia Bolivariana de Noticias (9/29/2009).

¹⁵¹ El Tiempo (5/14/2008)

case the radical project centered on a mass-organizational strategy would surely have come to a premature end. Yet similar objections can be raised to any argument. The goal is not to show that the progress of events was ineluctable, but that a mass-organizational strategy by the left was strongly favored. In this respect, an important point is that the contrasting outcome— a catchall strategy by the left – was never a real possibility. Chávez and the PP were likely to either gain control over policy-making authority and implement the mass-organizational agenda, or be removed from power.

Another relevant point is that the pattern observed in Venezuela – the ascent of the radical left with a mandate for institutional reform being followed by a lengthy period of contestation in which major policy-making initiatives are put on hold – is general across the cases in which the radical left has consolidated. Similar sequences developed in Bolivia and Ecuador, where new left governments also rewrote constitutions and inspired elements in the opposition to resort to non-electoral strategies for attempting to remove the radical left from power, which also eventually abated and resulted in left governments emerging victorious and presiding over new institutional environments in which they could turn to actually implementing their agendas. Comparative historical analysis often involves examining sequences of actions and reactions that seem extremely unusual and uncertain at the time, but appear to take the form of regularities when viewed with greater historical perspective. As we gain distance from the ascent of the radical left to power with mandates for institutional reform, these regularities and the logic of the reactions involved have become clearer.

Chapter 5 – Chile and Brazil: Catchall Strategies by the Left

The left in Chile and Brazil also entered government promising poverty reduction and looking to use the policy levers of the state to buttress support among the lower classes. In each case, however, the left adopted a catchall strategy for political mobilization, marked by two characteristics. Left governments took technocratic and atomizing approaches to the expansion of social protection, such that major programs did nothing to incentivize social organization and mobilization among beneficiaries. Policy innovation thus provided no basis for the formation of party-organizational linkages, and the left made no other significant attempts to build or strengthen these relationships en masse between left parties and social organizations in popular-sector zones.

This chapter charts this catchall strategy and makes the argument that it was shaped indirectly by the avoidance of legitimacy crises. The consolidation of moderate coalitions on the left in the previous years, by definition, had involved a movement away from a post-liberal transformative agenda and toward one of liberal pragmatism. This shift was more thorough within the Chilean PS than within the Brazilian PT, in which minority sectors of the party still held to a more transformative vision. Nevertheless, in both cases the abandonment of the post-liberal transformative agenda by moderate leadership factions entailed the deprioritization, well before the left came to power, of social mobilization as an abstract value and of mass-organizational strategies for support building. In each case, the left was already oriented toward a catchall strategy before entering government. There is little evidence that, once in power, the left in either case ever seriously considered a mass-organizational strategy akin to that in Venezuela.

The second legacy is that the left came to power in each case with a mandate for institutional continuity. Even had they wanted to use state power to pursue mass-organizational strategies, new administrations lacked the *apertura* enjoyed by the Chávez government that allowed for the contestation of constraints on policy-making authority. Rather, left governments in Brazil and Chile, like most new administrations in stable democracies, were forced to play the hands that they had been dealt. Both the Lagos and Lula administrations faced significant constraints on policy-making authority, owing largely to their reliance on multiparty legislative coalitions. Each administration was able to pass major programs to increase social protection, with considerably more strife and turmoil in Chile than in Brazil. But a mass-organizational agenda centered on spurring social mobilization would assuredly have met extremely stiff resistance. The arrival to power of a moderate left made the adoption of mass-organizational strategy extremely unlikely. But the left's mandate for institutional continuity played an important supporting role in keeping this trajectory on course.

This chapter proceeds in three sections. A first section illustrates how the consolidation of moderate leadership explored in Chapter 3 led to a deprioritization of popular mobilization and a move toward a catchall orientation in each case. Analytically, this part of the chapter thus explains why the left would seek to pursue a catchall rather than mass-organizational strategy once in office. A second section turns to the left in government, showing how the goals of moderate alliances, combined with mandates for institutional continuity that limited their policy-making authority, led to catchall strategies in which

expansions of social protection provided no incentives for social organization among beneficiaries. A third section then examines the status of party-organizational linkages in the absence of a mass-organizational project. To gain leverage on this question, this part of the chapter uses survey data to demonstrate the demobilization of Chilean and Brazilian societies and the weak relationships between participating in social organizations and supporting the left.

The Moderate Coalition and Proclivity Toward the Catchall Strategy

Chapter 2 showed that factional contestation within the PT and the PS involved not just debates over macroeconomic adaptation, but also tension between a post-liberal agenda that by its nature implied a transformative vision and a more liberal orientation acceptant of the status quo. While Chapter 3 made the argument that the success of the Aylwin and Cardoso administrations, preventing any possibility of legitimacy crisis, played a major role in resolving factional disputes and solidifying the power of moderate factions, it did not fully draw out the implications and nature of internal shifts within the PT and PS. The discussion in this section illustrates that these shifts were extremely consequential for the question of whether or not the left embraced catchall or mass-organizational strategies once in office.

Two important points are highlighted in the discussion, respectively related to the extent to which left parties came to value social mobilization and organizational strategies. First, both parties saw a decrease in emphasis on a transformational agenda geared toward the constitution of collective actors as a means to fundamentally make state-society relations, and a concomitant increase in emphasis on a more pragmatic politics of the possible. Social mobilization as an abstract value, in and of itself, therefore received less priority over time in each case. Second, over time parties also came to place less emphasis on linkages with organized constituencies as strategies for building support during electoral campaigns, instead adopting a more electoral-professional orientation highly dependent on the mass media and unintermediated modes of linkage with the electorate. In each case, the catchall strategy had already taken root before the left came to power.

Within these broadly similar patterns, several notable differences existed. Moderate factions within the Chilean PS had fully embraced liberal pragmatism by the early 1990s and were privileged by their relationship to the Aylwin government, such that the internal shift involved radicals converging on this position. Moderate pragmatism in Chile took a very elitist form that was extremely demobilizing, and the catchall strategy was quite firmly in place within the PS well before Lagos won the presidency. In Brazil, in contrast, even moderate factions held longer to the idea of a post-liberal politics, the eventual victory of moderates was less decisive, and pragmatic compromise involved the shelving of a truly transformational agenda in favor of a focus on “good governance” and creating delimited opportunities for civil society to participate in policy-making processes and oversight. Substantial movement toward a catchall strategy occurred before Lula came to power, but the movement away from an emphasis on social mobilization and mass-organizational strategies within the party was less thorough. The intent of the study is not to understate or dismiss these differences, which have substantive import and should be recognized. Rather, the point is that despite these differences, the two cases shared broad similarities.

Chile. On the eve of democratic transition, the orientation toward a post-liberal transformative agenda among groups within the partisan left in Chile mirrored the degree to which they were willing to compromise in the macroeconomic realm. The PC, like the radical fringe in other countries, was strongly oriented toward a transformative agenda but was relatively marginal. The party was able to win a position of influence within the CUT that far outstripped its meager electoral profile, and more generally “remained deeply inserted in grass-roots organizing work in trade unions, poblaciones, and universities” (Roberts 1997, pg. 157). Yet the electoral weakness of the PC forced the party to conduct such activities without recourse to the resources or power of the state, since it was almost entirely shut out of elected office, winning no congressional seats and only one mayorship in the context of an electoral system that greatly favored the parties that participated in the Concertación and Alianza coalitions.

The two major factions within the PS were each more pragmatic, but varied significantly in their initial adherence to a post-liberal transformative vision that placed value on social mobilization and organizational strategies. The sectors of the PS-Almeyda that formed the temporary PAIS party in contesting the 1989 legislative elections made “Participation and Popular Protagonism” a central part of their party manifesto, calling for both major changes to labor legislation that would promote unionization as well as sweeping initiatives to support neighborhood associations and devolve state power to the local level (Partido Socialista de Chile 1989). The continuing emphasis on popular mobilization of the radical sector, most encapsulated in the Nueva Izquierda faction, could also be seen in the Conferencia Nacional de Organización held in late 1991, in which NI took the lead in proposing and debating how the party might reacquire a more basist orientation, avoid elite-driven politics, and improve strategic relationships with social movements and civil society. At the local level, radical politicians such as Sadi Melo Moya, mayor of El Bosque, were also particularly ambitious and innovative in sponsoring popular mobilization and participation (Rivera Ottenberger 2008). More generally, this orientation toward social mobilization reflected the radicals’ conviction that formal procedural democracy was necessary but not sufficient for a new socialism oriented toward deepening democracy. As Manuel Almeyda put it, in discussing the vision of the NI bloc within the PS, “Democracy is an essential ingredient of socialism. But not just formal democracy, that is a limited vision of democracy” (La Nación 11/11/1990).

Moderates within the PS, on the other hand, entered the 1990s having already moved much more thoroughly toward a liberal pragmatic agenda. While continuing to rhetorically emphasize ideas about deepening democracy, the renovationist wing did little to further these goals and, in some ways at least, actively worked against them. Moderates acquiesced to only incremental changes in the Pinochet era labor law, which kept the labor movement highly restrained. Nor did they push to alter the law regulating and restricting the powers of neighborhood associations promulgated by the outgoing Pinochet regime shortly before the transition.¹⁵² The renovationist wing of the party was motivated, above all else, to consolidate

¹⁵² The Ley de Junta de Vecinos was seen as highly demobilizing and restrictive for several reasons. Whereas the applicable law before the authoritarian period had assigned a variety of specific roles and powers in local governance to the Juntas de Vecinos, the Pinochet-era law specifically mentioned no powers whatsoever.

the democratic transition and thus was skeptical of popular mobilization, which might have proven threatening and destabilizing at a particularly delicate time in the country (Oxhorn 1995; Roberts 1998). These priorities were reflected in a shift in electoral and campaigning strategy. From the 1988 plebiscite onward, moderate factions within the PS, as well as their coalition partners in the Concertación alliance, advocated a new emphasis on unintermediated appeals to the electorate through the mass media rather than activities on the ground and partnerships with social movements and organizations (Boas 2008). The devaluation of popular mobilization was thus also attended by a decreased reliance on organizational linkage strategies.

While moderates were in leadership and were privileged by their close relations with the PDC, the factionalized PS continued to reflect a dual-orientation toward mobilization well into the democratic years. In the early part of the decade, official party platforms, over which NI and the activist base of the party held influence, would strongly proclaim a commitment to popular mobilization and deepening democracy. For example, the 1992 party congress produced a set of resolutions regarding social movements that not only affirmed the importance of deepening democracy but were highly self-critical of the party's lack of progress in this area: "The Congress further notes with preoccupation that the social fabric of the country is shrinking, disarticulated, and atomized and that the party lacks a policy that defines its relationship with the social world...The deepening of democracy is only possible if social movements, and particularly the labor movement, obtains a protagonistic role in society" (Partido Socialista de Chile 1992, pg. 19). Yet while the official party platform reaffirmed these commitments, influenced by the numerical weight of NI and the activist base, the PS in government, which was almost entirely constituted by its renovationist wing, did little to actively follow through on these goals and objectives.

As detailed in Chapter 3, the resolution of factional contestation in Chile saw radical factions not only lose power, but also ultimately converge on the renovationist position. As ideological conflict disappeared among factions during the mid 1990s, so too did disputes over the elite-led character of the party and its deprioritization of popular mobilization. The party's elite character, distance from organized societal constituencies, and electoral-professional orientation became characteristics emphasized in studies of the Chilean left (Roberts 1998; Motta 2007). More broadly, Chile became the quintessential case of popular demobilization in scholarship on social movements and civil society in contemporary Latin America (Oxhorn 1994, 1995; Posner 1999, 2004; Kurtz 2004). By the time the Left Turn period began, then, the use of state power to spur popular mobilization and reinvigorate the PS's linkages with organized actors was simply not an option likely to be seriously considered by any relevant wing of the party. A catchall orientation was firmly in place, and would be pursued by the left in government.

Brazil. The consolidation of moderate leadership within the PT also involved a shift in emphasis from a post-liberal transformative agenda to a more liberal pragmatic orientation. With the PT's roots as a basist party emerging from social movements, and its extremely

Further, the law explicitly supported the formation of multiple competing associations within the same communities, which worked against collective action on a meaningful scale. See Posner (2004) for a more detailed analysis.

strong commitment to the notion of social transformation, this shift occurred at a different tempo, and was ultimately less thorough, than that within the PS. The moderate Articulação faction led by Lula did not so readily embrace a catchall orientation as the renovation faction in Chile, and radical tendências maintained more influence within the party and were less willing to completely abandon a post-liberal transformative vision. The PT's evolution over the course of the 1990s thus did not lead to the highly elitist character of the PS, but rather a sort of compromise, in which an emphasis on mobilization and fundamentally transforming state-society relations was replaced with a vision of supporting "good governance" and creating limited spaces for civil society to participate in certain areas of policy-making and oversight.

As Chapter 2 described, the factional disputes that wracked the PT during the 1980s were driven in significant part by conflicts over what a post-liberal transformative agenda might look like in practice and what kinds of pragmatic compromises might be necessary to make. These disputes within the party continued into the 1990s. Radical tendências within the party lambasted what they perceived as a growing tendency toward social democracy that was moving away from a legitimately revolutionary vision of transforming state-society relations (Azevedo 1995, pgs. 161-162). Radicals also tied this dangerous moderating impulse to greater emphasis on electoralist goals, and called for a renewal of the party's mobilizational orientation and greater attention to its social movement base (Hunter 2010, pg. 166). Moderate factions, in turn, struggled to appease these voices within the party and maintain unity, while continuing to steer the PT on the electoral course and to advocate the need for pragmatism.

As the 1990s progressed, this internal debate raged on, with the outcome still uncertain. Official party platforms continued to highlight the potential for a "process of structural transformation" and emphatically called for the creation of a society "radically different than ours." The achievement of these goals, in turn, were said to require "the reinvigoration of social struggle and the mobilization of civil society and workers" (Partido dos Trabalhadores 1998, pg. 545-546). As with many of the party's official stances regarding macroeconomic policy, however, these blanket statements covered up serious internal disputes and likely served as tools for appeasing different voices that were not necessarily in agreement.

The party's actions in government did not necessarily match the millenarian tone of its rhetoric. Over the course of the first half of the decade, the PT became increasingly known – both within and outside Brazil – for its innovations in participatory democracy in municipal administration, especially the participatory budgeting program that first emerged in Puerto Alegre and was later adopted, with variations, to many other cities in the country. Yet these participatory innovations were themselves pragmatic compromises in contexts in which PT administrations were hemmed in by constraints. Experiences in municipal administration offered opportunities for innovation but also demonstrated the limitations of social change and the difficulties of popular mobilization (Abers 1998). Crafting delimited avenues to increase citizen input into local decision-making, while creative and substantively meaningful, was a far cry from a radical transformation of state-society relations. And while participatory innovations "made room" for civil society, they were limited tools for organizing collective subjects and spurring social mobilization. The PT's popularizing of

participatory innovations was essential to crafting a highly distinctive profile during a time in which the party was becoming a more systemic player in Brazilian politics (Baiochhi and Checa 2007). But the “PT Way of Governing,” with its emphasis on good governance and pragmatically fostering limited forms of citizen participation within established institutional constraints, was not to be confused with the fundamentally transformational agenda that at least parts of the party had long advocated.

As noted in Chapter 3, the aftermath of 1994 elections saw a decisive shift in internal power toward moderate factions. The consolidation, or reconsolidation, of power in the moderate wing of the party involved the increasing marginalization of voices within the party who advocated ambitions well beyond the “PT Way of Governing” as well changes in support-building tactics that saw waning strategic emphasis on linkages with social organizations and movements as a means for building support. Whether or not the party’s focus on “organized Brazil” was sufficient for winning electoral majorities at the national level became one axis of debate among radicals and moderates in the mid 1990s, with many within the party arguing that alternative strategies were necessary to broaden its electoral base and appeal (Unger 1995). With moderate and pragmatic voices winning out, the 1998 and 2002 presidential elections also saw significant changes in the PT’s campaign strategies. Non-partisan professional political consultants were hired for the first time, a move that had been blocked by radical factions in the past. Under their guidance, Lula’s image was substantially remade from that of a fiery organizer to a sober dealmaker and elder statesman, and the PT converged on a “technocratic” model of campaigning that stressed political marketing through the mass media and deemphasized the use of party organization and allied social organizations to mobilize support (Boas 2009).

The abandonment of a transformational agenda centered on social mobilization thus occurred more gradually than in the case of the PS in Chile, and the end point of this shift was not an elitist orientation. The PT would remain a party with a basist identity, whose calling card was the participatory budget, and with close relationships to many social movements and the labor sector. These commitments would be affirmed in party manifestos and pronouncements, even up through the ascendance of the PT to power.¹⁵³ As Nylen (2003, pg. 104) put it, writing about the PT at the turn of the millennium, “The PT must have a ‘transformation project’ that envisions an eventual transformation of the status quo into a more socially just future, or it will lose the allegiance of its most expressive leaders and active membership.”

Yet over the course of the 1990s and under the auspices of moderate leadership, the party had experienced a very consequential shift. The truly transformative and millenarian visions of the 1980s, involving a fundamental reshaping of state-society relations and viewing certain opposing forces such as organized capital and the Brazilian oligarchy as enemies to be overcome through social mobilization, had been largely shelved in favor of a more pragmatic emphasis on working through extant institutional channels in order to improve the quality and transparency of governance. Simultaneously, the party’s reliance on social mobilization and organizational linkages for building support and conducting electoral campaigns had waned,

¹⁵³ See, for example, various resolutions from the 11th National Meeting published in Partido dos Trabalhadores (1998), especially those in the section entitled “Radical Democratization of Society and the State.”

replaced with an increasingly catchall, electoral-professional orientation that mirrored the strategies of its major partisan competitors. These strategic shifts were not universally accepted. Some radical *tendências* fought hard against the new orientation, arguing that the PT could be even more successful if it returned to its core grassroots mobilizational vision. Nevertheless, as the Left Turn began, moderates were in control of the party and, as we will see, were strongly oriented toward a catchall strategy once in office.

A Note on Party Organizations. A further comment might be made regarding the nature of party organizations of the PS and PT, especially in comparison with that of the Bolivarian Movement, as the Left Turn began. As Chapter 4 discusses, by its nature the emergence of a radical left in Venezuela involved the formation of a new party, the MVR, and a series of contentious issues regarding how political parties in general would be integrated into the Bolivarian Movement, dilemmas referred to as the “party question” in that chapter. A basic difference, then, with the Brazilian and Chilean cases is that consolidated left parties already existed and, to the extent that it had been once important, the “party question” had been long resolved. This difference is basic to the alternative trajectories of the radical and moderate left in the region. One pattern has involved the breaking of major left parties and the emergence of new radical alliances that must create new partisan vehicles. The other pattern has involved the consolidation of major left parties around the leadership moderate factions.

Once again, we should not completely equate the PS and the PT in terms of their party organizations. The PS had a highly developed party organization that became increasingly routinized over the course of the 1990s after its reunification, but which also became known for having a relatively weak base-level presence. Further, despite regular internal elections and formal structures of internal democracy, the party became known for an elitist character that made leaders unresponsiveness to the concerns voiced by its membership base (Motta 2008; Siavelis 2009; Luna 2010). The PT, in contrast, not only had an institutionalized and routinized organization, but was also known for both its robust local level party structures and for an internal democracy that allowed the party’s activist base to exert real influence over the its direction, characteristics that emerged in the 1980s but persisted in later decades (Keck 1992; Samuels 2004; Hunter 2010). For these reasons, the PT has often been referred as a new kind of mass party or mass-bureaucratic party in the region, terms rarely applied to the PS.

While these distinctions are worth acknowledging, two larger points should be stressed. The first is that, in comparison with the status of parties Venezuela at least, differences between the PS and PT were outweighed by similarities. Indeed, some analysts of the Left Turn have highlighted party organization particularly as a dimension for distinguishing between the duo of Brazil and Chile, on the one hand, and cases as Venezuela (Levitsky and Roberts 2011). The second point is that, possessing established party organizations with at least some presence at the base level in each case, both the PS and PT were in many ways better positioned for adopting a mass-organizational strategy through supporting social mobilization and the formation of party-organizational linkages. They already had local established and institutionalized party structures in place across the country that reached down to the local level and there was little uncertainty about the very future of left parties themselves, neither of which could be said about the Bolivarian Movement.

The Left in Government: Catchall Strategies

With the consolidation of moderate coalitions on the left in both Brazil and Chile, the new left governments that eventually came to power were inclined toward catchall strategies centered on technocratic and atomizing approaches to expanding social protection. Leadership factions had already embraced a pragmatic politics rather than a transformative vision of fundamentally altering state-society relations through support of citizen participation. As such, the adoption of a mass-organizational strategy was extremely unlikely in each case from the beginning. These dynamics were also reinforced by the stability of the institutional environment and the nature of policy-making constraints. The left came to power in Brazil and Chile facing significant constraints on its policy-making authority. Unlike Venezuela, however, the left did not possess a mandate for institutional reform that might have spurred or facilitated a renegotiation of these constraints.

In this milieu, new left administrations still made major policy initiatives in social policy expansion the centerpiece of their agendas. Yet initiatives to spur social mobilization and organization were absent or highly deprioritized. New programs did not incentivize participation and organization among beneficiaries, nor did governments launch other major initiatives geared toward supporting or shaping the world of civil society. In each case, the left invested little energy in building or reinforcing party-organizational linkages, such that already established tendencies toward catchall and electoral-professional strategies were reinforced. Two parties often viewed during the 1980s and early 1990s by analysts as polar opposites in terms of social mobilization and activities “on the ground” would wind up looking strikingly similar in these respects by the latter stages of the Left Turn.

Chile

The PS assumed the presidency in Chile, for the first time since the fall of the Allende regime, facing substantial institutional constraints on its policy-making authority and without any kind of popular mandate for institutional transformation. Partly due to the engineering of the outgoing Pinochet government, the Chilean polity had proven to be a surprising paragon of stability and functionality since the country’s democratic transition. The party system was one of the most highly institutionalized in the region, with relatively low levels of electoral volatility (Roberts and Wibbels 1999). Relationships between different branches of government were generally functional, despite the ongoing persistence of enclaves of military power. And political competition had followed a largely consensual pattern in previous administrations, marked by incremental policy changes and relatively muted rhetoric. Institutional stability did not necessarily imply the absence of public discontent. Apathy and disillusionment rose significantly in the Chilean population over the course of the post-transition period, manifested by decreasing rates of voter turnout, high levels of spoiled ballots, and apparent in many public opinion surveys (Posner 1999; Carlin 2006).

Nevertheless, unlike in Venezuela, the left entered office without a mandate for significant institutional renovation and committed to working largely within the institutional constraints that it inherited. The one exception was the resolution, shared within most of the

Concertación and meeting significant popular approval, to reform some of the non-democratic aspects of the Pinochet-era constitution, especially the provisions giving nine senate seats to unelected senators and keeping aspects of the military outside of civilian control. The subject of constitutional reform raised passions, involving clear consequences for the distribution of political power and representing a symbolic break from the Pinochet era. However, in comparison with other countries such as Venezuela (and, in the broader case universe, Bolivia or Ecuador) the constitutional reforms being debated in Chile as the left came to power were relatively minor. Writing a new constitution that seriously transformed the country's most basic institutions was never on the table, nor did the possibility of reform carry with it an opportunity to dramatically reduce the policy-making constraints faced by the new government.

Similar to left governments coming to power in Venezuela and Brazil, perhaps the most severe constraint faced by the Lagos administration was the lack of a clear and comfortable numerical majority in the legislature. As in the preceding Aylwin and Frei administrations, the Concertación's relative strength in the two chambers of the Chilean congress differed significantly. The government alliance held a clear majority in the Chamber of Deputies, with 70 of the 120 seats, a position that had been remarkably stable since 1989. The Concertación's power in the senate, however, was considerably weaker. The alliance had managed to win 20 of the 38 elected seats in the 1993 and 1997 senatorial elections, and was able to reclaim the body's leadership in 1998, with longtime PDC leader Andrés Zaldívar Larraín assuming the presidency. However, due to the continuing presence of the nine unelected senators, the Concertación nevertheless lacked a stable working majority. Further constraints on the administration derived from the nature of coalition governance within the Concertación. The Concertación was considerably more cohesive than most coalition governments, with the binomial electoral system encouraging close pacting and enabling some degree of discipline to be exerted across parties (Carey and Siavelis 2005). Nevertheless, the Concertación remained a coalition of multiple parties, generally pulling in the same direction but also marked by ideological heterogeneity and some degree of competing interests, especially with the very ascension of Lagos to the presidency calling into question the longtime dominance of the PDC within the alliance.

Technocratic Social Protection. The left in Chile took a technocratic approach to social protection. Neither of the two major social policy initiatives of the Lagos government – Plan AUGE and Chile Solidario – were designed to incentive participation and organization among beneficiaries or otherwise spur the formation of popular associations. And while sometimes rhetorically emphasizing the need to build a more participatory polity, neither the Lagos nor Bachelet administrations launched any other serious initiative in social mobilization. The nature of the left coalition was the predominant influence shaping a non-mobilizational orientation. Social mobilization was never even considered by the technocratically-oriented administration, and the Lagos government even went out of its way to shut organized social actors out of the policy-making process. The popular mandate for institutional continuity and the policy-making constraints faced by the administration reinforced this tendency. Given the amount of resistance that the Lagos government met in attempting to implement reforms in social protection, prospects for implementing more mobilizational policies were almost surely non-existent even had such policies been favored.

Chile Solidario was a new policy of non-contributory social assistance, intended to attack and ameliorate extreme poverty. While overall levels of poverty had declined markedly during the previous Concertación governments, levels of indigence had remained relatively stable during the last half of the 1990s. The Ministerio de Planificación began to examine this problem in mid 1999 and, subsequently, after the election of Lagos, launched a task force to design a strategy for reducing indigence. A pilot program was to emerge from this action plan, Programa Puente, which focused on connecting indigent families to the state through the activities of social workers, who would make contact with each family and help them attain various subsidies for which they already qualified and get access to other programs, such as job-training and alcohol and drug rehabilitation. At the same time as the Programa Puente was being developed, the Ministerio de Hacienda, in consultation with the World Bank, was also working on a strategy for ameliorating indigence that was centered on conditional cash transfers to indigent families, more closely mirroring many programs being developed elsewhere on the continent. Two separate government ministries thus began to develop ideas for attacking the indigenous problem, with somewhat different points of emphasis, the Programa Puente emphasizing job training and fostering integration, the Ministerio de Hacienda's proposals emphasizing cash subsidies. Both programs, however, shared an emphasis on establishing links between the state and atomized individual families, and neither included provisions geared toward fostering community solutions or collective action among beneficiaries.

The "Chile Solidario System," announced by Lagos on May 21, 2002, reflected a compromise between the visions of the Ministerio de Planificación and the Ministerio de Hacienda, hammered out in the preceding months in a series of high-level meetings and working groups. The program revolves around a "family contract" between indigent families and the government. Families agree to receive cash subsidies (an enrollment subsidy and a monthly benefit) as well as "psychosocial support," regular visits from municipal social workers and assistance in gaining preferential access to job-training programs, drug and alcohol rehabilitation centers, and pre-school enrollment. In return, participating families agree to comply with an extensive set of conditions, including regular visits to health clinics, family counseling, and school attendance for children. The program thus combined elements of the Programa Puente, with its focus on job training and establishing regularized contact between the indigent and state officials, with characteristics more common to conditional cash transfer programs in other countries. In comparison with other CCT programs being developed across the region during this time, however, Chile Solidario was also distinguished by the restricted scope of the program and the relatively low level of cash benefits offered. Conceived to address indigence rather than as income support for poor households more broadly, Chile Solidario extended benefits to only roughly 6% of households, a proportion much lower than comparable programs elsewhere in the region. The size of benefits offered through the program were also relatively small, even when accounting for the value of benefits from other programs that Chile Solidario was intended to help beneficiaries access (Pribble 2008).

While a large and growing line of research has parsed and explained these differences between Chile Solidario and other social protection schemes, the key point for present purposes is that the program was clearly orientated toward social protection without social

mobilization. Geared toward establishing individualized patterns of contact between state social workers and indigent families, the program offered no means or incentive for collective action among beneficiary families and, despite the tendency for extreme poverty to be territorially concentrated, no component for finding community solutions to problems of indigence. This orientation was present from the beginning – neither the Ministerio de Planificación nor the Ministerio de Hacienda plans contained a significant community-organizational component – and appears to have been an overt choice of the administration. Pribble’s excellent research into the policy-making process regarding Chile Solidario makes this point quite clear. One official confided that the orientation of social protection was to “help people without bringing them together” while another noted that “(Chile Solidario) does not have anything to do with solidarity or opportunity networks. It’s super individual.” While the program has been successful in many respects and attracted positive reviews in policy circles, its atomizing nature has also been noted in numerous evaluations and been a specific point of criticism.¹⁵⁴

A technocratic approach that pursued social protection without social mobilization was also present in the other major initiative of the Lagos government, the health care reform Plan AUGE. Lagos’ campaign for the presidency in 1999-2000 had made a revamping of the health care system a major point of emphasis. At issue were a series of inequities built into the country’s two-tiered health care system, which left the public health system underfunded and difficult to access for those without private insurance. After the new administration had taken office, several different working groups and an “Inter-Ministerial Committee on Health Sector Reform” were convened in order to examine reform proposals. The working groups were explicitly designed to incorporate participation from different stakeholders. One involved unions and academics, another included civil society and non-governmental organizations, and a third was geared toward doctors and other health providers (Gideon 2005, pg. 175). The government also made at least nominal moves toward eliciting public opinion. The Ministerio de Salud organized a series of local-level public consultation meetings in 2001, in which local civil society organizations were invited to attend and participate, and later disseminating information boxes in subway stations of Santiago through which citizens were asked to give their opinions on the health reform (Gideon 2005, pg. 176). Despite these nominal moves toward the integration of social organizations, however, the policy-making process was ultimately extremely technocratic. The working groups convened to debate the reform broke down by October 2001, as participants protested at being marginalized and treated only as token participants in a process driven by ministerial technocrats (Dannreuther and Gideon 2008, pg. 855-856).

The basic parameters of the health reform, given the name Plan AUGE, were announced to the public in May 2002. The government proposed to increase equity in the health care system by formally guaranteeing that all Chileans would be able to have a defined set of conditions and illnesses treated in a timely manner and to pay for the costs at least partly through increased taxation. The proposal was immediately met by a wave of

¹⁵⁴ For example, Palma and Urzúa (2005, pg. 33) comment that the program “could be broadened to look beyond inter-family relations to support associativity and participation in the community to help build a more active citizenship.”

opposition, especially from conservative parties and business interests, who objected in particular to plans for financing the reforms. Ultimately, the policy-making and legislative process was to drag out for almost two years, with the Lagos government eventually forced to accept a significantly modified version of its proposal. The number of conditions afforded guaranteed coverage would be phased in over time. More importantly, the costs of the legislation were funded through very different means than that originally envisioned. The government's original proposal had envisioned channeling a small portion of public and private contributions to a "solidarity fund" to pay for the program, with another portion pooled into a "maternal solidarity fund" to specifically pay for maternal health and leave for low income and high risk families. In the end, however, the first solidarity fund was substantially downgraded and the maternal solidarity fund eliminated, with revenues instead drawn from a 1% increase in the value added tax.¹⁵⁵ The ultimate legislation that emerged thus reflected a significant compromise, one criticized from some quarters, but also lauded from others as a substantial policy achievement given the significant constraints faced by the administration.

Once again, the key point for present purposes is that the program involved no component of social mobilization. The AUGE legislation was geared toward facilitating access to the existing health care infrastructure and finding means to pay for the increase in health provision to the poor that was expected to result from the reform. It did not establish institutions or otherwise provide incentives that would support and integrate civil society groups in the health sector or spur collective action among beneficiaries of the program. As with Chile Solidario, this non-mobilizational orientation was clearly by design. The government's initial proposal did not include such measures, and most analysts seem to agree that its initial incorporation of civil society actors into the policy-making process was half-hearted at best. Overall, then, rather than using social protection reform as a means to support social organization and mobilization, the government instead embraced a more technocratic model that sidelined and demobilized organized social constituencies.

While it seems clear that the Lagos administration never intended to pursue a more mobilizational orientation, the mandate for institutional continuity and the largely immutable policy-making constraints implied by such continuity likely made mobilization an impossible proposition. The government not only lacked a clear legislative majority, but also faced extremely fierce opposition to both Chile Solidario and Plan AUGE. Within a few days of the rollout of these plans in Lagos's address of May 21, 2002, right-wing parties were denouncing the government's policy agenda, while conservative commentators were terming the tax increases necessary to fund new programs a "golpe" against the Chilean middle-class (*El Mercurio* 5/24/2002, *El Mercurio* 5/26/2002). Ultimately, resistance to many of the government's proposals also emerged within the Concertación coalition, blocs within both the PDC and the PPD came out in opposition to the government's financing plans over the next few months (*El Mercurio* 5/29/2002, *El Mercurio* 8/29/2002). And the actual legislative process, particularly surrounding AUGE, would be extended and tortuous, involving the very

¹⁵⁵ For overviews of the AUGE policy-making process and the changes ultimately implemented from initial proposal to final legislation, see Dannreuther and Gideon (2008) and Pribble (2008, pgs. 228-232).

gradual assembly of a coalition amid high levels of intervention and influence from business groups.

While the battle to extend social protection largely centered on the costs of programs and the means of their funding, it seems inconceivable that highly mobilizational characteristics or initiatives would have survived in the legislative fray had the government attempted to incorporate them into new programs or make them a part of its larger policy agenda. Given the country's history with social mobilization and the generally demobilizing nature of previous Concertación governments, conservative sectors would certainly have viewed such proposals as surprising and significant threats and worked to defeat them. In a legislative process that involved many hugely contested rounds of consultation and painful consensus building, in which the administration was forced to make a quite large number of concessions, it is unimaginable that any kind of mobilizational policy proposal would have made it through alive. Rather, in all likelihood such proposals would not only have died, but would have strongly jeopardized the administration's ability to successfully expand social protection at all in the realms of health and non-contributory assistance.

As one might expect, neither the Lagos nor the Bachelet administrations launched other initiatives to spur collective action and social organization among the popular sectors, maintaining continuity with the longstanding orientation away of the PS and the Concertación alliance away from mobilization. Bachelet did cast herself as promoting the expansion of citizen participation, campaigning on the proposal to foster a "government of citizens" and ameliorate many of its more elitist features (Siavelis 2007; Navia 2008). This agenda, however, was not mobilizational. The candidate proposed to allow citizen groups to introduce legislation on some matters, to consider ideas about bringing participatory budgeting to Chile, and to create new institutional spaces for policy consultation with civil society. In this sense, Bachelet's vision represented more of a convergence on aspects of the "good governance" or "council democracy" models of Brazil than an embrace of popular mobilization and policies to truly foster collective action among marginalized groups. This campaign was backed by an extensive organization of volunteer networks, which were somewhat of a novelty in Chilean politics. However, these entities existed solely for the purposes of the election itself, and the campaign did not rely upon linkages with other extant social organizations and movements for persuading or turning out voters (Boas 2008).

The distinction between support for participation and fostering social mobilization became particularly evident in Bachelet's first year in office, as did the institutional obstacles for promoting even a limited participatory agenda. In one of her first official speeches to the country, the new president promised a "more inclusive, participatory, open and transparent politics" (Bachelet 2006). Only a few months later, she was confronted with the first crisis of her administration, the surprising emergence of a wave of student-led protest against inadequacies in the educational system. The administration's response involved a cabinet reshuffle that saw the Interior Ministry headed by Belario Velasco, a veteran politician with a strong law-and-order reputation, and a strategic decision to tone down its rhetoric about participation, lest these ideas be confused with an endorsement of the controversial mobilization of the students (Navia 2008). Even so, the Bachelet administration did try to push forward with some participatory reforms, most notably a set of "Advisory Councils" that would be composed of civil society groups and were tasked with formulating policy proposals

and recommendations in social policy areas such as health, pensions, and education. Yet while the councils were formed and operated, they were dominated by technocrats, did not serve in practice as participatory fora, and left many would-be participants in civil society disillusioned (Aguilera 2007; Rindejäll 2009). Put together, these experiences suggest, once again, that not only did the moderate left in Chile have little interest in supporting or spurring popular mobilization through state policy, but that institutional constraints almost precluded this possibility even were it desired.

Brazil

As in Chile, the left entered office in Brazil facing substantial constraints on executive policy-making authority and without a popular mandate for institutional transformation that might have allowed for those constraints to be meaningfully contested. The Lula campaign in 2002 had centered on a message that combined elements of change and continuity, casting the candidate as a change agent while also explicitly promising not to seek alterations to either the broad contours of macroeconomic policy or the basic institutions of Brazil's liberal democracy.

In managing the transition to the presidency, the income administration solidified this commitment to respecting the existing rules of the game, while also trying to balance demands from within the PT regarding the conduct of coalitional politics and executive-legislative relations within multiparty presidentialism. Relations with the outgoing Cardoso administration were conducted amicably on both sides and the transition process proceeded without incident (Fleischer 2004). Meanwhile, the new administration entered into intense negotiations with a variety of parties in order to craft a governing coalition that would enable a legislative majority. In this respect, the administration was hindered somewhat in comparison with past governments in that sectors of the PT strongly opposed accepting party-switchers, a tradition in Brazilian politics that the PT had long denounced, and were adamant about not conceding too many ministries in the process of horse-trading (Hunter 2007). In the end, the government was able to form a broad that, after the late inclusions of the PMDB and PPB, held comfortable majorities in both chambers of the congress.

The PT thus entered government largely committed to working within the rules of the game and accepting institutional constraints on executive policy-making authority. These constraints stemmed mainly from the legislature. In the 2002 elections, the PT, likely benefiting from Lula's coattails, was able to achieve its best-ever performance. Yet in Brazil's fragmented party system, this victory still left the party with slightly less than 18% of the seats in both chambers of the legislature. While the government's coalition held a large majority position (indeed, a supermajority in the Chamber of Deputies), the coalition itself was extremely diverse and posed significant difficulties in terms of maintenance. Encompassing parties of the left such as the PCdoB and PSB as well as parties of the right such as the PL and PPB, the coalition mixed traditional allies and traditional enemies. Not only would the new government have to reach across the aisle to many centrist and conservative forces, it would also have to do so while keeping its own activist base and legislative delegation happy or at least pacified.

Technocratic Social Protection. The Lula government in Brazil pursued a technocratic strategy of social protection without popular mobilization that was broadly similar to that of the Lagos government in Chile. The cardinal policy achievement of the new administration was Bolsa Família, an initiative to consolidate and expand a group of extant non-contributory social assistance programs. Like other conditional cash transfer programs, Bolsa Família was designed in a largely technocratic fashion and atomizing in its implementation. Municipal-level councils were established to improve oversight in the implementation of the program, continuing the trend toward “Council Democracy” in Brazil. But Bolsa Família provided no basis for collective action among beneficiaries or for spurring social organization among the popular sectors, and nor did the Lula administration take other actions to foster popular mobilization. As in Chile, the orientation toward social protection without social mobilization was a logical extension of the dual legacies of the legitimation era. The moderate coalition that came to power on the left never seriously pursued mobilizational alternatives. The continuity of the institutional environment and policy-making constraints, in turn, made such alternatives politically unviable.

Lula made a promise to end hunger a rallying call of his victorious 2002 campaign and famously reaffirmed this commitment at his inauguration, declaring: “If, by the end of my term, every Brazilian has food to eat three times a day, I shall have fulfilled my mission in life.” Soon after taking office, the president thus made an initiative titled “Fome Zero” the centerpiece of his new administration. This initiative was initially centered on three ideas. First, the new administration created, by decree, a new ministry to coordinate social assistance and anti-hunger programs in the country. Second, also by decree, the Lula administration launched a new social assistance program called “Cartão Alimentação,” which would offer to low-income families a monthly benefit of R50, which could only be spent on food. Finally, Fome Zero was intended to serve as an umbrella initiative for a set of other new non-contributory social assistance programs.

The 1990s had seen the emergence of a variety of targeted non-contributory social assistance programs launched by subnational governments controlled by diverse political parties. During the last years of the Cardoso administration, several programs had been extended to national level or launched in similar form nationally for the first time. The largest and most salient was Bolsa Escola, which had been originally implemented in the Federal District by PT governor Cristovam Buarque in 1995. In April 2001, the Brazilian legislature passed a law authorizing the national extension of the program, which would be administered through municipalities and which would provide a monthly cash benefit of R15-45 to poor families with children aged 6-15, so long as those children attended school. Shortly thereafter, the Congress passed another law creating a similar program with the same benefit structure, “Bolsa Alimentação,” for families with children aged 0-6 or with a pregnant mother, conditional on regular vaccinations and trips to health clinics for the mother and small children. Finally, in January 2002, the Cardoso administration created a third program by decree, Auxilio Gas, which offered a bimonthly R15 benefit to poor families such that they could purchase cooking gas.

The logistical problems inherent to an umbrella initiative soon became apparent. Programs were broadly similar in nature, yet were run through different ministries, with Bolsa Escola handled by the Ministry of Education, Bolsa Alimentacao by the Ministry of Health,

Auxilio Gas by the Ministry of Mines and Energy, and Cartao Alimentacao by the Fome Zero system. The programs thus had separate administrative structures, procedures for screening and selecting beneficiaries, and mechanisms for dispensing benefits (Hall 2006, pg. 696). This situation was marked by obvious inefficiencies and created coordination problems and rivalry among the various institutional entities involved in the administration of benefits. In October 2003, the Lula administration thus announced an administrative reorganization, in which all of the programs would be combined and integrated into Bolsa Família. This change was soon followed by a ministerial reshuffling, in which the a new Ministry of Social Development and Fight Against Hunger was created to merge the extant Ministry of Food Security and Fight Against Hunger and Ministry of Social Welfare. Finally, the administrative reshuffling of the Bolsa Família program was codified into law and passed through the Congress in January 2004, with the support of a broad multipartisan coalition.

Bolsa Família grew with tremendous speed and became the signature program of the Lula administration. Under the new administrative system, systems for targeting and enrolling beneficiaries were improved and benefit levels extended, leading to a huge growth in the enrolled population, from 4.1 million households in June 2004 to 11.1 million households in July 2006 (Zucco 2008). Spending on Bolsa Família (or, previously, the programs that Fome Zero sought to unify) increased from R1.5 billion in 2001 to R8.3 billion in 2006 (Hall 2006, pg. 693). The program quickly attracted worldwide attention as a particularly successful and large-scale conditional cash transfer scheme, attracting a host of analyses of its structure and impact on development outcomes. Bolsa Família also became the signature policy achievement of the first Lula administration and critical component of the president's successful reelection campaign in 2006. The president emphasized the program continually in his campaign, while opponents struggled to claim credit for their own parties' roles in bringing such programs to fruition.¹⁵⁶ After Lula's resounding victory, numerous academic studies soon turned to analyzing its impact on the voting behavior of beneficiaries (Hunter and Power 2007; Zucco 2008).

The critical point for this discussion is that Bolsa Família did not involve social mobilization, nor was a mobilizational component ever seriously considered. The program was run by national authorities at the Ministério do Desenvolvimento Social e Combate à Fome and implemented by municipal governments. Each municipality is legally obligated to create a Conselho de Controle Social for the purposes of running and overseeing the program. The Brazilian government estimates that 52% of council members are other public officials while 48% are from civil society (Ministério do Desenvolvimento Social e Combate à Fome ND). These municipal-levels councils are largely administrative bureaucracies, responsible for processing applications, ensuring that beneficiaries comply with conditionalities, and that programs are not abused for political purposes. The councils play an important role, at least theoretically, in ensuring a rules-based and technocratic implementation of the program. However, the program itself does not provide support for civil society organizations by offering funding for them or giving them a role in local policy making beyond seeing out very basic administrative tasks assigned by the national-level ministry. Nor does the program

¹⁵⁶ Alckmin went out of his way to emphasize both his support for Bolsa Família and the programs origins during the Cardoso administration. See, for example, Globo (10/26/2006).

create incentives for collective action among beneficiaries. Rather, as with Chile Solidario, beneficiaries have essentially individual relationships with the program, visiting the municipal office if they have a problem and usually receiving benefits through automatic bank deposits. For this reason, while Bolsa Família has received widespread acclaim and proved very popular in Brazil, it has been occasionally criticized, especially from the left, for reflecting an “assistencialist” and atomizing approach to poverty alleviation.

While the Lula administration was clearly oriented toward social protection without social mobilization from the beginning of its tenure, an alternative strategy would likely have been politically unfeasible given the mandate for institutional continuity and the policy-making constraints faced by the government. This point is not quite as obvious as in the Chilean case. The Lula government faced far less opposition to its social policy agenda than the Lagos government did to its initiatives. Indeed, the ministerial reshuffling and executive orders to begin programs such as Cartao Alimentação and Bolsa Família induced relatively little dissent from opposing parties. Further, when programs were ultimately submitted to the legislative process for formal ratification, each bill passed easily with support from a broad coalition of political parties. Is it possible that the Lula administration had the policy-making freedom for a mobilizational agenda?

The ease with which the administration was able to achieve its objectives with respect to social protection is largely reflective of the long-term and multipartisan support for new non-contributory social assistance programs and for the notion of basic income guarantees more generally. As early as 1991, a proposal for basic income guarantees introduced by the PT’s Eduardo Suplicy had attracted significant multiparty support, although it eventually died in the Chamber of Deputies. Subsequently, new initiatives in non-contributory social assistance at the subnational level were pioneered or adopted by municipal administrations of many different parties. Not only were these programs subsequently extended to the national level under the Cardoso administration, but their extension and legislative implementation was backed by a broad coalition of parties. Indeed, representatives from the PSDB, PMDB, and the PT had introduced proposals in the late 1990s for the national extension of programs and a broad multipartisan coalition had also eventually coalesce behind the notion of basic income guarantees (Suplicy MS; Britto and Soares 2011). In sum, there was longstanding multipartisan convergence on the desirability of specifically extending a technocratic and essentially atomizing kind of income support policy.

It seems unlikely that a policy orientation geared toward social incorporation, which might have used income support programs or other initiatives to organize and mobilize beneficiaries, would have gotten any legislative traction. For one, such a proposal would have broken with the developing consensus behind a more atomizing and technocratic approach to policy making. The efforts of the PT, especially its moderate leadership, to prove its systemic bona fides would have been undercut by this kind of departure. More generally, the breadth of the consensus behind income support programs was arguably due to the perception among parties of the center and the right that such policies represented a means to address poverty that were not politically threatening and from which parties across the ideological spectrum could potentially reap rewards. Conservative parties and sectors in Brazil had long perceived the PT as a fundamentally threatening force, a perception intrinsically linked to its earlier identity as a representative of “organized Brazil” and its relationship to the wave of social

mobilization in the 1980s and early 1990s. Even just proposing this kind of agenda would likely have been politically problematic for the Lula government, opening the administration to a host of criticism and critique, potentially leading to the fragmenting of its legislative coalition, and jeopardizing other policy objectives. In this sense, the flip side of the multipartisan consensus behind the extension of income support was an implicit multipartisan consensus for social demobilization and against an agenda of social incorporation.

The PT's place within this consensus was not just reflected by the administration's choice of making Bolsa Família its flagship policy achievement, but also by its further distancing of the PT from organized societal constituencies. No other major policy initiatives were launched that would spur popular mobilization. Rather, the Lula administration, in somewhat similar fashion to the Bachelet administration in Chile, focused on some more limited goals in enhancing citizen participation and civil society input at the national level. The most highly publicized of these initiatives was the creation of the Conselho de Desenvolvimento Econômico e Social (CDES), an entity composed of government representatives, labor unions, business associations, and other NGOs and high-profile social movements which would theoretically play a consultative role in national-policy making. Several other lower profile national councils were also formed, and the government also made separate strides toward including a large number of civil society organizations in discussions surrounding the "Multiyear Plan," a general policy document outlining plans for the latter half of the first Lula administration.

These plans, while welcomed by civil society actors in the beginning, ultimately met with significant disillusionment. From the beginning, the CDES was vested with very little power in shaping policy-making, such that one commentator has summed up its role as "absolutely irrelevant" in shaping the direction of the Lula administration (Samuels 2008). The debility of the CDES incensed many of its civil society representatives, leading them to protest the administration's actions and to nearly resign from the council altogether (Hochstetler 2008). The Multiyear Plan also ultimately received a critical reception, with many groups within civil society questioning the inclusion of projects that they had opposed and their lack of input into the process once plans had left the abstract realm and entered into the legislative arena. Relationships between the government and established social movements and civil society organizations thus generally deteriorated over time, and it became commonplace for fronts of organized actors to launch public missives and engage in protests and mobilizations against the policy agenda of the administration (Hochstetler 2008). Many of these organized actors would refuse to endorse Lula in the 2006 presidential elections, or do so with great hesitance. Ultimately, Lula's campaign in 2006 was the first in which the candidate relied nearly exclusively on unintermediated forms of support building, eschewing mobilization through organized social actors nearly completely (Boas 2008). If the PT had been growing more distant from organized civil society before entering office, the experience of national governance actually accentuated this tendency.

Party-Organizational Linkages Compared

The second and related aspect of the catchall strategy was a minimal emphasis on party-organizational linkages. With the Lagos and Lula governments choosing to pursue

technocratic and atomizing approaches to social protection, their major policy actions, by definition, provided no spur to collective action among the popular sectors and no special opportunity for their respective parties to form linkages with social organizations supported by state policy, as was the case in Venezuela. The technocratic policy orientation, however, does not necessarily mean that societies were demobilized or that party-organizational linkages did not exist altogether. Working relationships between parties and popular associations might have existed previously and been maintained. Party-associational linkages might also have been formed through other means during this period at the initiative of other actors within political parties. Even with the consolidation of moderate hegemonic coalitions, factions within each party clearly remained with different kinds of agendas, which have involved nurturing or forming relationships with popular associations at the local level. The persistence of such local relationships seems especially clear in the case of the PT, which had a much stronger basist orientation not that long ago, and in which the triumph of moderate factions favoring a move away from mobilizational strategies was not so thorough.

One of the difficulties in considering party-organizational linkages is that their incidence is extremely difficult to characterize, even in broad terms, in the absence of concerted attempts to form or institutionalized such relationships en masse, as in contemporary Venezuela or, in other time periods, in cases of labor mobilization by labor-based parties. For example, monographic studies may suggest the existence of ad hoc local working relationships between popular associations and the PT in certain municipalities. But it would be a clear mistake to extrapolate a national trend in a country with over 5500 municipalities. The same can be said for social mobilization and collective action in general. Some cities or neighborhoods in Brazil or Chile may have particularly robust patterns of popular participation and associationalism. Yet inferring a national trend from those areas is effectively impossible, equivalent to extrapolating trends about participation in the United States from observations drawn from a few areas of San Francisco.

We can gain some insight into the incidence of party-organizational linkages by examining survey data on participation in social organizations, especially those operating at the community-level, and support for left parties. Such data cannot directly measure the frequency or strength of working relationships between PT or PS and such organizations. But they can assess two very relevant questions. First, in the absence of mobilizational policies from national governments, how active are Brazilians and Chileans in organizing at the territorial level compared to the citizens of other countries? Second, is there any relationship between participation in popular associations and support for left parties? The latter question is particularly important for assessing the extent and vibrancy of party-organizational linkages between left parties and popular associations. If such linkages are actually widespread to a meaningful degree, then a statistical relationship between participation and left partisanship is a likely observable implication.

A first question, then, involves the overall level of participation in community-based organizations. Of interest are both the aggregate level of participation and patterns of change over time during the Left Turn period. Table 5.1 presents data from the 1998 Latinobarómetro survey and the 2006 LAPOP America's Barometer on participation in community-based associations for Chile and Brazil, with Venezuela also examined for

comparative purposes.¹⁵⁷ Whereas the former survey only asks about participation in general, the latter asks about the frequency of participation, allowing for separation examination of the proportion of respondents participating at least monthly and at least yearly. Because the Latinobarómetro and LAPOP measures were generated with somewhat different survey instruments, issues arise with respect to their comparability and we should be somewhat circumspect about drawing conclusions about longitudinal change. A more appropriate focus of examination is the change in standing of any one country relative to others over time. Both surveys utilized the same instrument across countries, making cross-sections produced by the surveys clearly comparable. We can therefore think of the data as two cross-sections that are each individually comparable but are only more roughly useful for making inferences about longitudinal change.

Table 5.1: Participation in Community-Based Organizations

	Brazil	Chile	Venezuela
1998 (Any)	17.4	9.2	20.9
2006 (Monthly)	7.3	13.2	25.6
2006 (Yearly)	14.4	21.1	34.6

The data suggest a striking pattern of change and differentiation with respect to the pair of Brazil and Chile, on the one hand, and that of Venezuela on the other. Before the Left Turn began, Brazil and Venezuela had roughly similar levels of participation in community-based associations. Chile lagged somewhat behind, which is not surprising given the widespread impression that the 1990s had been a time of demobilization in the country. The data from 2006, however, paints a very different picture. Whether looking at yearly or monthly measures, now we see strikingly large differences in the rates of participation in Brazil and Chile versus that in Venezuela. Indeed, rates in Venezuela roughly equal to or higher than those in Brazil and Chile combined. The extremely low figures for Brazil are particularly interesting. While the Left Turn period appears to have been attended by a significant spur to collective action on a territorial level in Venezuela, the organizational landscape in Brazil now looks like comparatively demobilized and placid. And these data are only estimates, prone to bias from sampling or other factors, it is striking that participation in Brazil is even lower than that in Chile, given that the former has frequently been lauded for its innovations in citizen participation and the latter has so frequently been cast as highly demobilized.

The data underscore the point that the institutional innovations in “good governance” that spread around Brazil in the 1990s, frequently but not always spurred by the PT, are

¹⁵⁷ A question about community-based associations likely picks up most, but not all, participation in popular associations. Unfortunately, data are not available for both surveys that measure participation in organizations like informal-sector unions that may not be picked up by this question.

perfectly compatible with a relatively atomized and demobilized society. While laudable in many ways, innovations such as the participatory budget or the municipal-level policy councils are not necessarily significant spurs to collective action and mobilization, at least not in comparison to the policy actions of the Chávez government in Venezuela or, as discussed in the conclusion, other governments of the radical left in the region. Evidence backing this notion has been uncovered in other studies. For example, data collected on associationalism across the six largest cities in Brazil in 1988 and 1996 showed a decline in participation in community-based associations, at precisely the time when the participatory budget and “Council Democracy” was spreading across the country (Ferreira 1999; Avritzer 2009).

If the Left Turn has witnessed a growing divergence in collective action and popular mobilization across countries where the moderate and radical left has taken power, has it also seen a similar divergence in linkages between social organizations and left parties? As noted above, measuring party-organizational linkages is extremely hard. We can gain some leverage on this question, however, by looking at “shared-member linkages” (Seawright 2009; Handlin and Collier 2011), which examine the relationship between partisanship with left parties and participation in social organizations. Table 5.2 presents information on levels of monthly participation in community-based associations among partisans of the major left party in each country, partisans of any other party, and non-partisans.

Shared-member linkages are revealing for two reasons. First, if a party really does have significant linkages with a set of social organizations, we would expect participation or membership in such organizations to be especially high among supporters of that party. For example, were the PT still the party of “organized Brazil,” then we might expect PT partisans to be more likely to participate in various kinds of social organizations than other partisans or non-partisans. In this sense, shared-member linkages can be seen as an observable implication of party-organizational linkages. Second, shared-member linkages, in and of themselves, can be an important component of strong party-organizational linkages. Individuals who have one foot in party activism and another foot in associational life are particularly well situated to help facilitate working relationships between social organizations and political parties or their candidates (Seawright 2009).

Table 5.2: Shared-Member Linkages

		Brazil	Chile	Venezuela
Participation in Community-Based Associations	Left partisans	9.2	13.3	38.7
	Other partisans	11.1	18.2	28.4
	Non partisans	6.0	12.3	21.0

This set of data illustrates the paucity of shared-member linkages between left parties in Brazil and Chile and community-based organizations, as well as a huge divergence with Venezuela in this respect. Partisans of the PT and the PS are not significantly more likely than either non-partisans or partisans of other parties to be participants in community-based

associations. In fact, in both cases, the rate of participation among left partisans is actually lower than among partisans of other parties. These data contrast sharply with that for the left in Venezuela and Bolivia. Not only are rates of participation substantially higher, as suggested by the previous Table 5.2, but supporters of the PSUV and MAS are far more likely to be participants in popular associations than others in the country.

These results are not that surprising for the PS in Chile, which has long been associated with a move away from linkages with organized societal constituencies. But for the PT, once widely acknowledged as the party of “organized Brazil,” the data are quite striking. Numerous studies have suggested that the party’s relationship to organized constituencies has weakened over time and that its popular base of support has likewise shifted along social, geographical, and ideological dimensions with its growth, evolution, and nationalization. For PT supporters to be no more active in community-based organizational life than other Brazilians, and even slightly less active than partisans of other parties, however, is still quite a shock. Naturally, these aggregate numbers in a national sample may obscure many regional and local differences. Latin American political parties have long histories of “multiple identities,” functioning differently in urban areas and the countryside, or across urban spaces in different regions. It would not be surprising to find that PT supporters in the party’s historical strongholds in the urban south are still more likely to participate in associational life than others in those areas.

Conclusion

This chapter argued that legacies of the previous period – a moderate left coalition consolidating and eventually coming to power with a mandate for institutional continuity – were conducive to catchall strategies from the left in office, marked by technocratic approaches to social protection and little emphasis on party-organizational linkage. The consolidation of power by moderates within the PS and the PT occurred at different tempos and involved produced a party with a more elitist orientation in Chile than in Brazil, where the PT retained a more basist identity and a mission focused on good governance and supporting limited forms of citizen participation. Nevertheless, in both cases the moderate left came to power with little interest in using the levers of the state for the purposes of spurring popular mobilization and fostering collective action among marginalized groups. In each case, this non-mobilizational orientation was further buttressed by mandates for institutional continuity, which induced left governments to play the hands which they had been dealt rather than looking to undertake controversial actions that might have reduced institutional constraints on their policy-making authority.

With the dominance of catchall strategies, the tenure of left parties in government did not produce a spur to popular-sector organization or the formation of party-organizational linkages, instead reinforcing previous trends toward demobilization and greater distance between left parties and societal constituencies. Unlike in Venezuela, then, the actions of the left did not create a new organizational foundation for the class cleavage. As the next chapter will show, this non-mobilizational orientation was in turn conducive to class cleavages remaining unexpressed in party systems in both countries, as left presidents and their successors reaped temporary rewards from new social policies but, lacking organizational

foundations, left parties themselves were not capable of seizing advantage and did not see their relative support among the poor and lower class sectors of society increase.

Chapter 6 – Left Mobilizational Strategies and the Politicization of Class Cleavages

Whereas the avoidance or occurrence of legitimacy crisis directly led to party systems marked by different patterns of programmatic contestation, variation in the channeling of class divisions into party politics only occurred over time, and depended on the strategies of political mobilization that the left implemented in office. This chapter shows that the implementation of mass-organizational and catchall strategies catalyzed this divergence in the expression of class cleavages in party systems. In all three countries, the class cleavage was largely unexpressed in the party system as governments of the left came to power, with left parties drawing no more support from the lower classes and poor than from other sectors of society. As the Left Turn period progressed, however, variation emerged. Cleavages became strongly reflected in the Venezuelan party system, while remaining unexpressed in the party systems of Brazil and Chile.

The central argument of the chapter is that mass-organizational and catchall strategies were differentially effective in allowing left parties to reap rewards from new social programs and build durable bases of electoral support among the lower classes. The mass-organizational strategy by the left in Venezuela allowed the parties of the Bolivarian Movement to effectively claim credit for programs such as the major Misiones Bolivarianas and Consejos Comunales and to employ linkages with organizations created through these programs to engage beneficiaries for electoral recruitment. The catchall strategy by the left in Brazil and Chile made it much more difficult for left parties to claim credit for new social policies and offered them no opportunities for engaging program participants and recruiting them into electoral activism.

The rest of the chapter proceeds as follows. A first section discusses issues of conceptualization and measurement with respect to class cleavages in party systems and then scores the cases with aggregate and individual-level data. A next section provides a more detailed discussion of the hypotheses to be tested regarding the effects of mass-organizational and catchall strategies on support for the left. The chapter then turns to empirical tests of the effects of new social policies on support for the left, employing genetic matching (Diamond and Sekhon 2006) for covariate adjustment, estimating treatment effects for each program, and then using sensitivity analysis (Rosenbaum 2002) to explore the robustness of findings to sources of hidden bias. A final section considers various alternative hypotheses regarding why and how the Venezuelan party system shifted along class cleavages.

Operational Choices: Conceptualization and Measurement

Assessing the expression of class cleavages in party systems across the three countries requires numerous operational choices. What does the study mean by social class and by class cleavage? Why make a distinction between the reflection of class cleavages in party systems and in presidential elections? What kind of indicators should be utilized to measure social class and to assess class cleavages? An explicit discussion of these choices is required for several reasons. Extant scholarship on class cleavages in Latin America reveals little consensus about these choices. There is also reason to believe that decisions about

conceptualization and measurement can be quite consequential for the descriptive conclusions we draw about class cleavages or class voting (Handlin 2011).

Conceptualizing Social Class. This study employs a definition of social classes as groups within society that are differentiated along a hierarchy of socioeconomic status. On a broad level, the definition works within the neo-Weberian tradition that has viewed classes not purely in terms of the relations of production but as groups of individuals sharing a common position within market relations, positions associated with different “life chances” (Breen 2005).¹⁵⁸ In doing so, however, the concept is deployed in a manner akin to what Wright (2004) has called “class as objective position within distributions” or what Sørensen (2000) has called “class as life conditions.” The study is assuming the existence of social classes distinguished by their socioeconomic characteristics. But we are not making grand theoretical assumptions about the nature of class conflict or exploitation and we are not attempting to deploy class in order to explain other socioeconomic outcomes such as life chances.¹⁵⁹

It is widely understood that there is no “correct” definition of class and that the choice of definition is highly associated with theoretical ambitions and goals of research. This conceptual approach seems appropriate for investigating the politicization of class in contemporary Latin America. Viewing social class in terms of socioeconomic status and the multifaceted position of individuals within market relations seems advantageous in comparison to a stricter Marxian approach, which would view social class purely in terms of the social relations of production. One reason for this choice is that the Marxian tradition, while perhaps appropriate in other contexts, only poorly distinguishes individuals according to their material wellbeing in the complex employment landscape of contemporary Latin America. In each of the countries considered here, the informal sector is large and diverse and much of the workforce is underemployed or has very unstable employment. In this context, even more refined occupational categorizations utilized in the advanced countries such as Erikson and Goldthorpe’s (1992) seven-class schema do not necessarily serve to distinguish social groups in compelling ways.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁸ It might be noted that, like many others, the study does not maintain Weber’s (1978) conceptual distinction between class and status, viewing them as deeply entwined and mutually constitutive aspects of social stratification.

¹⁵⁹ This latter point is fairly important. Some theorists in the neo-Weberian tradition maintain a firm conceptual distinction between class and life chances in the interest of actually testing the hypothesis that class shapes life chances. Other researchers find it appropriate to effectively distinguish classes in terms of different life chances and socioeconomic outcomes.

¹⁶⁰ For one, given that the economically active population is only around 65-70% in most Latin American countries, occupational divisions leave a huge rump category of retirees, unemployed, and those otherwise out of the labor force, which is extremely diverse socioeconomically. Nor is it obvious that occupational divisions really distinguish workers that well in terms of material wellbeing. The informal sector in aggregate is relatively marginalized, but household income surveys suggest that a sizeable proportion do quite well. Conversely, while those in the formal sector are well off in aggregate, subsets of formal sector workers – especially the very substantial category of wage laborers outside of union contracts – can be very marginal, a trend that has been exacerbated with the failure of minimum wage increases to keep up with economic growth and inflation. The comprehensive analysis of Portes and Hoffman (2003, pgs. 62-63) is very illuminating on this point: Formal laborers (the largest subset of formal workers) and informal workers are simply not that different when it comes to material wellbeing.

A neo-Weberian definition centered on socioeconomic status, in contrast, seems to better distinguish individuals according to their material wellbeing and to better mirror the actual nature of discourse surrounding social class in the region. In a region marked by massive material inequalities, it is the unequal possession of assets and the unequal ability of individuals to thrive within labor markets – in essence, the unequal “market position” of individuals – that truly distinguishes social classes. There is much reason to believe that this notion of socioeconomic status has greater salience in the region than the occupational categories that capture the social relations of production. Both politicians and everyday citizens often utilize terms such as “the poor,” “the lower classes,” “the popular sectors,” “the middle classes,” and “the rich” in mapping the socioeconomic landscape and their place within it. In comparison, citizens and politicians seem much less likely to draw upon occupational categories such as labor and capital, or even more refined notions such as the non-manual proletariat or the service class, to draw distinctions regarding class divisions in society. Given that we want to examine the politicization of salient social distinctions, then there is good reason to choose a definition of class that captures those material divides that are most relevant to citizens and most often primed in political discourse.

Conceptualizing Class Cleavages. A second issue involves the conceptualization of the expression of class cleavages in party systems. Many studies use the term cleavage to reference socially salient material divisions within society, leaving the question of whether these divisions were politicized out of the definition itself (Eckstein 1966; Lipset and Rokkan 1967; Chhibber 2001). In this sense, we might say that class cleavages – as social divisions - exist in all three countries in the study, given the high levels of socioeconomic inequality in each country and the obvious salience of these divides. Other studies, in contrast, have used the term class cleavage to refer to situations in which salient class divisions become politicized in particular ways (Bartolini and Mair 1990; Bartolini 2002).¹⁶¹ This approach thus effectively incorporates into the cleavage definition additional dimensions about the causal mechanisms by which social divisions are politicized. This study adopts the former, purely sociological conceptualization, as it seems advantageous to make a clear demarcation between the outcome and the mechanisms by which this outcome is realized. The study thus uses the term class cleavage to refer to a salient material social division, and frames inquiry in terms of whether this division is politicized or expressed in party systems.

The operational definition of the expression of the class cleavage in the party system is viewed in terms of the relationship between social class and support for the largest political party or bloc of the left. This approach follows the established line of inquiry within scholarship on class cleavages and class voting in the advanced democracies, which has overwhelmingly focused on the support of class groups for the left in conceptualizing and measuring cleavage expression or class voting (Alford 1962; Clark, Lipset, and Rempel 1993; Manza, Hout, and Brooks 1995; Evans 1999; Nieuwbeerta and Ultee 1999; Bartolini 2002). The underlying rationale is that, in both Europe and Latin America, parties of the left have been particularly active in trying to mobilize the vote of the lower and working classes and

¹⁶¹ The work of Bartolini and Mair adopts three criteria for characterizing a cleavage: that a salient social division exists, that it becomes ideologically salient in political discourse, and that it takes on organizational expression through autonomous social organizations.

traditionally viewed those sectors as core constituencies. Evaluating whether the lower classes do actually disproportionately support left parties is therefore a natural way to approach the question of the expression of class cleavages in party systems.

Evaluating this relationship involves examining support for parties, not support for individual politicians, such as one might find in a presidential election. This distinction has not been relevant in scholarship on class cleavages in the countries of Western Europe, which mainly possess parliamentary systems. In presidential systems, however, presidential elections do not necessarily serve as good indicators of support for parties, and it is not always the case that coalitions behind presidential candidates and coalitions behind their parties will be similar. This divergence is particularly likely in multiparty systems, given that the vote share for presidential candidates is always far larger than the level of support for their own parties and given that pacting usually occurs in which other parties throw their weight behind presidential candidates in exchange for concessions. It is also particularly likely in countries marked by personalistic politics, in which presidential candidates often are charismatic figures that cultivate their own followings. Both conditions hold in Latin America. Therefore, it is desirable to conceptually distinguish cleavages in the party system from those in presidential elections. The study focuses on the former not only in order to better mirror the approach of extant scholarship on the topic, but also because cleavages in party systems are likely to have a high level of durability. Cleavages in presidential elections, in contrast, are tied by definition to individual politicians and are likely to be relatively ephemeral. The electorate may divide along class lines in its opinion of a given candidate, but unless this division is translated into the party system, such divisions are likely to fade once that politician exits the national stage.

Measuring Social Class and Class Cleavages. Due to concerns over data limitations and quality, the study utilizes both individual-level data from public opinion surveys and aggregate-level data from official government sources for measurement. Each kind of data has its drawbacks. Using aggregate data, for example, carries with it the problem of ecological inference. Individual-level data, on the other hand, is prone to sampling error and also raises questions related to the comparability of measures drawn from different surveys, often utilizing different instruments. If both kinds of data produce compatible results, however, our conclusions about the reflection of class cleavages in party systems can be strengthened. These different data sources, of course, will provide somewhat different options for the measurement of social class and class cleavages.

For measuring social class at the individual-level, the study follows common approaches in sociological research in constructing scales of socioeconomic status out of multiple indicators that tap both material wellbeing and educational attainment. While different surveys require slightly different approaches, the study attempts to standardize across surveys as much as possible. Each scale include a wealth component (preferably household consumption goods, but household income if unavailable) in which respondents are stratified into four groups and an educational attainment measure, in which respondents are likewise divided into four groups (the groups are those with primary education or less, those with some secondary education, those with completed secondary education, and those with at least some superior education). These components are then added, produced values from 2-8, and then these raw values were then combined in each country into three groups that most closely match terciles of the distribution and which could can be understood as the lower

classes, the lower-middle classes, and the upper-middle to wealthy classes. Aggregate data presents fewer options, as each national government only makes available certain socioeconomic indicators for municipalities or parishes, the units of analysis. For each country, the study simply uses the indicator that best captures the overall socioeconomic level of these subnational units. In Venezuela, this is the mean household income by parish, in Brazil the score of each municipality on the Human Development Index, and in Chile an index constructed by the author using both aggregate levels of educational attainment and levels of household consumption goods.

Measuring the reflection of the class cleavage in party systems and presidential elections also involves a series of important decisions. One basic choice is whether to examine bivariate relationships between social class and political behavior or to use multivariate analysis that seeks to capture this relationship conditional on other variables. The study opts for the former for a variety of pragmatic and theoretical reasons. Scholars tend to invoke the latter when looking to examine whether class exerts an influence on vote choice, which is not the question under investigation. Rather, this study adopts the position that social class itself is unlikely to ever directly cause political behavior (or will be so distal in a casual chain as to make investigation of its causal impact largely fruitless). Rather than trying to assess the impact of class on the vote, therefore, a more fruitful approach is to simply describe how much class divisions are reflected in electoral politics while making the fewest possible assumptions about the nature of this relationship and then attempt to explore why and how this comes to be the case. With this approach to the subject, bivariate measures are both simplest (not involving assumptions about how class and other variables are related to vote choice, as would be necessary with a linear model) and most valid (capturing the simple descriptive question of “who votes for whom”).

A final measurement choice regards indicators of support for left parties. Since the study seeks to measure the reflection of class cleavages in party systems, the obvious choice is voting patterns in legislative or gubernatorial elections. When measuring with aggregate data, such information is readily available from each government. When measuring with individual-level data, however, limitations arise because public opinion surveys rarely include questions on voting behavior other than in presidential elections. Therefore, measures of party identification are utilized, as they are more readily available and more easily comparable across time and cross-nationally.

Class Cleavages in the Party Systems of Brazil, Chile, and Venezuela

Extant research on class cleavages in Latin America has largely consisted of single-country studies, which tend to make different methodological choices, making it difficult to use to draw cross-national comparisons from meta-analysis of extant research. The study therefore analyses the question anew, presenting both aggregate and individual-level data on the expression of class cleavages in the party systems of each country at the beginning of the Left Turn period and during a subsequent juncture, after the completion of at least a full presidential electoral cycle. These data show a striking pattern of variation that emerged over time. As the left entered power, class cleavages were largely unexpressed in the party systems of each country, with major left parties drawing no more support from the lower classes and

poor than from other sectors. Over time, class cleavages become very strongly expressed in the Venezuelan party system yet remained unexpressed in the Brazilian and Chilean party systems.

Aggregate Data. We start with a look at aggregate data on the expression of class cleavages in party systems, using data obtained from official government sources in each country.¹⁶² Figure 6.1 shows scatter plots of the relationship between left party vote share and community socioeconomic level for two time periods. The first period is the legislative election immediately before or concurrent with the Left Turn. The second is the first national party election (legislative or gubernatorial) after the left had implemented the new social programs that are at the center of the explanation in the chapter.¹⁶³ Loess trend lines are fitted to the data in each case to better illustrate relationships.

The data suggest a significant cross-national divergence in the expression of cleavages during the Left Turn period. As the Left Turn began in all three countries, class cleavages were not expressed in party systems. Indeed, the trend lines in each country are flat or even slope slightly upward, with the vote for the major left party increasing at higher community socioeconomic levels. The second measure, however, shows a striking pattern of variation. Class cleavages remained unexpressed in the party systems of Brazil and Chile. Yet the cleavage came to strongly structure the Venezuelan party system, with a very steep downward tilt to the trend line fitted to the data. These aggregate data are useful because the measures are extremely consistent over time in each country. However, drawing inferences solely from aggregate data can be dangerous, given the possibility of ecological fallacies. It is therefore useful to see whether these results are replicated in individual-level data drawn from public opinion surveys

¹⁶² Data for Venezuela were obtained from the Consejo Nacional Electoral and the 2001 Censo de Población y Vivienda. Data for Brazil taken from a dataset compiled by Cesar Zucco, which utilized information from the Tribunal Superior Eleitoral and from Ipeadata, an online information databank of the Brazilian government. Data for Chile socioeconomic comes from the Chilean census. Electoral data was obtained from the Ministerio del Interior, at <http://www.elecciones.gov.cl>. The geographical units utilized are the parish in Venezuela, the municipality in Brazil, and the comuna in Chile.

¹⁶³ It is advantageous to choose to measure the class cleavage in elections that bracket the implementation of these programs fairly closely, as we can better draw inferences about their effects (if any) on aggregate patterns of electoral change. The gubernatorial election of 2008 is used in Venezuela in the interest of tightening this window, as a fully contested legislative election did not occur until 2010. It should be emphasized that the pattern of variation reflected in the data has been maintained in future elections in each country.

Figure 6.1: Expression of Class Cleavage in Party Systems, Aggregate Data

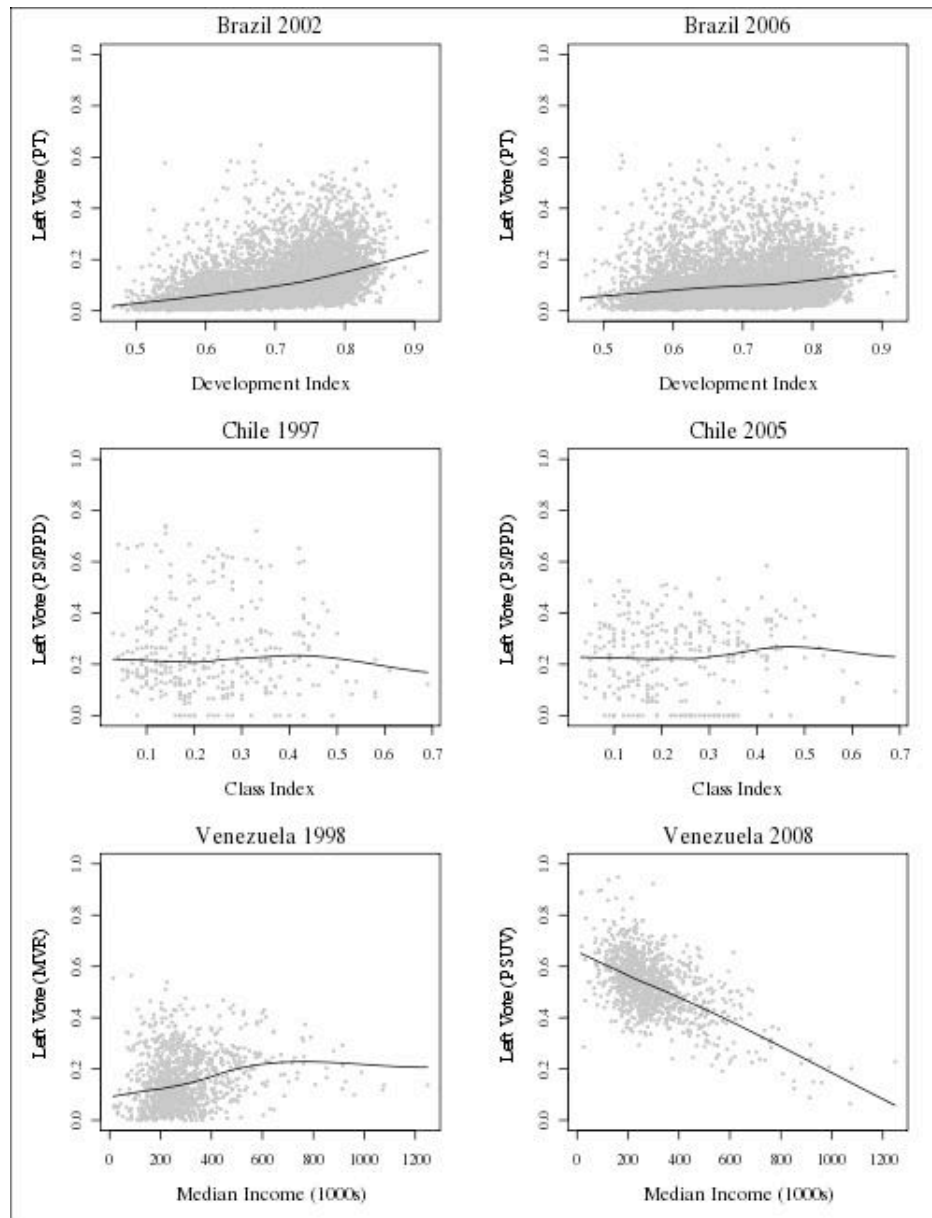


Table 6.1 presents the proportion of the lower, lower-middle, and upper-middle classes in each country that reported an identification with the major left party at the beginning of the Left Turn and after that completion of a full presidential electoral cycle. The last column then presents the relative risk of a lower class respondent identifying with the left party versus an upper-middle class respondent doing so. Given that we want to assess change over time, emphasis was placed on using data sources that facilitate longitudinal comparison. In each country, data are drawn from national surveys that were either conducted by the same

companies using the same instruments at both junctures, or conducted by different companies but appear to have utilized similar measures and sampling strategies.¹⁶⁴

Table 6.1: Expression of Class Cleavages in Party Systems, Individual-Level Data

	Lower	Middle	Upper	Relative Risk (Lower/Upper)
Brazil (2002)	.22	.29	.30	.71
Brazil (2006)	.16	.20	.18	.87
Chile (1999)	.20	.22	.28	.71
Chile (2005)	.23	.22	.27	.84
Venezuela (2000)	.23	.27	.26	.88
Venezuela (2006)	.48	.41	.30	1.59

Results are similar to those found in aggregate data. As the Left Turn began, in each country the lower classes were not meaningfully more likely to identify with the left than the upper classes – indeed, in each country the lower classes were the least likely to support the major left party. This pattern stayed consistent over time in Brazil and Chile, but changed markedly in Venezuela, with the MVR developing a very strong base among the lower classes.

While there are no other cross-national comparative studies of class cleavages during the Left Turn that might serve as points of comparison, a few notes might be made about how the findings compare to extant research on single countries. Overall, the findings seem largely consistent with other studies as well as common perceptions of each case. That class cleavages were not expressed at the beginning of the Left Turn in any of the three countries is not surprising. The lack of cleavage expression in the Chilean party system after democratization has been shown in other studies, albeit using a very different set of occupational measures for social class (Torcal and Mainwaring 2003). Likewise, scholars have long noted the lack of class cleavages in the Brazilian party system during the 1990s and the difficulties that the PT has faced in winning support among the poor (Meneguello 1995; Mainwaring 1999, pgs. 44-47). These findings also generally accord with scholarship on Venezuela. Numerous scholars have highlighted the multiclass nature of the initial Bolivarian coalition (Ramírez 2005; Lupu 2010). While others found class voting in the 1998 and 2000 elections, the class effects they discovered were actually quite small (Molina 2002; Canache 2004).¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁴ The Chilean data was taken from surveys by CESOP fielded in April 1999 and November 2005. The Brazilian data comes from two surveys by Datafolha fielded in October 2002 and October 2006. In Venezuela, surveys from two companies had to be utilized, but both appear to use similar sampling techniques and have very similar instruments for generating responses. The former survey is from Consultores 21, fielded in July 2000, the latter was conducted by IPSOS in November 2006. The analysis of all surveys utilizes unweighted samples.

¹⁶⁵ One likely reason for this discrepancy is that studies such as that of Canache (2004) relied upon survey samples only from Caracas and other major cities.¹⁶⁵ In this truncated perspective, class divisions might easily be perceived in the 1998 electorate, with Chávez and the MVR gaining more support in famous popular-sector areas like 23 de Enero or Petare than in wealthier areas like Chacao or El Hatillo. What the truncated perspective would miss, however, is that Chávez and the MVR performed quite abysmally in many other poor areas,

The data just analyzed are also largely consistent with other findings, or at least common impressions, regarding cleavage expression over the course of the Left Turn. No scholars have posited a major change in the expression of the class cleavage in the Chilean party system. In Brazil, a change in Lula’s personal base of support during the Left Turn has been widely remarked upon (Hunter and Power 2007; Zucco 2008). However, scholars have also noted that change in the PT’s coalition has been much less extensive, such that the party in the Lula era has drawn about equally across socioeconomic levels (Samuels and Zucco 2010). Finally, many studies have suggested that class cleavages came to be strongly expressed in Venezuela, albeit generally focusing on the personal support for Chávez rather than for the MVR or PSUV (Hellinger 2005; Cannon 2008; López Maya and Lander 2007; Buxton 2009).¹⁶⁶ The data presented here show that this change extended to the party system, unlike in Brazil.

Mass-Organizational Versus Catchall Strategies and Class Cleavages

The chapter argues that these divergent outcomes in cleavage expression were driven by the different approaches to policy innovation and popular mobilization taken by left governments, mass-organizational in Venezuela and catchall in Brazil and Chile. Chapters 4 and 5 elaborated on these distinctive approaches to policy innovation. The mass-organizational strategy was distinguished by social policies that incentivized social organization and mobilization among beneficiaries and the formation of an extensive set of linkages between these organizations and the MVR/PSUV. The catchall strategy, in contrast, was distinguished by social policies that provided no spurs to social organization or mobilization among beneficiaries and thus no opportunity for left parties to form linkages with social organizations created through state policy.

These distinctive approaches created different kinds of opportunities for left parties to seize advantage and reap benefits from the major social programs enacted by left governments. The mass-organizational strategy in Venezuela allowed parties of the Bolivarian Movement to better claim credit for new social programs and to use party-organizational linkages in order to directly recruit beneficiaries into electoral activism. The catchall strategy in Brazil and Chile, in contrast, did not help the PT and the PS claim credit for programs and offered these parties no opportunities to recruit participants into becoming party members or activists.

Table 6.2: Mobilizational Strategies and Mechanisms for Partisan Advantage

	Key Characteristics		Mechanisms for Parties to Seize Advantage	
	Organizations Among	Party-Organizational	Credit Claiming	Electoral Recruitment

especially in the small cities and rural hamlets of the hinterland, which hold a majority of the country’s population.

¹⁶⁶ Lupu (2010) offers a dissenting perspective regarding support across class groups for Chávez. The likely reason for this aberrant finding is the use of household income for measuring social class, rather than the more nuanced (and more reliable) socioeconomic scales favored by other scholars.

	Beneficiaries	Linkages		
Mass-Organizational (Venezuela)	Yes	Yes	Easy	Yes
Catchall (Brazil, Chile)	No	No	Hard	No

The argument produces hypotheses about the effects of new social programs in each country on support for left parties that can be tested with survey data. Programs in Venezuela should lead to support among beneficiaries for the major left party, while programs in both Brazil and Chile should have no effects. It is important to stress, however, that these tests themselves are not sufficient to demonstrate that the implementation of mass-organizational versus catchall strategies might plausibly have driven divergence in the realignment of party systems along class cleavages. In addition, two aspects of the programs just discussed should also be seen as necessary conditions. The first is that programs in all three countries reached very large populations of beneficiaries, clearly a requirement for shifting electoral behavior in the aggregate. The second is that beneficiary populations in each country were concentrated among the lower classes by program design. Given that programs reached a broad swath of the electorate in the lower tiers of the socioeconomic hierarchy, they should have had the potential to tilt party systems along class cleavages if they exerted substantial effects on support for left parties.

Two caveats might be mentioned regarding this argument and the approach to causal inference in the chapter. First, the argument does not purport to be a “complete” explanation of divergence in the class basis of party systems. When attempting to explain aggregate patterns of change (or stasis) in the electorate, constituted by millions of individual behavioral decisions, it is simply unreasonable to assume that only one proximate variable is at work and that no other factors come into play. As with most such endeavors, whether explaining cleavage change or other outcomes such as the results of a particular election, the goal is instead to test hypotheses concerning what factor or factors are most responsible for driving aggregate patterns. It would be unreasonable to claim that no other factors exerted any influence at all.

A second point is that the statistical tests performed in the chapter evaluate whether the evidence is consistent with the proposed theory, but do not provide a basis for directly testing the mechanisms involved. The chapter faces an ineluctable inferential difficulty common to much cross-national behavioral research: Different programs were implemented in different populations. If the programs appear to have heterogeneous effects across those populations, it is therefore difficult to know whether that is largely due to a particular difference in the programs (what is being claimed here), some other program feature, or even differences in the populations. The approach of the study should be seen as a mixed-method strategy for inference. The last two chapters provided evidence regarding the plausibility of the mechanism for this theory. The statistical tests performed below, in turn, evaluate whether empirical implications of the theory actually hold.

Data

To test hypotheses about the effects of programs in each country on political behavior, the study utilizes data from the Latin American Public Opinion Project's (LAPOP) 2006-2007 wave. These surveys are particularly useful for two reasons. First, they contain information on the independent variables of interest, some of the only surveys in the region to do so. More generally, the LAPOP surveys offer the benefit of standardization. Given that the study seeks to evaluate the effects of several different programs across three countries, it is particularly valuable to have a data source that provides a similar set of variables generated through similar processes. While different firms in each country field the LAPOP surveys, much of the survey questionnaire is standardized, and with a few exceptions the same variables are available for the analysis in each country.

The dependent variable for testing the key set of hypotheses is party identification with the major left party in each country. This variable is scored as 1 if the respondent reports left partisanship and 0 otherwise, and is generated by a survey question in which respondents were asked: "With which political party do you sympathize?" The independent variables of interest are measures of participation in the major programs of left governments in each country, each of which is scored as dichotomous with 1 indicating participation. In Venezuela, for Misión Ribas, respondents were asked: "Have you ever participated in a course of the Misión Ribas?" For Barrio Adentro, respondents were asked: "How often do you use the services of the Misión Barrio Adentro?" and respondents were given several possible frequency categories. This variable was rescaled as dichotomous, with respondents counted as beneficiaries if they used the service more frequently than "once or two a year."¹⁶⁷ For the Consejos Comunales, respondents were asked: "With what frequency do you participate in meetings of the Consejo Comunal (if one exists in their neighborhood)?" and given several possible frequency categories. Once again, this variable was recoded as dichotomous, with respondents being scored as positive if they participated "once or twice a month" or more frequently.¹⁶⁸ In Chile, respondents were asked, "During the last three years, has your family been a beneficiary of the following programs?" and then both Chile Solidario and Plan AUGE were specifically inquired about. In Brazil, respondents were asked: "Are you a participant in the Bolsa Família program of the federal government?"

The LAPOP data provides a wide range of "control" variables that are also utilized in the analysis. Demographic variables include age, sex, education, formal sector employment, religion, ethnicity, household wealth, and region of residence in each country.¹⁶⁹ The data for

¹⁶⁷ This choice was made for two reasons. First, the goal of the study is to capture the population that truly relies on Barrio Adentro as a primary provider of services, not the population that has private insurance but might stop by a Barrio Adentro clinic very infrequently. Second, counting the "once a year" respondents as positive would make the total beneficiary population unrealistically large given government statistics and the findings of other surveys.

¹⁶⁸ There were several reasons for this choice. Most functional Consejos Comunales appear to meet on a weekly basis, so this response category will pick up even respondents who are not able to participate every time due to other commitments. On the other hand, including the next category, once or twice a year, would likely have picked up too many respondents who have only dallied very casually in the program.

¹⁶⁹ Some of these variables were scaled or rescaled in the following ways. Education was placed on a three point scale, with 0 indicating less than a high school education, .5 indicating a high school education, and 1 indicating

Brazil and Venezuela also provide measures of past political behavior that are particularly useful (unfortunately, no such measure is available in the Chilean data). These measures differ according to available data and the sequencing with which programs were implemented. In Brazil, a measure of vote choice in the 2002 presidential election, which preceded the national implementation of Bolsa Família, is available. In Venezuela, a measure of participation in a *Círculo Bolivariano* is available. As Chapter 4 detailed, these were pro-Chávez social organizations that were formed and proliferated during the regime crisis of 2001-2003 but which had largely died prior to the spread of the *Misiones* and *Consejos*. When analyzing the *Consejo Comunal* program, which did not start until 2006, data on vote choice in the 2005 legislative elections can also be utilized. A final category of control variable, once again only available for the analysis of Brazil and Venezuela, is aggregate-level data on the socioeconomic level and previous vote share for the left in the communities of respondents.¹⁷⁰

Matching Analysis: Balance, Estimation, and Sensitivity Results

To test hypotheses about the effect of programs on political behavior, the chapter utilizes genetic matching, a non-parametric matching method for covariate adjustment that involves the construction of control groups similar to treatment groups along a set of pre-treatment covariates.¹⁷¹ This approach was favored over the specification of regression models for two reasons. First, unlike multiple regression, genetic matching does not require onerous assumptions to be made about functional form (Sekhon 2010). Second, while matching will not solve the fundamental problem of working with observational data, the assumption that cases were selected into treatment and control groups based on observable variables, it does facilitate post-hoc testing of the sensitivity of results to violation of this assumption.

The empirical analysis involves three steps: First, for each program, genetic matching is utilized to construct a “control group” of non-beneficiaries that is similar to the “treatment group” of program beneficiaries along a set of pre-treatment covariates and covariate balance checked. Second, I estimate the effects of treatment on identification with the major left party in that country. Finally, for those programs in which effects seem to pertain, Rosenbaum

some level of tertiary education. Religion was converted into a dichotomous variable with 1 equal to Catholic and 0 indicating not Catholic. Ethnicity was converted into two dichotomous variables, with values of 1 respectively indicating white and mestizo. To measure household wealth, I constructed a scale of consumption goods similar to that employed by Booth and Seligson (2009).

¹⁷⁰ Unfortunately, the LAPOP survey does not provide the basis for matching respondents to comunas or other relatively small geographical units for which aggregate data is available. The only possible units are so large (for example, all of Santiago, with half of the respondents, is one category) that it was deemed not worthwhile to include this variable. The discussion of results provides some commentary on why not including these variables is unlikely to make a difference in Chile.

¹⁷¹ Genetic matching is a generalization of Mahalanobis matching and propensity score matching that utilizes an evolutionary search algorithm to find the set of matches that optimizes covariate balance between treatment and control groups. In various applications, it has been shown to outperform either propensity score matching, Mahalanobis matching, or a combination of the two with respect to achieving covariate balance and recovering experimental benchmarks (Sekhon and Grieve 2008).

sensitivity analysis is utilized to explore the robustness of the findings to sources of hidden bias (Rosenbaum 2002).

The first step therefore involves constructing control groups that are balanced with treatment groups on the relevant baseline covariates. For each program being examined, the following procedure was employed to do so. The likelihood of treatment was first modeled on the pre-treatment covariates and the squares of the interval-level variables using logistic regression and a propensity score estimated for each respondent. Genetic Matching was then conducted, matching (with replacement) on the propensity score and the same covariates included in the propensity score model. In each case, the default option of the GenMatch function for R was utilized, which is to search for the combination of matches that maximizes the minimum p-value across all covariates from both a paired t-test and a bootstrapped Kolmogorov-Smirnov (KS) test.

Table 6.3: Means of Treatment and Control Groups After Matching

	Barrio Adentro		Ribas		Consejo Comunal	
	Treatment	Control	Treatment	Control	Treatment	Control
Age	38.8	37.9	35.2	35.1	39.6	38.5
Sex	.56	.55	.64	.63	.56	.59
Education	.30	.30	0	0	.31	.30
Formal	.29	.28	.33	.32	.29	.29
Wealth	4.86	4.81	4.58	4.51	4.75	4.80
Catholic	.81	.81	.70	.71	.85	.85
Union	.09	.09	.08	.07	.12	.12
White	.48	.50	.46	.50	.43	.42
Mestizo	.37	.36	.41	.40	.39	.41
Círculo	.27	.27	.27	.27	.29	.29
Vote2005	NA	NA	NA	NA	.36	.35
AgVote	.64	.64	.64	.65	.65	.65
AgInc	415,804	411,817	403,734	399,810	400,128	392,115
	Bolsa Familia		Chile Solidario		Plan AUGE	
Age	38.5	38.5	40.1	40.6	42.6	42.6
Sex	.63	.63	.64	.64	.66	.66
Education	.06	.05	.12	.12	.31	.31
Formal	.15	.14	.27	.27	.21	.21
Wealth	3.46	3.47	3.87	3.90	5.10	5.10
Catholic	.66	.67	.67	.67	.69	.70
Union	.09	.09	.06	.06	.06	.06
White	.25	.24	.67	.67	.65	.65
Mestizo	.51	.49	.25	.25	.27	.27
Vote2002	.47	.48	NA	NA	NA	NA
AgVote	.59	.59	NA	NA	NA	NA
AgInc	.72	.73	NA	NA	NA	NA

Table 6.3 presents an intuitive measure of balance, the means of treatment and control groups on relevant covariates after the matching procedure had been conducted (data for some covariates, such as region, is not reported). As we can see, for each program matching successfully eliminated meaningful differences across treatment and control groups, producing comparison sets that are nearly identical (at least on these measures) except for whether or not respondents were enrolled in programs. Balance was also evaluated through the results of paired t-tests and Kolmogorov-Smirnoff tests, which respectively examine similarity between the means and distributions of treatment and control groups. For each program and for every covariate, none of these tests produced a p-value lower than .1, once again suggesting very good levels of covariate balance.

With satisfactory balance achieved, a next step is to estimate treatment effects for each program on party identification with the left. Assuming unconfoundedness given baseline covariates, the mean difference on the outcome variable between treatment and control groups will be an unbiased estimate of the average treatment effect among the treated (ATT). Table 6.4 reports these estimated treatment effects for each program, along with Abadie-Imbens standard errors and 95% confidence intervals. These standard errors are more conservative than conventional standard errors, taking into account uncertainty in the matching procedure itself.

Table 6.4: Estimation Results

Country	Program	ATT	S.E.	95% CI
Venezuela	Barrio Adentro	.16	.03	[.22,.09]
Venezuela	Ribas	.12	.06	[.24,.01]
Venezuela	Consejo Comunal	.11	.04	[.19,.03]
Brazil	Bolsa Família	-.01	.05	[.08,-.11]
Chile	Chile Solidario	-.01	.04	[.06,-.08]
Chile	Plan AUGE	.00	.03	[.06, -.05]

The results are consistent with the theory that mass-organizational programs should produce benefits for parties while catchall programs should not. For programs in Brazil and Chile, there is no evidence whatsoever that programs have any effect on identification with the PT or PS: The estimates are not just statistically insignificant, but actually fall at or near zero in each case. In contrast, in Venezuela the programs appear to powerfully affect the likelihood of identification with the PSUV. These latter estimates are each statistically significant at conventional levels, even when using the relatively conservative Abadie-Imbens standard errors. On a substantive level, the size of estimated effects is striking. Given that overall levels of party identification in Latin America are low compared to the advanced democracies, increases greater than .1 in the likelihood of a respondent being a left partisan are quite large.

The power of mass-organizational strategies in Venezuela to shape the translation of class cleavages into party systems must also be understood in terms of the scope of programs. Were they small, programs could not reach enough individuals to catalyze aggregate shifts in the electorate, no matter the power of estimated effects. Assessing the scope of Venezuelan programs through official data is somewhat difficult due to the unreliability of government

statistics. In the LAPOP data set, however, 33.7% of respondents were Barrio Adentro beneficiaries, 20.8% were participants in Consejos Comunales, and 9.3% were Ribas beneficiaries. A very broad swath of the population was thus on the receiving end of the powerful average treatment effects just estimated. Given the nature of the programs, targeted toward populations in need, this beneficiary group is overwhelmingly in the lower half of the socioeconomic hierarchy. It seems plausible, then, that programs such as the Misiones Bolivarianas and Consejos Comunales are the major drivers of the reorientation in the Venezuelan class cleavage. Programs in Brazil and Chile also have reached large populations. For example, Bolsa Familia reached households containing an estimated 44 million Brazilians by 2006, or roughly a quarter of the population (Hall 2006). Yet because programs in Brazil and Chile exerted no effects on support for left parties among beneficiaries, they did not provide the basis for shifting the expression of class cleavages in party systems.

Sensitivity Analysis. The key identifying assumption made to estimate treatment effects without bias is that individuals are selected into treatment on the basis of observed covariates. While we cannot test this assumption, we can evaluate the robustness of the findings to violations of the assumption through sensitivity analysis (Rosenbaum 2002). This procedure poses a thought experiment: If an unobserved confounder does exist, how powerful would this hidden bias have to be to change the qualitative conclusions of the study? Sensitivity analysis assesses this question by assigning different values to the sensitivity parameter τ , an odds ratio representing the most two individuals with otherwise identical characteristics could differ in their likelihood of treatment. If $\tau = 1$, two such individuals have the same likelihood of treatment, if $\tau = 2$, one individual is potentially twice as likely to be assigned to treatment, etc. By attaching different values to τ and seeing how the upper bound p-values change in a statistical test, we can examine sensitivity to hidden bias.¹⁷² This procedure is conducted for the positive findings in Venezuela, since these are the results we want to put under the microscope.¹⁷³

Table 6.5: Results of Sensitivity Analysis

τ	Barrio Adentro	Ribas	Consejo Comunal
1.0	.000	.012	.001
1.1	.000	.028	.004
1.2	.000	.054	.013
1.3	.000	.092	.035
1.4	.000	.143	.075
1.5	.001		.136
1.6	.005		
1.7	.015		
1.8	.037		

¹⁷² For binary data on the outcome variable, Rosenbaum's methods employ McNemar's Test of significance in 2 X 2 tables, estimating the upper bound p-value under the hypothesis that there is no treatment effect.

¹⁷³ Keele (2009) offers a useful and concise discussion of Rosenbaum's methods for sensitivity analysis and their implementation in the "rbounds" package for R.

1.9	.075		
2.0	.133		

Our qualitative conclusions regarding the effects of the Venezuelan programs on partisanship appear differentially robust but, at the least, none are likely to be changed by relatively minor sources of hidden bias. The most sensitive inference regards the effect of Consejo Comunal participation: A hidden confounder that made one Venezuelan 30% more likely to receive treatment than another otherwise identical Venezuelan might lead us to change our conclusion of a treatment effect. The robustness of the Ribas inference is slightly greater, while that for Barrio Adentro is especially strong. At a minimum, then, the results suggest that hidden bias will have to be fairly substantial to jeopardize our inferences. One additional point should be stressed in interpreting these results. The maximum p-value represents somewhat of a worst-case scenario, corresponding to hypothetical situations in which the unobserved confounder is also a nearly perfect predictor of the outcome, and in the direction that jeopardizes the inference of a treatment effect (Rosenbaum 2002, pgs. 113-114). At τ values of a certain level, inferences do not automatically become invalid, but could become invalid, depending on the relationship between the unobserved variable and the outcome.

Ancillary Hypothesis. It may also be useful to test an ancillary hypothesis, which is that programs in all three countries should have effects on support for left presidents running for election or, in the case of Chile, on support for a closely associated successor. To test this hypothesis, the same matching and estimation procedure was repeated, but with the presidential vote as the binary outcome, with 1 indicating a vote for the left candidate in the previous presidential election. Table 6.6 reports these results in the same manner as the previous Table 6.4. As predicted by the theory, there is at least some evidence for a treatment effect for every program across all three countries. These estimates are slightly smaller in Chile, suggesting that Michele Bachelet may have only partly captured benefits from the actions of her predecessor, and more noisily estimated, mainly due to smaller treatment groups. Notably, however, with the exception of that for Barrio Adentro, the estimates for the Venezuelan programs are not markedly higher than those in the other countries.

Table 6.6: Estimation Results for Ancillary Outcome

Country	Program	ATT	S.E.	95% CI
Venezuela	Barrio Adentro	.25	.03	[.31, .19]
Venezuela	Ribas	.12	.06	[.24, .00]
Venezuela	Consejo Comunal	.09	.04	[.16, .01]
Brazil	Bolsa Família	.13	.06	[.25, .01]
Chile	Chile Solidario	.09	.07	[.22, -.04]
Chile	Plan AUGE	.08	.05	[.17, -.01]

These ancillary findings buttress the results in several ways. It is useful to demonstrate that the matching analysis produces results similar to findings in extant research on the behavioral effects of programs such as Bolsa Família, or similar CCT programs in other

countries, which have also found strong evidence of an effect on the vote for incumbent presidents or their successors (Zucco 2008; Manacorda, Miguel, and Vigorito 2009; De La O 2010). The theory presented in the chapter is consistent with those ideas, and the results generated are quite similar. More importantly, establishing that programs in all three countries have helped presidential incumbents or their successors, and that estimated effects are for the most part broadly similar in size, underlines a critical distinction drawn in the chapter: What sets the Venezuelan programs apart is specifically their capacity to build support for political parties, a power that derives from the opportunities that mass-organizational strategies present for political parties to claim credit and recruit among beneficiary populations.

Summary. The data analysis shows strong support for the theory regarding mass-organizational and catchall strategies. Programs in Venezuela, with their organizational foundations and extensive party-organizational linkages, appear to have exerted strikingly large effects on support for the PSUV. These estimates were generated after matching on a wide range of covariates, including demographics, prior political behavior, and features of the communities in which respondents reside. These estimates were also shown to be fairly robust to the presence of hidden confounders, which should strengthen confidence in inferences. Given the broad scope of the programs, their implementation is likely the driver of the massive change in the expression of the class cleavage in the Venezuelan party system over the course of the Fifth Republic that was illustrated in the beginning of the chapter. In contrast, programs in Brazil and Chile, lacking organizational foundations that would allow left parties to similarly take advantage of them, had no effects whatsoever on partisanship with the PT or PS. While benefitting left presidents or their successors in both countries, they offered little means for left parties to take advantage, explaining why shifts in the expression of the class cleavage did not occur over time in Brazil or Chile.

Alternative Hypotheses Regarding the Mechanism

As noted previously in the chapter, the statistical tests allow us to probe the empirical implications of the theory but do not provide a means for testing the mechanism itself. While the logic seems compelling concerning why mass-organizational strategies should build support for parties while catchall strategies should not, it may be useful to consider a few other alternative hypotheses regarding the mechanism at work. Specifically, we might consider two other possibilities for why programs in Venezuela have been particularly potent in creating support for the MVR and PSUV. The first is that programs in Venezuela were more effective in building support because they involved clientelistic mechanisms of selection and sanctioning. The second is that Venezuelans programs were more effective in building support for the left party because of a particularly strong association between Chávez and that party.

Clientelism. The Chávez government's political opponents frequently characterize the Misiones Bolivarianas and Consejos Comunales as clientelistic, a term also applied by some academic analysts (García-Guadilla 2007a, Penfold-Becerra 2007). In contrast, the major programs in Brazil and Chile are generally cast as paradigmatic examples of rule-based social policies. Could this difference actually account for their differential effectiveness in building

support for parties? This possibility seems unlikely, despite the fact that the clientelistic label is not necessarily unmerited in Venezuela. To see why, it is necessary to parse the concept of clientelism and consider what aspects of these programs are truly “clientelistic.”

Both the Misiones and Consejos were born from highly opaque policy-making processes and involve the discretionary distribution of funds. As explored in Chapter 4, these programs only became possible once the Chávez government had eliminated virtually all policy-making constraints, and the executive branch implemented major aspects of each by decree without any kind of public debate. It seems very likely that political considerations have impacted the broad targeting of funds to different areas of the country, although evidence regarding such relationships is not particularly strong and data limitations make them hard to assess. These aspects of the policy-making process merit the term “clientelistic” as it is sometimes utilized. But they do not offer an explanation of why programs in Venezuela would build support for parties. It is not clear at all why the opacity of policy making or even the political targeting of funds to different municipalities would increase the capacity of programs to foster partisanship or mobilize individuals to the polls to vote for the MVR/PSUV.

When considering clientelism as an alternative hypothesis regarding the programs’ ability to drive individual-level behavior, another set of ideas often associated with the concept is much more critical: Do the programs involve a direct exchange of benefits for political support? As Stokes (2007) puts it in her definition of clientelism: “the proffering of material goods in return for electoral support, where the criterion of distribution that the patron uses is simply: did you (will you) support me?” Such exchanges might account for the ability of Venezuelan programs to build support for the MVR/PSUV, as beneficiaries might be induced to vote for the party due to fear of losing their benefits.

There are two reasons to doubt that direct exchange is a common feature of these programs. The first regards the capacity of the government to effectively identify and monitor the political behavior of beneficiaries. The use of the Tascón List to punish some Venezuelans who supported the recall referendum suggests that the government is not above such discrimination. Yet there is little evidence that the government has been capable of actually monitoring voting behavior in Venezuela. The country has a highly sophisticated electronic voting system that has numerous safeguards to prevent the possibility that votes might be recorded and matched to voters for the use of keeping track of individual political behavior. While serious questions have been raised about other aspects of the system, even opposition critics generally believe that the sanctity of the voting booth is preserved in the country. Given that voting behavior cannot be monitored, threats of sanctioning are simply not credible.

Table 6.7: Exclusion and Self-Exclusion on Political Grounds

	Barrio Adentro	Ribas	Consejo Comunal
Exclusion on Political Grounds	.3%	.6%	.8%
Self-Exclusion on Political Grounds	6.4%	3.2%	8%

More importantly, there is direct evidence that selection based on political criteria simply does not occur with any meaningful frequency in these programs. The LAPOP survey included questions asking respondents who did not make use of the Misiones Bolivarianas or participate in Consejos Comunales about their reasons for not doing so. As shown in Table 6.7, the proportion of eligible non-users who claimed to have been excluded based on political criteria is strikingly low, less than 1% for each program. A somewhat higher proportion of non-users appear to engage in political self-exclusion – they do not utilize the programs because they perceive them as overtly politicized. But even these proportions are relatively small, and this self-exclusion of some potential beneficiaries could not logically explain why the programs appear to build support for the PSUV among those Venezuelans who do participate in the programs. These findings from the LAPOP survey are also supported by other scholarship. Hawkins et al (2010, pgs. 222-224), for example, surveyed workers and recipients of the Misiones around Caracas and found no evidence of conditionality in the operation of the program.¹⁷⁴

That the programs do not involve selection and sanctioning is perhaps not surprising. After all, the Bolivarian Movement grew in strength in significant part due to widespread dissatisfaction with the clientelistic practices of the Punto Fijo regime and Chávez and other politicians within the movement have made opposition to clientelism a point of constant rhetorical emphasis. Clearly, this orientation has not prevented the government from using state resources in overtly politicized ways or employing political conditionality in more limited spheres, such as the distribution of state employment. But were Chávez and the PSUV to employ selection and sanctioning in their mass-level programs, they would likely create a backlash and alienate key supporters, given that the activist base of the movement has always viewed itself as engaged in a fight against clientelism and in the construction of an alternative to the Punto Fijo system.

Presidential Coattails. A second alternative hypothesis regarding the mechanism relates to the political context in which programs were developed. In Chapter 4, we saw that Chávez’s coattails were particularly strong in the 1998 election, and that at this time many Venezuelans did not fully distinguish the MVR from the presidential candidate. If this relationship remained durable, programs such as the Misiones and Consejos Comunales might have effects on support for the MVR/PSUV simply because of Chávez’s coattails: They really build support for the president, and beneficiaries then simply automatically support the party. It is more difficult to gain empirical leverage on this notion, but several aspects of the Venezuelan case should lead us to be highly skeptical.

A first point is that the notion of the MVR as a personal electoral vehicle for Chávez very quickly disappeared in the country. As Chapter 4 illustrated in segments discussing the “party question” and the evolution of the partisan wing of the Bolivarian Movement, support did not automatically translate from the president to the MVR after 1998, with many activists

¹⁷⁴ They concluded: “The recipients and workers we surveyed had no sense of program benefits being a quid pro quo for their participation and no expectation that they might be expelled or excluded if their partisanship wavered.”

maintaining deep suspicions of the party, instead transferring their allegiance to other parties in the Polo Patriótico, or choosing not to support a political party at all. The “party question” was one of the primary difficulties faced by Chávez and other leaders in the Bolivarian Movement throughout the initial years of the Fifth Republic. And figuring out how to create a new partisan apparatus in which supporters would place more value would prove to be one of the most important challenges during the latter stages of the Fifth Republic. As Chapter 4 also detailed, the PSUV rapidly became quite institutionalized, developing not only an extensive organizational structure and a massive membership base, but also routinized procedures for internal governance and for conducting primary elections.

Two other points might also be noted when the Venezuelan case is put in comparative perspective with Brazil and Chile. A first point is that we should not overstate the uniqueness of Chávez’s popularity and charisma. Both Lula and Lagos were also charismatic leaders who garnered extremely high approval ratings and elicited huge amounts of personal affection. The comparison with Lula, who founded the PT and was the party’s only presidential candidate from 1989 to 2006, deserves particular emphasis in this respect. Chávez is clearly not the only president who might seem to have strong coattails or whose actions might affect the propensity of beneficiaries to support his party.

A secondary point is that, after 2000 at least, the Venezuelan electoral calendar has worked explicitly against coattail effects at the voting booth. Presidential terms are six years long, legislative terms five years, and gubernatorial terms four years, such that subsequent presidential elections have not been held in the same years as legislative or gubernatorial contests. In contrast, in both Brazil and Chile, legislative elections have consistently been held in conjunction with presidential elections – with voters actually voting for president and for the legislature in the same trip to the ballot box. If anything, then, institutional arrangements would lead us to expect presidential coattails to be potentially stronger in Brazil and Chile than in Venezuela.

Conclusion

This chapter argued that the distinctive approaches of left governments to political mobilization – mass-organizational versus catchall – catalyzed divergent patterns of party system reorientation around class cleavages. The chapter first presented evidence to demonstrate these divergences in cleavage expression. To test the argument, the chapter then examined the effects of programs in each country on identification with left parties, showing that programs in Brazil and Chile had no effects whatsoever whereas those in Venezuela had strikingly large effects. Alternative hypotheses regarding the underlying mechanism of the argument appear to have little support.

The consolidation of the “Two Lefts” across different countries therefore has not only led to different dynamics of polarization in political contestation but also, with the realization of different agendas in office, to divergence with respect to the expression of class cleavages in party systems. There is substantial reason to expect that this pattern of divergence will endure. The mass-organizational strategy in Venezuela was effective at building support for the PSUV precisely because it involved the construction of a new organizational foundation for the class cleavage, one appropriate to a post-industrial era in which the class

organizational foundations of class politics are no longer viable. The catchall strategy in Brazil and Chile, in contrast, did nothing to shape the world of civil society in poor communities or create linkages with left parties. While both countries continue to be marked by deep and socially salient class cleavages, political entrepreneurs have not lent them organizational expression and the window of opportunity for doing so may have closed, as moderate left parties with little interest in building such organizational foundations appear highly entrenched.

Chapter 7 –Comparative Perspectives and Final Observations

The last decades of the 20th century saw both democracy and economic liberalization spread across Latin America. From the start of these trends, scholars have asked how such dual transitions would shape future political trajectories in the region, developing theories regarding the mode of democratic transition, the extent and success of market reforms, or whether or not established parties and party systems were able to survive. Yet with the benefit of greater historical perspective, it has become increasingly clear that variant political trajectories did not stabilize during this dual transitions period. Rather, subsequent sociopolitical reactions, especially the political ascendance of the left across much of the region and the activities of the left in office, have been integral to putting countries on different paths. Moderate left parties consolidated to anchor integrative party systems in some countries, in which major partisan actors maintained a consensus on support for the neoliberal model and continuity in the institutions of liberal democracy, and in which class cleavages remained largely unpoliticized in party competition. In other nations, radical left parties emerged to drive polarizing party systems, marked by wrenching programmatic conflict and class cleavages that were powerfully channeled into the electoral arena.

These strikingly different party systems, driven by different kinds of left parties, can be seen as representing central institutional legacies of a tumultuous period of political and economic transition and sociopolitical response. Were we to employ the language of critical junctures, we might say that a critical juncture has extended beyond the dual transitions into a period in which new and different actors have emerged across countries, putting into place new and different institutional arrangements, and that these increasingly stable arrangements seem likely to constitute legacies, shaping the conduct and nature of political contestation for years to come. Of course, it is difficult to conduct a critical juncture analysis without the benefit of greater hindsight, making the idea of a critical juncture during this period largely speculative. At the very least, however, we can perceive very distinct macropolitical trajectories across countries in the region where the moderate and radical left has taken power, which are well buttressed by a variety of institutional differences, especially the nature of their party systems.

Explaining variation in regional party systems is critical for several reasons. For Latin Americanists, finding a more comprehensive and convincing explanation is critical to better understanding the events of the last two decades and their implications. For scholars of comparative politics more generally, exploring variation in regional party systems offers the opportunity to build theory about the emergence and dynamics of political and social polarization in the contemporary developing world. Both programmatic polarization and the politicization of class cleavages have been most extensively studied in the more developed countries, where democratic competition has been longer entrenched. Yet the spread of democracy or semidemocracy throughout much of the developing world in the last decades, into contexts of massive social inequalities and relatively weak institutions, makes these topics particularly central for thinking about the politics of developing countries in the new century. When does democracy spawn highly conflictual patterns of programmatic

contestation? When and how do deep socioeconomic divisions become activated and channeled into political contestation?

This concluding chapter serves three purposes. First, I briefly summarize the argument of the study and its relation to extant explanations for the emergence and consolidation of the Two Lefts, and thus different kinds of party systems, in the region, showing how the study has furthered our understanding of cross-case variation. I then examine how well the argument explains outcomes in two other countries in the region, Bolivia and Uruguay, which have respectively seen the consolidation of polarizing and integrative party systems in recent years. This brief exploration is encouraging, suggesting that the argument could serve as a broader explanation for party system outcomes across the subset of middle-income Latin American countries that meet the original scope conditions of having major left parties and maintaining democratic regimes throughout the 1990s. I then make some final observations regarding the study's broader contributions to the exploration of political and social polarization in the young, increasingly numerous, yet highly unequal democracies of the developing world.

The Argument Summarized

This study argued that the occurrence or avoidance of legitimacy crises – protracted failures of governance also marked by steep erosions in citizen confidence in core state institutions – triggered the consolidation of polarizing or integrative party systems across countries. These legitimacy crises decisively shaped factional contestation within the partisan left, such that moderate or radical coalitions consolidated. The consolidation of these coalitions, in turn, shaped both the level of programmatic competition within party systems and the politicization of class cleavages in party competition. The former relationship was more direct. The consolidation of the radical left in Venezuela, by definition, entailed conflictual patterns of contestation within the party system, as Chávez and the Polo Patriótico challenged the neoliberal consensus and proposed a series of institutional reforms that would remake Venezuela's liberal democracy. The consolidation of the moderate left in Brazil and Chile, in contrast, entailed consensual patterns of contestation within party systems. Neither the PT nor the PS would challenge the neoliberal consensus, nor would the left in either country pursue an agenda of transforming the institutions of liberal democracy.

The occurrence or avoidance of legitimacy crisis also led to left governments pursuing different strategies of political mobilization, which catalyzed variation in the expression of class cleavages in party systems. The radical left pursued a mass-organizational strategy, implementing new social programs that were designed to sponsor and support organization and mobilization among the lower class beneficiaries and expending great energy to form linkages between these organizations and the parties of the Bolivarian Movement. The moderate left pursued a catchall strategy, implementing technocratic social programs that did not sponsor organization or mobilization among beneficiaries and making few strides to form or strengthen linkages between left parties and social organizations of the lower classes. These alternative strategies of political mobilization opened up different kinds of opportunities for left political parties to penetrate poor communities, claim credit for new social programs, and engage beneficiaries for electoral recruitment. As a consequence, they

drove variation in the politicization of class cleavages in party systems. The lower classes came to disproportionately support the MVR and, subsequently, PSUV in Venezuela. In contrast, the poor remained no more likely than other class groups to support the PT in Brazil or the PS/PPD bloc in Chile.

Relationship to Extant Explanations. A few notes might be added regarding how this argument relates to and improves upon extant explanations of the consolidation of the “Two Lefts” across countries in the region, and thus divergent party systems. The rise of the left across the region has triggered numerous preliminary attempts at explaining variation. Yet these initial studies, often taking the form of more cursory reviews in journal articles or the introductions to edited volumes, have failed to produce convincing explanations.

Studies that focus on societal opposition to market reforms as explanations of polarization or the emergence of the radical left are undermined by the lack of public opinion evidence for their claims. Indeed, the emergence of the radical left in Venezuela occurred despite an electorate with expressed preferences no further to the left – indeed, along numerous measures, further to the right – than those in Brazil or Chile. The simplistic notion that the radical left just arose in response to anti-neoliberal sentiment obscures many interesting aspects of the outcome and plays into the hands of Chávez and others within the Bolivarian Movement, who have made this view of events the official narrative of their ascent. A more realistic view, attentive to public opinion data, would hold that Chávez and the Polo Patriótico took advantage of their anti-systemic credentials and the attraction of their post-liberal message regarding remaking Venezuelan democracy to win an election in which their radically anti-neoliberal sentiments were actually a net debility (and, indeed, had to be strategically obscured in part during the campaign). Legitimacy crisis, not opposition to market reforms, helped radicals win office.

The study also improves on extant explanations of the supply side dynamics at play in the consolidation of the Two Lefts in the region. The most prominent hypothesis in this respect has focused on the collapse or deinstitutionalization of party systems, holding that the radical left consolidated in countries where traditional party systems suffered these fates. This hypothesis has two weaknesses. First, the consolidation of the radical left in Venezuela (and in other countries in the region) occurred in tandem, rather than subsequent to, the collapse or deinstitutionalization of established party systems. The putative cause does not clearly precede the outcome. Such explanations are unsatisfactory on a *prima facie* level, and the temporal coincidence of putative cause and effect raises the question of whether some other prior variable was responsible for driving both. I argue that legitimacy crisis played this role, undermining established parties as well as shaping factional dynamics on the left.

The second problem with this hypothesis is that it never really demonstrates why the decline of established parties should lead to the consolidation of a radical left, rather than a moderate left. Scholars claim that party system collapse is conducive to radical politics, but do little to actually connect these variables through process tracing. Yet why should the fates of party systems that largely consist of centrist and right-win parties have shaped dynamics on the left? The Brazilian case offers a clear example of a situation in which an inchoate party system, in which established parties suffered huge blows, was perfectly compatible with the consolidation of a moderate left. It is easy to imagine a similar outcome in Venezuela, in which the Punto Fijo system largely collapsed but a moderate MAS or LCR reaped the

benefits and consolidated as the major party on the left. Indeed, up until about 1996, most Venezuelan political analysts believed this sequence of events to be happening in the country. A much more intuitive and convincing approach is to focus on the left side of the ideological spectrum, rather than on established parties of the center and right, and to examine how legitimacy crisis shaped factional contestation and competition within the left itself.

Studies focusing on whether or not major left parties were in government during market reform episodes make admirable strides in this direction but neither correlate cause and effect nor convincingly establish mechanisms through process-based analysis. Outcomes in both the Chilean (where the left was in government) and Venezuelan (where the left was mainly in opposition) cases run counter to the predictions of the theory. Further, the theory offers little explanation why the left's mere entrance into government during this period (regardless of what happened in government) should have so powerfully shaped outcomes. A more convincing idea, which better correlates cause and effect and is supported by a wealth of process-based evidence, is that the key variable related to the success or failure of governance during market reform episodes and how these outcomes shaped factional contestation and debate within the partisan left itself, leading to left parties cohering around moderate leadership in some cases and the breakdown of left parties and emergence of radical coalitions in other countries.

Comparative Perspectives: Bolivia and Uruguay

How well does the argument hold up when extended to other countries in the region where the radical or moderate left has won power in the last decade? We should not consider the argument of the study to be "wrong" if it cannot explain additional cases. As with many other macropolitical outcomes such as democratization, there might reasonably be numerous paths toward the emergence of polarizing or integrative party systems. If the argument can help explain outcomes in these other cases, however, that would be a significant point in its favor.

The chapter briefly assesses this question with respect to the cases of Bolivia and Uruguay, two other countries in South America that fit the original selection criteria for the study. While an in-depth exploration is not feasible, the discussion focuses on whether the major elements of the study's argument hold across these three cases. Did legitimacy crisis occur in Bolivia, but not in Uruguay, during the transition to market liberalism? Did the occurrence or absence of legitimacy crisis seem to shape the fates of established left parties and the nature of factional contestation on the left, leading to radical coalitions in the former and a moderate left coalition in the latter? Has the radical left in Bolivia pursued mass-organizational strategies while the moderate left in Uruguay has pursued a catchall strategy? Finally, is there evidence that class cleavages have become politicized in Bolivia while remaining unexpressed in Uruguay?

Bolivia. Like its counterparts in Venezuela, Chile, and Brazil, the partisan left in Bolivia entered the 1980s internally divided, as different parties and party factions battled over programmatic and strategic adjustment in the new era. The major left party in the country was the Movimiento de la Izquierda Revolucionaria (MIR), which had been founded in 1971 as an alliance between student radicals, labor leaders, and leftist factions of

established parties. As with other major left parties in other countries, however, the MIR was divided into moderate and radical factions. Other smaller, radical fringe parties also existed, including the Partido Comunista de Bolivia (PCB), the Partido Socialista, and emergent indigenous parties and movements such as the Movimiento Revolucionario Tupaj Katari de Liberación (MRTKL). In this sense, the partisan left in Bolivia was grouped in a tripartite structure similar to that in other countries. While the democratization struggle against the regime of Hugo Banzer had a unifying effect on forces of the Bolivian left, the post-transition milieu would soon exacerbate disputes between different groups.

The course of the 1980s saw the MIR severely tested by factional divides within the party. The greatest source of internal discord regarded macroeconomic adaptation, exacerbated by the party's participation in the Unidad Democrática y Popular (UDP) coalition, the post-transition governing coalition led by Hernán Siles Zuazo. The UDP government was beset by a massive hyperinflation, and proved largely incapable of deciding on a policy course to deal with the problem. MIR abandoned the governing coalition in 1984, at the behest of longtime leader Jaime Paz Zamora, who led a moderate faction within the party that was embracing an increasingly pragmatic view of the kinds of macroeconomic reforms that would be necessary in the new era. Paz Zamora's choice to leave the UDP and, even more importantly, his inclinations toward macroeconomic moderation, however, were not universally popular. As the 1980s progressed, the MIR became increasingly fractured along factional lines, with two radical factions called MIR-Bolivia Libre and MIR-Masas both tentatively breaking with the Paz-led moderates and starting to go their own way in the new democratic milieu (Dunkerley 1986).

The next two Bolivian governments would vigorously pursue market reforms yet fail to put the country on a more successful course, creating a legitimacy crisis that would lead to the irrevocable fracture and decline of the MIR and establish the conditions under which a new radical force on the left, the Movimiento al Socialismo – Instrumento Político por la Soberanía de los Pueblos (MAS), would eventually consolidate. The 1985 elections were won by the Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario's (MNR) Víctor Paz Estenssoro, who would go on to implement sweeping structural reforms to address hyperinflation. While the reforms succeeded in stabilizing prices, they were recessionary, such that the Bolivian economy went into a tailspin for the rest of the decade. The reforms were highly unpopular among the radical elements of the Bolivian left, including both radical factions of the MIR and smaller parties of the radical fringe. Paz Estenssoro ended his presidency highly unpopular, and divisions within the left hardened, such that the Paz Zamora MIR group would contest the election independently of the radical MIR factions, which instead joined with the PCB and other minor fringe left parties to form Izquierda Unida (IU), an initial attempt to unite radical forces of the left.

Much like in Venezuela, the moderate-led major left party reached its zenith in the wake of the struggles of initial reformers, and then collapsed disastrously as the successor government, in which the moderate left participated, failed and the country fell into legitimacy crisis. In the Bolivian case, the MIR was actually the head of this successor government. The 1989 elections had produced a virtual three-way tie between the MIR, the MNR, and Banzer's ADN. In the "pacted democracy" that Bolivia had developed, the head of state would be chosen through the formation of a legislative majority in congress. After

intense negotiations, a highly controversial MIR-ADN coalition was crafted and Paz Zamora named president of the country. As part of the alliance with ADN, Paz Zamora committed to maintaining the neoliberal model. Not only was this choice (as well as the alliance with ADN to begin with) unpopular, the model was largely a failure, as the Bolivian economy, even coming off a recession, grew by an average of around 1% during the entire presidential term. The Paz Zamora administration was also beset by numerous corruption scandals, including the incarceration of chief presidential aide Oscar Eid on drug trafficking charges. In sum, the successor government of Paz Zamora, much like the Caldera administration in Venezuela, turned out to be a massive failure.

These protracted failures of governance in Bolivia meet the standard for legitimacy crisis. There were two consecutive failed administrations during the period of market liberalization, or three if the post-transition Siles Zuazo government is also considered. During the decade from 1984-1993, covering the Paz Estenssoro and Paz Zamora administrations, the Bolivian economy grew by a total of less than 2%, including two separate recessions. By 1996, when data is first available, Bolivians would show a profound lack of trust in basic government institutions, close to Venezuelan levels, with the proportion of the population claiming to have no trust at all in the congress, the government, and the public administration averaging 40%.¹⁷⁵ In this milieu, the breakup of the MIR became permanent and the moderate-led Paz Zamora group within the party experienced huge setbacks from which it would never recover. The Bolivian left that emerged from the failure of the successor government and the onset of legitimacy crisis was thus one in which, like in Venezuela, the major left party had been dealt a mortal blow. The fracture of MIR opened up space for the growth of a radical alternative and opportunities for further coalition building between disaffected radicals from the MIR and groups from the radical fringe left, a process that had started with the creation of IU.

In the absence of a Chávez figure to immediately step into the political vacuum and galvanize the consolidation of a strong radical coalition, the formation of a new alternative on the left in Bolivia occurred through a lengthier and more organic process than in Venezuela. The search for a way to unite forces of the radical left had begun in the late 1980s with the formation of IU, in which both traditional radical leftist groups and disaffected parts of the MIR participated. The same period had also seen the steady growth, centered in the department of Cochabamba, of newly activated social and political movements that combined leftist politics and ideology and indigenous appeals and identities. With the factional breakup and decline of the MIR, growth opportunities in the political arena for these new left/indigenous actors increased in the 1990s. A first party, the Asamblea por la Soberanía de los Pueblos (ASP) was formed in the mid-1990s to begin contesting elections. Without formal recognition as a political party and lacking many of the resources necessary to compete in the electoral arena, ASP entered into strategic alliances with IU and MIR-Bolivia Libre (which had left IU but remained ideologically compatible), which were integral to its early growth. Indeed, the first four ASP members that won seats in the Chamber of Deputies – including Evo Morales – were elected as members of IU.

¹⁷⁵ Data comes from the 1996 Latinobarómetro. This figures can be compared to those cited for Venezuela, Brazil, and Chile in Chapter 3.

The aftermath of legitimacy crisis thus saw a process by which various minor actors on the radical left engaged in strategic alliances in the interest of finding a coalition that could contest power on the national stage. This process also involved infighting among the fledgling left/indigenous movement, as leaders Felipe Quispe and Morales jockeyed for power. In 1998, a group led by Morales split from ASP and officially formed MAS-ISIP. The party made significant gains in the 1998 local elections, played a leading role in the “Water War” of 2000, and then broke through in the 2002 national elections, with the party winning over 20% of seats in the Chamber of Deputies and Morales finishing second in the presidential race. With several aborted presidencies and the deepening of the country’s crisis of legitimacy and governability in the next few years, MAS’s strength only grew, such that the party would sweep the 2005 elections with an absolute majority.

The meteoric ascent of MAS was driven by the ongoing legitimacy crisis in the country and the successful crafting of a broad electoral coalition. MAS made concerted attempts to avoid being pigeonholed as a purely indigenous party and to craft a coalition that also included substantial numbers of white and mestizo voters (Madrid 2008). MAS also attempted to position itself as an inclusive party that could unite disparate parts of the radical left, including those who had no roots in the indigenous movement. These strategies were exemplified by the vice presidential choice of Álvaro García Linera, a famous leftist radical who had longstanding ties to many in MAS and ASP but who himself was of Spanish descent. Indeed, the ranks of key MAS politicians and close Morales advisers would reflect a diversity of backgrounds in social movements and the radical Bolivian left.

The triumph of MAS spelled the end of Bolivia’s post-transition “pacted democracy” and inaugurated a new party system marked by a conflictual pattern of contestation. Like Chávez and the Polo Patriótico in Venezuela, Morales and MAS came to power denouncing the inequities of the neoliberal model and promising to refound the Bolivian state in order to forge a new kind of democracy. In power, the MAS government implemented a more heterodox set of economic policies and pursued a highly controversial constitutional reform. This agenda was staunchly rejected by a coalition of opposition parties, with political conflict becoming extremely heated and boiling over into violent clashes between supporters of the government and the opposition on numerous occasions.

Like the radical left in Venezuela, the MAS pursued a mass-organizational strategy for political mobilization, although perhaps of a more basist and “bottom-up” variant. While the MBR-200 was committed to grassroots politics, the short time frame between its emergence and the 1998 elections left little room for the development of a strong organization and movement at the base level. In contrast, the victorious MAS of 2005 represented the culmination of two decades of an organic process of social mobilization and political alliance formation. Commitments to fostering social organization and to forming linkages between social organizations and movements and political parties were central to the MAS project. Unlike Venezuela, however, much of this infrastructure had already been created before the MAS came to power. Not only did the MAS have powerful allies in major social movements and labor unions in the country, but MAS itself – a “loose and heterogeneous coalition of mainly indigenous organizations” in the words of one commentator (Mayorga 2008) – blurred the line between social movement and political party, a notion captured in the long-held idea

of the group as a “political instrument” for popular constituencies, rather than a party conventionally understood.

Despite already possessing a formidable organizational and mobilizational infrastructure, the MAS has also used its position in power since 2005 to sponsor social organization among the popular sectors and extend its linkages with social organizations and movements, especially those operating in its rural base. In order to extend its influence and support in urban areas, the party has adopted an overt strategy of attempting to affiliate and coopt extant territorially based social organizations in poor areas of La Paz and other major cities (Anria 2010). The MAS has also made support and sponsorship of social organizations a primary emphasis of its developing policy agenda. The constitutional reform process involved the institutionalization of the rights of civil society in numerous spheres of local governance. The Morales government’s most ambitious foray into social protection to date, a major health care reform, also sponsors the formation of local-level Health Committees in similar fashion to the Barrio Adentro program in Venezuela (Ministerio de Salud y Deportes 2008).

These strategies reflect a mixture of sponsorship and, increasingly, an emphasis on affiliation and control from the partisan wing of MAS. As a result, scholars have increasingly begun to emphasize the organizational development of MAS’s partisan wing and to highlight an increasingly top-down dynamic between the party and affiliated social organizations and movements (Mayorga 2008; Schilling-Vacaflor 2010). While the social movement base of MAS holds more power and autonomy than its analogue in Venezuela, the experience of MAS in office has in some ways sharpened similarities between the two political projects. Both appear to be characterized by largely top-down processes of institutionalizing political parties through mass-organizational strategies, but these processes have unfolded on somewhat different terms due to disparities in the preexisting strength and organization of the base in each case.

The rise and consolidation of MAS has not only led to a conflictual pattern of programmatic contestation, in which the government and opposition have clashed, sometimes violently, over macroeconomic policy and the constitutional reform process, but also the politicization of class cleavages in party competition. A look at data from the 2010 LAPOP America’s Barometer suggests that Bolivians in the lower third of the class hierarchy are almost twice as likely to identify with MAS as Bolivians in the upper third. More data analysis is required to sharpen this descriptive assessment of the class cleavage and to investigate the role of mass-organizational strategies in driving and institutionalizing the politicization of the cleavage. But it seems at least likely that the mass-organizational strategy, in which MAS has placed great emphasis in building mobilizational power among the lower class and indigenous population of the country, has been central to shifting party competition along class lines.

Uruguay. The partisan left in Uruguay entered the 1980s divided along ideological lines in much the same way as left parties in other middle-income countries of the region. A notable difference is that the Uruguayan left, from the beginning of the democratic transition, was loosely united in the Frente Amplio (FA) coalition. The FA was formed in 1970s to unite several parties of the Uruguayan left, as well as Christian Democrats and splinters from the established Partido Colorado (PC) and Partido Nacional (PN). While established to better

challenge the hegemony of the two traditional parties, the formation of the FA ultimately hastened the breakdown of Uruguayan democracy altogether, as the new electoral threat posed by a coalition that included the left help trigger a military coup. However, the democratization struggle during this authoritarian interlude offered impetus for maintaining coalitional unity, such that the FA emerged in 1984 after the democratic transition as a viable third option in Uruguayan politics.

As a coalition of parties that spanned the center to the extreme left, the FA was ideologically heterogeneous and “factionalized” by its nature. Indeed, analysts of Uruguayan politics in the 1980s spoke of the country’s four-party system, positing that the coalition possessed moderate and radical wings that were so distinct that they should be considered separate entities (González 1995). On the moderate side were groups such as Nuevo Espacio, as well as some blocs within the Partido Socialista (PS) and Partido Comunista (PC), the country’s two oldest and most established parties of the left. FA founder Liber Seregni, while maintaining independence from any one element in the coalition, was often considered to have moderate sympathies. The radical wing consisted of the bulk of the PS and PC, as well as fringe radical groups such as the Movimiento de Liberación Nacional - Tupamaros, urban guerillas who had played a particularly prominent role in inciting the military crackdown of 1973, and the Movimiento Revolucionario Oriental (MRO). These fringe radical groups, which supported the FA but remained hesitant regarding democratic participation, formed the Movimiento de Participación Popular (MPP) in order to strengthen their forces as the left-most bloc within the coalition.

As with the left in other countries, divides within the FA reflected both disputes over macroeconomic adaptation – especially how much to compromise with the neoliberal model – as well as clashes regarding alternative visions of democracy and how much to prioritize a post-liberal agenda centered on social mobilization and increasing citizen participation. As the country returned to democracy, pragmatists asserted their leadership and began to put the FA on a moderating trajectory, a decision that elicited significant pushback from radicals, both in the MPP and in parts of the PS and PC. Congresses of the Frente Amplio and of major constituent parties such as the Partido Socialista during the late 1980s revealed both the continuing strength of radical viewpoints as well as fundamental factional divides regarding the wisdom of macroeconomic moderation and the vigor with which the bloc should pursue an agenda of deepening democracy (Frente Amplio 1987; Partido Socialista de Uruguay 1987). This period also saw the temporary exit, due to internal disagreements with intransigent radicals, of a subset of the moderates of the coalition, who instead temporarily formed the party Nuevo Espacio. Whether moderates would be able to extend their hegemony over the ideologically fractured coalition or whether the FA would break, facilitating the formation of a radical alliance with greater ideological purity, remained in the balance.

Relatively successful governance in the neoliberal era and the avoidance of legitimacy crisis decisively shaped the outcome of these factional struggles, such that the FA would undergo a major ideological renovation during the 1990s. Colorado Julia María Sanguinetti helmed the first government after the democratic transition, presiding over the consolidation of the new regime and taking some initial steps toward liberalizing the economy, especially in the area of trade. While neighbors such as Argentina and Brazil saw their economies explode during this time, the Uruguayan economy expanded over 17% during the president’s term

from 1985-1990.¹⁷⁶ The slow creep of inflation eroded Sanguinetti's popularity by the end of his term, such that the president enjoyed an approval rating of only about 20% by his last days in office, but the Sanguinetti administration is widely regarded as a relative successful one, especially in the turbulent context of the 1980s. His successor, Luis Alberto Lacalle, a Blanco, had a similar experience in office. Lacalle took even more aggressive steps to open the economy, focusing on tackling inflation and privatizing numerous state enterprises. Some of these policies elicited significant opposition, such that Lacalle would also end his term with a relatively low approval rating. However, the performance of the economy during this period was likewise quite strong, as GDP per capita rose roughly 28% over Lacalle's term in office.

The Uruguayan experience in the decade after democratic transition shows why one cannot mechanistically use presidential approval, without recourse to any other information, to judge the occurrence or not of legitimacy crises. Both Sanguinetti and Lacalle finished their terms with approval ratings around 20-25% (Boas 2009). In many ways, however, these low ratings simply reflected the tripartite nature of the Uruguayan party system, marked by significant antagonism between each bloc and thus a pattern in which presidents tended to enter office over the opposition of 2/3 of the electorate. Low approval ratings may also have reflected unrealistically high expectations (González 1995). In any case, a combined aggregate economic growth of nearly 50% in GDP per capita during the 1985-1995 decade, when other countries in the region were experiencing severe recessionary crises, cannot be seen as a protracted failure of governance. One final indicator of the avoidance of legitimacy crisis is the relative absence of anti-systemic sentiment. Latinobarómetro data from the mid-1990s show that the proportion of the population claiming to have no trust at all in the congress, the government, and the public administration averaged only 19.7%, the second lowest figure in the region after Chile and less than half the corresponding figures in Venezuela or Bolivia.¹⁷⁷

Successful governance in the neoliberal era and the avoidance of legitimacy crisis bolstered the argument for programmatic moderation within the FA and strengthened the hand of moderate factions. Disputes over programmatic moderation played out against the backdrop of leadership struggle. Most importantly, a stiff challenge to the leadership of Seregni – and close associate Danilo Astori – emerged in the form of former oncologist and PS leader Tabaré Vázquez, who was able to win the 1990 election for the mayorship of Montevideo and utilize this position to dramatically increase his profile. During the first half of the 1990s, competition between Vázquez and Seregni/Astori for leadership intensified. Critically, however, the dynamics of this competition involved both sides embracing increasingly moderate positions, while also attempting to bring along and court the party's radical wing.

As this fight between moderates continued, radical leaders within the MPP such as José Mujica experienced a change of heart regarding electoral participation, agreeing to stand for election for the first time in 1994. Much like the radicals within the Chilean PS, leaders of

¹⁷⁶ Data is drawn from the Penn World Tables.

¹⁷⁷ Data are drawn from the 1995 and 1996 Latinobarómetro. This figure can be compared to those cited for Venezuela, Brazil, and Chile in chapter 3 and that cited for Bolivia earlier in this chapter.

the MPP saw that moderation and pragmatic accommodation represented the only game in town in the context of an increasingly stable post-transition milieu. Strategic adjustment involved juggling a commitment to grassroots politics and organization with a pragmatic stance toward electoral alliances and programmatic compromise, and was highly dependent on the leadership of Mujica, who emerged as one of the country's most popular politicians (Luna 2007). In this process, MPP became an increasingly powerful force, improving its relative standing in the 1994, 1999, and 2004 elections, eventually becoming the single largest faction within the FA. Again mirroring events in Chile, the radicals of the FA were not so much marginalized as converted and subsequently empowered.

If factional dynamics within the FA were similar to those within the Chilean PS, the course of programmatic moderation bore more similarity to that of the PT in Brazil. The FA's position in opposition throughout the 1990s allowed the bloc the luxury of inveighing against many of the reforms carried out under the Lacalle and Sanguinetti administrations, especially the privatization of state companies and other measures that struck directly at the union base of the coalition. Like the PT, however, these oppositional stances were maintained at the same time that the party leadership, including Vázquez, was progressively moderating its stances in electoral campaigns and taking other actions to reach out to the business and political community in order to further establish their bona fides as pro-systemic actors that could be trusted to maintain political and economic stability. The victory of Vázquez in the 2004 election was won with a program that, while stressing the need to do more for the poor in the country, promised many continuities with the liberal economic model that had been implemented by previous administrations.

In office, the FA has pursued a largely catchall strategy of political mobilization. Like the PT and PS, this catchall orientation reflects a longer standing trajectory, which began before arriving in office, in which the bloc came to rely less on linkages with organized social constituencies and came to embrace more of an electoral professional orientation. Arguably, the FA has retained stronger linkages to organized labor and a greater grassroots party presence than its moderate analogues in Chile and Brazil (Collier and Handlin 2010). Nevertheless, in the broader perspective, the FA clearly fits into the catchall camp. As with left governments in Brazil and Chile, new social policies implemented by the Vázquez and Mujica administrations – such as the CCT program Plan Nacional a la Emergencia Social (PANES) – were implemented in a technocratic and atomizing manner, providing no incentives for organization or mobilization among beneficiaries. And while the FA may still have some durable relationships with labor and some established groups within civil society, it has not used its position in power to significantly expand party-organizational linkages.

In the absence of overt attempts by the FA to extend the party's organizational reach among the lower classes, the class cleavage in Uruguay has remained largely unexpressed in party politics. The FA after democratization developed a heterogeneous social base, drawing roughly equally across class groups and often performing best by a slight amount among upper sectors of the population (Luna 2007). As with the PT and PS, the bloc's time in government has done little to alter this social base. Indeed, analysis of data from the 2010 Latinobarómetro suggests that the bloc, while exhibiting impressive appeal across the Uruguayan class structure, has continued to draw roughly equally across class groups, with a slightly higher vote share from the upper sectors of society. As in Brazil and Chile, then, the

Uruguayan case is a clear example of how successful governance in the neoliberal era, which staved off legitimacy crisis, led to the consolidation of a moderate coalition on the left and the entrenchment of an integrative party system marked by largely consensual politics and class cleavages that remained unexpressed in party competition.

Summary. While more research is necessary, there is substantial reason to believe that the argument of the study travels well to the cases of Bolivia and Uruguay. A legitimacy crisis clearly occurred in Bolivia during the implementation of the neoliberal model, with protracted failures of governance involving almost no net economic growth for a decade and very high proportions of the citizenry losing confidence in state institutions. In the face of this crisis, moderates within MIR were undercut, the party's fissure became irrevocable, and opportunity arose for new alliances between radical factions and groups emerging out of the left/indigenous mobilization that began during this time, ultimately culminating the growth and victory of the MAS. With MAS emerging as the major partisan actor on the left, the Bolivian party system would reflect conflictual dynamics during the Left Turn, as the Morales government and the opposition battled over macroeconomic policy and the constitutional reform process.

In contrast, the Sanguinetti and Lacalle administrations managed to successfully steward the Uruguayan economy through the tumultuous 1980s and early 1990s, and Uruguayans maintained very high levels of confidence in state institutions. The avoidance of legitimacy created a milieu in which moderates within the FA were able to convince radicals of the wisdom (indeed, necessity) of a more pragmatic course, and the bloc consolidated in a moderate orientation with the radical MPP converging toward the center. With the FA's moderation, the Left Turn would see largely consensual dynamics within the Uruguayan party system, as the Vázquez and Mujica administrations did little to challenge the neoliberal model and made no attempts at reforming the basic institutions of the country's liberal democracy.

The two cases also largely correspond to theoretical expectations with respect to the adoption of mass-organizational versus catchall strategies of political mobilization and the politicization of class cleavages in party systems. The Bolivian MAS has embraced a mass-organizational strategy, although one that differs in important ways from that of the Bolivarian Movement in Venezuela (more on this below). In contrast, the Uruguayan FA clearly fits the catchall pattern, implementing technocratic social programs and taking few steps to spur social mobilization or truly expand party-organizational linkages beyond the bloc's historic ties with organized labor. While it is not possible to conduct extensive data analysis regarding the effects of these mobilizational strategies on political behavior, evidence does suggest that the mass-organizational strategy of MAS has been attended by the politicization of class cleavages in the Bolivian party system, while class cleavages continue to be largely unexpressed in the Uruguayan party system.

Table 7.1: Scoring Key Variables for the Broader Case Universe

	Venezuela	Bolivia	Brazil	Chile	Uruguay
Legitimacy Crisis	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Left Factional Outcome	Major left party breaks, radical coalition emerges	Major left party breaks, radical coalition emerges	Major left party stays cohesive, moderates become hegemonic	Major left party stays cohesive, moderates become hegemonic	Major left party stays cohesive, moderates become hegemonic
Pattern of Competition in Party System During Left Turn	Conflictual	Conflictual	Consensual	Consensual	Consensual
Left Strategy of Political Mobilization	Mass-Organizational	Mass-Organizational	Catchall	Catchall	Catchall
Class Cleavage Reflected in Party System	Yes	Yes	No	No	No

While the major elements of the argument seem to extend well to these additional cases, as summarized in Table 7.1, the addition of other variables might be considered to better capture certain aspects of variation. For example, it may be useful to introduce an additional variable to differentiate the mass-organizational strategies of the radical left in Bolivia and Venezuela, which are marked by different degrees of reliance on preexisting social movements and are marked by different balances with respect to the relatively strength of top-down and bottom-up forces. This difference seems largely attributable to the dynamics by which new radical coalitions were formed in each country. Where such coalitions coalesced quickly without significant linkages with established social movements, as in Venezuela, mass-organizational strategies took on a very top-down character. Where such coalitions grew more slowly and more organically, with significant linkages with strong social movements, as in Bolivia, mass-organizational strategies reflected a more equal balance between top-down and bottom-up pressures.

Consideration of the Uruguayan case also raises the question, already implicit in the contrast of Chile and Brazil, of whether it would be advantageous to make a finer distinction

with respect to the catchall strategies employed by the left parties that fall into the moderate category. The same variable just discussed in the last paragraph, which might be understood as “strength of linkages with organized actors and social movements before the left came to power,” could also be used to make a more refined distinction between those cases in which a catchall strategy was employed but the left still enjoyed fairly strong ties to certain organized constituencies (the PT in Brazil and the FA in Uruguay) and that in which a catchall strategy was employed by a left that had become highly elitist before entering power (the PS in Chile). If this approach were taken, we could actually imagine typologizing the strategies of popular mobilization of the left in office in a manner captured by Table 7.2.

Table 7.2: A Potential Refinement to the Argument

	Strong Prior Linkages with Social Movements	Weak Prior Linkages with Social Movements
Legitimacy Crisis	Mass-organizational (Top-Down and Bottom-Up) Bolivia	Mass-organizational (Clearly Top-Down) Venezuela
No Legitimacy Crisis	Catchall strategy (Some Organizational Ties) Brazil, Uruguay	Catchall strategy (Highly Elitist) Chile

The addition of a variable capturing preexisting relationships with organized actors and social movements would have no bearing on the outcome of polarizing or integrative party systems. Whether or not legitimacy crisis occurred would remain the dominant independent variable in the analysis. Rather, this potential change would simply serve to refine the political mobilization typology in ways that accord with many common perceptions regarding substantively important differences between cases in the radical and moderate groups. This option bears further consideration in future research.

Final Observations

The study makes several broad contributions to scholarship on the politics of developing countries in the contemporary era. Never have so many democratic or semidemocratic regimes existed in the developing world as today. Due to various abuses of power and infringements of civil liberties, many of these regimes fall short of being polyarchies. Nevertheless, the extent to which competitive elections have become the primary vehicle for determining access to power in developing countries is truly remarkable. Yet developing countries also tend to be beset by massive socioeconomic inequalities. While longitudinal comparison of inequality data is difficult, there is reason to believe that inequalities of income and wealth have increased, or at least not declined, in much of the developing world over the last three or four decades during the age of globalization. We thus might say that while never have democracies or semidemocracies been so prevalent, never have the nations of the developing world been marked by such wide socioeconomic disparities.

As we gaze to the future in the new century, a major question regards whether the democracies of the developing world will settle into stable patterns of political contestation or whether more conflictual dynamics will emerge from the volatile combination of electoral democracy and extreme inequality. It is imperative to better understand not just the roots of conflictual patterns of programmatic contestation but also the logic of how these polarizing equilibria are sustained in electoral competition. These questions are especially pertinent because the international climate is so supportive of democracy. In the past, highly conflictual patterns of contestation such as those in Venezuela or Bolivia would have quickly triggered authoritarian reversals. In today's climate, in which authoritarian coups are likely to meet condemnation from the international community, such strikes against democracy are less likely and therefore understanding the logic of sustained polarizing patterns of electoral contestation has become more imperative.

The emergence of polarizing patterns of contestation in countries such as Venezuela and Bolivia offers fruitful ground for thinking about these topics. This study has attempted to develop a set of theoretical propositions regarding the roots of conflictual patterns of political contestation and the logic of political mobilization under these kinds of party systems. While geared toward examining a set of similar countries facing a common challenge of adapting to the era of market liberalization, the study produced insights that should travel well to other areas of the world. Legitimacy crises and protracted failures of governance are unfortunately not limited to the recent Latin American experience. The logic of why such crises should favor radical parties and partisan factions – whether of the left, the right, or those competing on grounds that are not well expressed on a left-right ideological spectrum – should travel to other contexts. For example, numerous countries in Eastern Europe have seen a surge in the fortunes of radical parties in the last decade, which has been attributed to protracted governance failures and lingering discontent with mainstream options (Pop-Eleches 2008). Other examples can be found in other world regions. For example, a protracted legitimacy crisis during the 1990s is arguably at the root of the highly conflictual pattern of contestation that has characterized the Thai party system since the political rise of Thaksin Shinawatra in 2001.

While legitimacy crisis might favor radicals and trigger conflictual patterns of contestation, socioeconomic inequalities offer fertile ground for radicals, once given an opening or foothold by legitimacy crisis, to build and consolidate their support. One of the strange puzzles of the contemporary era is that, despite the vast inequalities of the developing world, class cleavages have often remained largely unpoliticized in electoral contestation. In some countries, this situation may reflect the relatively higher salience of other social cleavages, such as those based around ethnicity or religion. Yet ethnic or religious divides do not necessarily rule out class-based forms of mobilization and contestation. Indeed, overlapping social cleavages can sometimes be complementary, thus helping spur the politicization of class, as seems to have been the case in Bolivia. A broader reason may be that the politicization of class requires both windows of opportunity for the entrance of new actors oriented toward class-based appeals and the development of new forms of class-based political mobilization appropriate to the post-industrial era. While simplistic models of political economy might predict that the mere presence of inequalities would automatically

lead to attempts by political elites to take advantage, the path from class cleavages in society to class-based political mobilization is not quite so direct in the messier world of real politics.

Another broader contribution of the study is thus to examine and theorize these new and emerging modes of class-based political mobilization. The distinction between mass-organizational and catchall strategies is useful for differentiating forms of political mobilization in broad strokes. But the real contribution of the study in this regard lies not in drawing the conceptual distinction, which is relatively simplistic, but in exploring and analyzing the nature of the mass-organizational strategy that has been implemented in Venezuela. In an age when the classic labor-organizational foundations of class politics are no longer viable, the Bolivarian Movement has created a new mass-organizational infrastructure of class politics centered on community-based organizations and a new kind of mass party built largely through the actions of political elites “from above.” The Bolivian case, while reflecting a different variant of this strategy, suggests that the emergence of new forms of mass-organizational political mobilization in the post-industrial era represents a larger trend beyond Venezuela.

In this perspective, the social-structural shifts caused by the decline of industrial economies, the rise of the service sector, and the informalization of work may not be leading to the death of class politics – as has often been implicitly assumed – but to a “reorganization,” in which new forms of lower class organization are emerging and political entrepreneurs are finding new ways to shape and channel this activity (Collier and Handlin 2009). The full expression of new patterns of mass-organizational mobilization, however, requires the emergence of actors with this ideological proclivity as well as institutional environments that allow them the latitude to use state policy to sponsor and sustain new organizational forms. Stable democracies, marked by strong horizontal institutions, may work against these conditions, blocking the ascendance of actors with a mass-organizational orientation and creating obstacles to the implementation of their strategies. In this case, the reorganization of class politics may only become apparent in those cases where democracies cease to function well and failures of governance become deep enough to constitute profound crises. In this sense, the emergence of both conflictual patterns of contestation and the politicization of class cleavages in the young democracies of the developing world may require prior failures of democratic governance.

Finally, the cases explored in this study also illustrate the substantive implications of divergent party systems, which appear to have set countries on different macropolitical trajectories. A look at the immediate future highlights the reality and substantive weight of macropolitical divergence. Chile seems likely to continue on its course toward the first world, a regional exemplar of stability and successful governance in the age of globalization. Brazil, historically prone to so much instability and unfulfilled promise, now seems to be on a similar trajectory, and stands ready to fulfill its geopolitical destiny as a regional superpower, a member of the rising BRICs. While we might imagine many futures for Venezuela, the long shadow cast by the Bolivarian Movement seems likely to be inescapable in some form or another. As this conclusion is being written, new questions about the health of Chávez have emerged, raising the specter of a post-Chávez Venezuela more forcefully than at any time since the recall referendum of 2004. What is striking is that, unlike in the past, only the most myopic of opposition sympathizers equate a post-Chávez Venezuela to a post-Bolivarian

Venezuela. Rather, most observers pose the question as one of succession and assume that the Venezuelan party system will continue to revolve around a highly charged competition between PSUV and opposition for years to come.

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