

LIVING IN ACTUALLY EXISTING DEMOCRACIES

Democracy to the Extent Possible in Chile

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Abstract: Chilean democracy is today more consolidated and inclusive than before the military dictatorship or at any point since the center-left Concertación government came to power. Yet the 1973 coup and Augusto Pinochet's dictatorship remain a defining moment in Chilean history. After all, democracy has been built on the foundations set in place by the country's 1980 Constitution. Although the Constitution has been amended several times, it is a reminder that Pinochet is the father of today's Chile, and the Concertación coalition a deserving stepfather. Four consecutive Concertación governments have helped heal deep social and political wounds and have presided over the most successful period of growth and progress in the nation's history. I discuss the shortcomings of Chilean democracy before 1973 and the status quo of democracy. Although I acknowledge the threat these might pose to further democratic consolidation, they are evidence of a healthy and working democracy.

Chilean democracy has consolidated far beyond what Pinochet and his allies had in mind when drafting the 1980 Constitution. Paraphrasing former president Patricio Aylwin's famous dictum, Chile enjoys a democratic system to the extent possible. Aylwin's definition of transitional justice (*justicia en la medida de lo posible*) has extended into the fabric and institutions of Chile's twenty-year-old democracy. Democracy is today more consolidated and inclusive than it was before the military dictatorship or than it has been at any point since the center-left Concertación government came to power. Yet the 1973 coup and the seventeen-year dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet remain a defining moment in Chilean history. After all, democracy has been built on the foundations set in place by the 1980 Constitution. Although the Constitution has been amended several times—and most of its deadlock authoritarian provisions and enclaves have been eliminated—the Constitution reminds us that Pinochet is the father of today's Chile. Yet the Concertación coalition has been a deserving stepfather. Four consecutive Concertación governments have helped

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heal deep social and political wounds and have presided over Chile's most successful period of economic growth, social inclusion, and democratic progress in the nation's history.

When democracy was restored in 1990, 2.8 million Chileans (17 percent) were younger than ten years old. An additional 5.3 million (31 percent) have been born since. In fact, fewer than 43 percent of Chileans were born before 1973. Only three of every ten Chileans were at least eight years old when the military bombed the presidential palace and the socialist president Salvador Allende committed suicide. When the new president—the fifth democratically elected since 1989—took office in March 2010, Chilean democracy turned twenty years old. For most Chileans, it was the only democratic experience they have known. Because it has evolved within—and beyond—the constraints the authoritarian constitution imposed on it, but also because it has evolved in a context of persistent levels of inequality combined with stable economic growth, Chile's democracy has evident strengths and unquestionable weaknesses. But it provides a good platform for future consolidation and offers opportunities to promote and bring about increasing levels of social and economic inclusion and to expand political rights.

In what follows, I first discuss the shortcomings of Chilean democracy before 1973. I summarize the context in which democracy emerged from the dictator's shadow. After analyzing how the institutional design entrenched in the Constitution hindered democratic consolidation, I highlight how democracy has nonetheless grown. I discuss the status quo of democracy, with the tension between a political elite satisfied with a top-down approach to democracy and a growing demand for more participation and bottom-up mechanisms of democracy. I finish by analyzing the challenges the Bachelet administration faced and stress underlying social and political tensions that exist in Chile today. Although I acknowledge the threat these might pose to further democratic consolidation, I also highlight how they are evidence of a growingly healthy and working democracy.

THE MYTH OF THE PRE-PINOCHET DEMOCRATIC CHILE

The system the 1973 coup shattered was not an inclusive or sufficiently institutionalized democracy. The election of Salvador Allende, who promised a "Chilean road to socialism," and the previous sweeping victory by Christian Democratic (Partido Demócrata Cristiano, or PDC) Eduardo Frei, who advocated a "revolution in liberty," reflect that the old democratic system was not functioning very well and indeed required transformations (Gil, Lagos, and Landsberger 1979; A. Valenzuela and J. S. Valenzuela 1976; Kaufman 1972; Loveman 1976, 1988; Drake 1978; Stallings 1978; A. Valenzuela 1977; Garretón 1989). The average annual growth between

1960 and 1970 was 4.1 percent, but only 1.7 percent when measured per capita. According to World Bank figures, inflation averaged 27 percent in the 1960s. Chile was a profoundly unequal society, in which the poorest 20 percent received 3.7 percent of national income in 1967, whereas the richest 20 percent received 56.5 percent (Beyer 1997).

However, there was some political inclusion in the second half of the twentieth century. After women's enfranchisement in 1949, 29.1 percent of voting-age Chileans cast ballots in 1952. When Frei was elected in 1964, 61.6 percent of eligible voters went to the polls. In the last election before the coup, held in March 1973, 69.1 percent of voting-age citizens cast a ballot in that highly polarized contest (Navia 2004). The rapid political inclusion in that period both reflected growing polarization and helped radicalize politics. Social and political inclusion became the goal of revolutionary and reformist parties. However, the inability of the state apparatus to make education, health, and other public services more inclusive rendered the democratic system incapable of accommodating newcomers. The newly enfranchised population wanted in, but the structure of the state could not survive unaltered with the additional pressure to distribute resources. Jocelyn-Holt (1998, 112) has described the system as one in which the haves "had been for years in a party," but as time went by, "the number of guests [kept] on increasing." The old democratic system, based on limited social and political inclusion, could not cope with demands for universal inclusion. Although the military dictatorship was not inevitable (A. Valenzuela 1978; Garretón and Moulián 1983), nor was the legacy of human rights violations, Chile's old democracy, built on the premise of limited social inclusion, could not survive. Frei's call to bring about change in a bourgeois democratic order and Allende's more radical call for a democratic road to socialism reflected the need to dramatically alter the political order that emerged after the 1925 Constitution.

PINOCHET, FATHER OF TODAY'S CHILE

The ensuing seventeen-year-old brutal dictatorship did not originally seek to generate a new institutional order. In fact, those who called for a military coup sought to prevent, not promote, political and economic inclusion. Probably not even Pinochet himself thought, when taking power as part of a four-member military junta on September 11, 1973, that his legacy would be so lasting. The economic model initially forced by the dictatorship and its economic team (Valdés 1995; Fontaine Aldunate 1988; Vergara 1985) has been the basis of the economic policies adopted since the return of democracy. Although successive Concertación governments have championed several reforms aimed to increase social spending, to reduce poverty, and to create a safety net for the needy (Meller 2005; Boeninger 2007; Ottone and Vergara 2006; Larraín and Vergara 2000;

Martínez and Díaz 1996), the fact that the Concertación itself identifies its economic model as neoliberalism with a human face and social market economy reflects the extent to which Pinochet's legacy remains a defining factor.

The Pinochet regime did not immediately embrace neoliberalism (Huneus 2007; Barros 2002; Cristi 2000; Cavallo, Salazar, and Sepúlveda 1997; Vial Correa 2002). More preoccupied with eliminating the Marxist threat, the regime began to talk about "goals, not deadlines" (*metas, no plazos*) after it gained political control and stabilized the economy. The famous 1978 Chacarillas speech, delivered by Pinochet and written by his adviser Jaime Guzmán, established a road map for a transition to a protected democracy (Cristi 2000; Huneus 2007). The 1980 Constitution, approved in a plebiscite held under undemocratic conditions, entrenched a political system full of deadlock provisions. Authoritarian enclaves hindered the emergence of full-flown democracy. A carefully designed institutional system of checks and balances made it clear that, even if the military were not to remain in power, the constitutional order would protect private property and consolidate a neoliberal economic model (Huneus 2007; Cavallo et al. 1997).

Yet because even custom-made shoes bind (Barros 2002), the constitutional order masterminded to perpetuate the military in power provided an opportunity for the opposition to bring about democracy (Aylwin 1998; Zaldívar Larraín 1995; Boeninger 1997). After an economic crisis in 1982 forced the government to open some political room for the opposition and social protests threatened the stability of the regime, democratic political parties seized the opportunity provided for in the constitution and forced the government into a plebiscite to decide on a new eight-year presidential period for Pinochet.

Although the plebiscite was held under conditions that favored Pinochet, on October 5, 1988, Chileans rejected him. Democratic elections were held in 1989, and democracy returned in March 1990. Yet because Pinochet was defeated within a constitutional framework of his choosing, the cost of forcing him to step down was that the opposition to Pinochet acquiesced to the institutional order entrenched in the Constitution (Love-man 1994, 1991; Ensalaco 1994, 1995; Heiss and Navia 2007). A set of constitutional reforms the dictatorship proposed was approved in a plebiscite in mid-1989. True, the Concertación asked for more comprehensive reforms (Andrade Geywitz 1991; Aylwin et al. 1985; Geisse and Ramírez 1989). But its acquiescence to the reforms and the overwhelming majority support in the plebiscite made it easier for the new democratic regime to take power peacefully, and it legitimated the Constitution (Heiss and Navia 2007; Loveman and Lira 2000; Portales 2000).

When PDC member Patricio Aylwin became president, the Concertación government began to eliminate other authoritarian enclaves and adopted

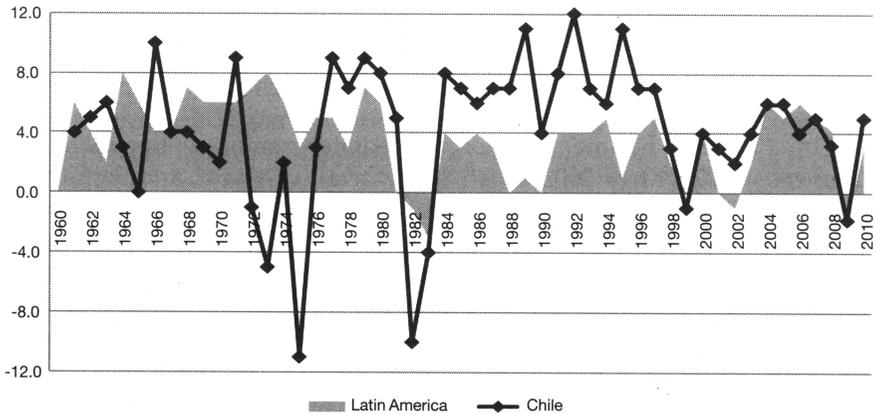


Figure 1 GDP Growth, Chile and Latin America, 1960–2009

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators, and selected data from Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean.

reforms to reduce rampant poverty levels. With 38.7 percent of Chileans living in poverty, and one in every three of those in extreme poverty (Ministerio de Planificación 2006), the new government was hard pressed to show tangible results. Widespread poverty and social and economic exclusion could trigger an authoritarian regression or democratic instability (Aylwin 1998; Meller 2005). Thus, democracy to the extent possible—though never formally stated—became the guiding principle for the transition under Aylwin and democratic consolidation under his successors.

As figure 1 shows, Chile's journey of economic development and progress was a frustrating experience. Plagued by endemic hyperinflation and particularly sensible to the economic cycle, with years of rapid growth followed by stagnation, Chile's economy underperformed Latin America in the 1960–1973 period. Although the violent overthrow of Allende and the authoritarian sequel are inexcusable, the 1973 coup also symbolized the failure of Chile's old democracy to deliver economic growth, development, and social inclusion.

But history began to change dramatically after the deep 1982 recession. Although Chile performed below the Latin American average in the years before 1984, the following twenty-six years have seen Chile outperform its Latin American neighbors in economic growth. Starting in 1984—under military rule—the economy began to expand robustly. Under the four multiparty, center-left Concertación coalition administrations of Aylwin (1990–1994), PDC Eduardo Frei (1994–2000), Party for Democracy (Partido por la Democracia, or PPD) Ricardo Lagos (2000–2006), and Socialist Michelle Bachelet (2006–2010), Chile experienced its longest run of economic growth and poverty reduction. As such, economic growth has strength-

ened democracy. Moreover, the Concertación would argue, it has also fostered it.

CHILE SINCE THE TRANSITION

When Pinochet left power on March 11, 1990, Chile was a society appropriately characterized as a nation of enemies (Constable and A. Valenzuela 1991). The country advanced toward democratic restoration constrained by an authoritarian constitution and informally limited by the former dictator, who remained as chief of the army (Ensalaco 1995; Agüero 1998; Huneeus 2007; Barros 2002; Loveman 1994, 1991). The country had deep wounds inflicted by high poverty and inequality.

The defeat of Pinochet in 1988 opened the road toward democracy. When President Bachelet completed her mandate in 2010, the Concertación completed twenty years in power, the longest duration of any coalition since the adoption of universal suffrage. The Concertación's initial goal was to secure a smooth transition to democracy. The Concertación's first president, Patricio Aylwin, sought to deal with pending issues (e.g., human rights abuses) and launched an aggressive drive to build democratic institutions and overpower the institutional constraints Pinochet left behind (Loveman 1991, 1994; Heiss and Navia 2007; Ensalaco 1994, 1995; Cavallo 1998; Rojo 1995; Otano 1995). Because Chile had suffered two dramatic economic crises under the dictatorship in 1974–1975 and 1982–1983 (see figure 1) and unemployment was widespread, the Aylwin government prioritized a growth-inducing and poverty-reducing economic policy. For democracy to flourish, the government had to better distribute economic growth. Thus, although the Concertación realized that by not seeking to abolish some authoritarian legacies and enclaves right away the new institutions of democracy would consolidate and gain legitimacy—including nonappointed senators, the powerful National Security Council, and a tutelary role for the military—the Aylwin administration favored economic development and poverty reduction rather than institutional change (Boeninger 1997, 2007; Aylwin 1998). Figure 2 shows that the strategy proved successful. Unemployment decreased, the economy grew rapidly, and inflation was brought under control after increased government spending by the dictatorship in 1988 and 1989 had provoked a spike.

Because of Aylwin's success, the Concertación easily won the 1993 presidential elections. Frei continued with the same social market economic policies during his six-year tenure. By the time Lagos became the third Concertación president in 2000, the center-left coalition had become inseparable from a market-friendly economic model. The Concertación proved that democracy would not inevitably lead to polarization and social upheaval. As figure 2 shows, after twenty years in power, the Concertación

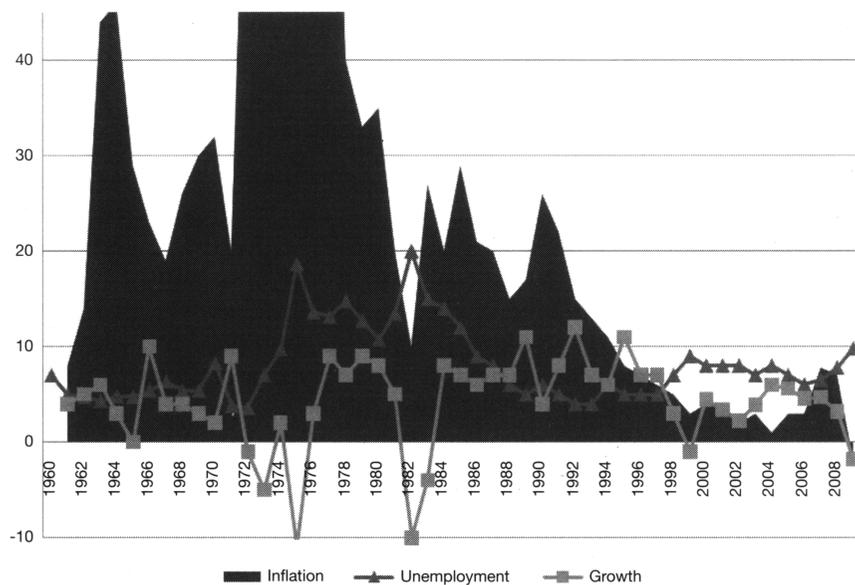


Figure 2 Selected Economic Indicators for Chile, 1960–2009

Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators, and selected data from CEPAL and Bardón M., Camilo Carrasco, and Álvaro Vial (1985). Inflation for the 1973–1979 period was 362 percent, 505 percent, 375 percent, 212 percent, 92 percent, 40 percent, and 33 percent, respectively.

has done exceptionally well bringing about economic growth, reducing inflation, and producing the conditions for more and better employment. Chileans living in poverty decreased from 38.6 percent in 1990 to 27.7 percent in 1994. Although the economic growth experienced since 1985 explains part of that reduction, a tax reform brokered with the Alianza in the opposition-controlled Senate allowed Aylwin access to fresh resources to combat poverty. Because the 1980 Constitution provided for the outgoing regime to directly and indirectly appoint nine senators—who transformed the Concertación's 22–16 majority among elected seats into a 25–22 seat majority for the opposition—the Concertación could not transform its commanding electoral majority into a majority in Congress. Thus, it had to bargain for all reforms with the overrepresented conservative opposition. Poverty reduction continued during the Frei and Lagos administrations. Although economic growth was less robust—as figure 2 shows—under Lagos than it was under Frei or Aylwin, the Concertación still succeeded in reducing poverty.

Not surprisingly, Chileans rewarded the Concertación with electoral majorities in all contests held since 1989. The Concertación won all four presidential elections, five legislative elections, and five municipal elec-

tions held between 1989 and 2008. Democracy under the Concertación has resulted in increased welfare, better living conditions for all, less poverty, more social and political inclusion, and growing levels of participation. Indicators of civil and political liberties have also shown robust results since the restoration of democracy (Stein et al. 2006; UN Development Programme 2005; Walker 2006; Lagos Escobar 2005).

THE VIRTUAL CYCLE OF DEMOCRACY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Scholars have long argued about the causal relationship between democracy and economic development (Przeworski et al. 2000). Regardless of the initial causal link they advocate, scholars agree in that development and democracy are mutually reinforcing (Hagopian and Mainwaring 2005; Przeworski 2005; Lijphart 1990; O'Donnell 1999). In Chile, economic development and democratic consolidation occurred concurrently under the Concertación. As the Pinochet regime ended in 1990, the economy was showing strong and dynamic growth. The 1988 plebiscite was held under favorable economic conditions for the dictatorship. Yet the outgoing regime did not benefit electorally. When Aylwin won in 1989, the economy was growing at unprecedented levels. The sound fundamentals of Chile's economy made it easier for Aylwin to focus on strengthening social policy and alleviating poverty.

The rapid economic growth experienced during his tenure (7.8 percent annual average) and earmarked social programs helped reduce poverty dramatically from 38.6 percent in 1990 to 27.6 percent in 1994. True, the government privileged poverty reduction rather than tackling inequality. In fact, during the Aylwin and Frei administrations, inequality remained stubbornly high and began to decrease only after 2000, under Lagos's tenure. Still, the reforms Aylwin first adopted set the country on an impressive path of poverty reduction that made Chile a successful case of poverty alleviation in Latin America (Meller 2005; Vega Fernández 2007).

Although Chile's results have been much better in reducing poverty than in fighting inequality, Concertación governments successfully combined a market-friendly economic model with a strong emphasis on poverty-alleviating programs. As table 1 shows, poverty has decreased in every administration since 1990. Moreover, recent data also show that inequality has also begun to decrease, as the Gini coefficient reached 0.54 in 2006. The policies that the Concertación championed proved successful—as figure 1 and table 1 show—but were also electorally rewarding. In the 1993 presidential election, Frei obtained 58 percent of the vote. Six years later, Lagos won a closely fought runoff election with 51.3 percent. That year, Chile experienced its first recession in fifteen years. Yet Chileans rewarded the Concertación, at least partially, because the center-left coalition had led a period of economic growth and democratic con-

Table 1 *Poverty and Extreme Poverty in Chile, 1990–2006*

	1990	1992	1994	1996	1998	2000	2003	2006	2009
Poverty	38.6	32.9	27.6	23.2	21.7	20.2	18.7	13.7	15.1
Extreme poverty ^a	13.0	9.0	7.6	5.8	5.6	5.6	4.7	3.2	3.7
Gini coefficient	0.57	.58	.58	.57	.58	0.57	0.55	0.54	0.55

Source: Encuesta Caracterización Socio-Económica Nacional, 2006.

^aExtreme poverty is included in poverty.

solidation (Navia and Joignant 2000; Angell 2005; Garretón 2000). Then, in 2005, President Bachelet gave the Concertación its fourth consecutive presidential victory with 53.5 percent in a runoff election. In 2010, after twenty years in power, the Concertación lost to the moderate right-wing candidate Sebastián Piñera. Although that election brought the right-wing parties that had supported the military dictatorship back to power, Piñera himself is a moderate who opposed the Pinochet regime.

AUTHORITARIAN ENCLAVES

Democratic consolidation has faced significant hurdles. Several authoritarian enclaves that survived the 1989 reforms made it difficult for the Concertación to carry out its policies (Portales 2000; Garretón 1999; Drake and Jaksic 1999). Although the Concertación enjoyed majority support in all parliamentary elections—as table 2 shows—nonelected senators, whom the outgoing military regime appointed, stripped the Concertación of its electoral majority in the upper chamber. The nonelected senators gave the right-wing opposition an effective veto power that constrained the Concertación beyond the already-strict limits of the 1980 Constitution.

Some scholars have also pointed to the electoral system as an additional antimajoritarian constraint (Siavelis and A. Valenzuela 1997; Angell 2003; J. S. Valenzuela 2005; Siavelis 2002). Designed as an insurance mechanism against an electoral defeat, the across-the-board two-seat proportional representation system makes it difficult to transform an electoral majority into a majority in Congress (Navia 2005). The electoral system tends to favor large coalitions at the expense of smaller ones (particularly the Communist Party). As table 2 shows, the Alianza has systematically obtained a greater share of seats than its share of votes. To a lesser extent, the Concertación has also benefited. Critics of the system point to the fact that smaller parties are left without representation (Huneus 2006), yet that cannot be considered antidemocratic. Single-member majoritarian systems punish minority parties but are not antidemocratic.

The electoral system does have some clearly negative features, but they have more to do with the structure of incentives on the political system.

Table 2 Vote and Seat Distribution in Congress in Chile for the Concertación and Alianza Coalitions, 1989–2005

Election year	Alianza				Concertación			
	Chamber of deputies		Senate		Chamber of deputies		Senate	
	Votes (%)	Seats (%)	Votes (%)	Seats (%) ^a	Votes (%)	Seats (%)	Votes (%)	Seats (%) ^a
1989	34.2	40.0	34.9	42.1 (52.3)	51.5	57.5	54.6	57.9 (46.8)
1993	36.7	41.7	37.3	50.0 (54.3)	55.4	58.3	55.5	50.0 (45.7)
1997	36.3	39.2	36.6	47.4 (51.1)	50.5	57.5	49.9	52.6 (48.9)
2001	44.3	47.5	44.0	50.0 (50.0)	47.9	51.2	51.3	50.0 (50.0)
2005	38.7	45.0	37.2	44.7 ^b	51.8	51.7	55.7	52.6
2009	43.4	48.3	45.1	50.0	44.4	47.5	43.3	50.0

Source: Compiled by author with data from <http://www.elecciones.gov.cl> and Engel and Navia (2005).

^aIncluding nonelected senators.

^bNot including one senator elected as independent.

Because the two large coalitions tend to equally split the two seats in more than 95 percent of the districts, voters end up having little to say on the seat distribution in Congress. In every district, voters can decide only which candidate from each coalition will get the seat, but a 60 percent–40 percent vote advantage for one coalition will produce exactly the same one-to-one seat divide than a 40 percent–60 percent vote distribution. The lack of competition embedded in the system undermines one of the essential components of democracy, competitive elections.

As table 2 shows, the electoral system has not severely underrepresented the Concertación's vote share (Zucco 2007). The presence of designated senators certainly distorted seat allocation in the Senate until a constitutional reform eliminated their posts in 2005. Nonetheless, because the outgoing regime imposed the electoral system, it remains the most symbolic pending authoritarian enclave. A set of constitutional reforms passed under President Lagos in 2005 eliminated most remaining authoritarian enclaves, but there was a lack of agreement on how to replace the binominal system. The Concertación favored a more proportional representation system that would allow the Communist Party to gain seats in Congress, but the Alianza defended the binominal system. In the debate over electoral reform in recent years, there are good arguments in favor of and against a more proportional representation system (Fontaine, Larroulet, Viera-Gallo et al. 2007; Altman 2005; J. S. Valenzuela 2006; Aninat and Navia 2005; Huneus 2006). Yet the binominal system should be considered an authoritarian enclave because of its origin, not because of its effects.

No other authoritarian enclaves remain in the 1980 Constitution. There are areas in which more democratic reforms could be implemented—such as the direct election of regional *intendentes* or voting rights for those residing abroad—but all remaining authoritarian enclaves were eliminated in 2005. It is certain that Chile has pending issues in dealing with its complex human rights legacy (Roht-Arriaza 2006; Baxter 2005; Aguilar 2002; Bacic 2002). New human rights concerns have emerged as well (Espejo 2008). But all democracies have such issues. The fact that they are part of public debate signals the health of the democratic process.

Other issues associated with democratic institutional design, such as the influence, scope, and powers of the constitutional tribunal; reform of the party system (Fontaine, Larroulet, Navarrete et al. 2008); campaign finance reform (Valdés Prieto 2000); and balance of powers between the executive and the legislative (Linz et al. 1990; Burgos and Walker 2003) also pertain to normal democratic consolidation debates. True, some have questioned the legitimacy of a democracy built on a constitution designed by an authoritarian government (Cristi and Ruiz-Tagle 2006), but even those critics acknowledge that Chile today has a full-fledged democracy.

DEMOCRATIC CONSOLIDATION AND PRESIDENTIAL APPROVAL

When democracy was restored to Chile, the new government needed to help strengthen and consolidate democracy. The very presence of Augusto Pinochet, who remained as head of the army until March 1998, symbolized the limits under which Aylwin had to secure a transition to democratic rule. High growth, low inflation, and poverty reduction helped Aylwin keep high approval ratings. Chileans were satisfied with the direction of the country. In early 1990, Aylwin could count on a comfortably high level of support, as figure 3 shows. More than 70 percent of Chileans approved of his administration, greater than his 55.2 percent vote share in the election. However, as figure 3 shows, by mid-1992, his approval had fallen to less than 50 percent. Still, Aylwin's tenure was successful. The country recovered democracy and kept the economy growing at a healthy rate, with inflation under control, unemployment falling, and hundreds of thousands getting out of poverty.

Aylwin's successor, Eduardo Frei, came to office with the greatest vote share in Chilean history. The son of a former president, Frei received 58 percent of the vote, more than twice that of the Alianza presidential candidate. Yet Frei enjoyed a very short honeymoon, in part because he did not benefit from the political capital Aylwin had as the first democratically elected president but also in part because of his own leadership style. Although there was strong economic growth, Frei saw his approval fall to less than 40 percent. Before the midterm 1997 elections, his disapproval rating was greater than his approval rating. Then, as the economy experienced a downturn in 1998–1999, Frei's approval fell to less than 30 percent and his disapproval climbed to almost 50 percent.

Ricardo Lagos, the first socialist president since Salvador Allende, won a highly contested election in 2000. In addition, the former dictator Pi-

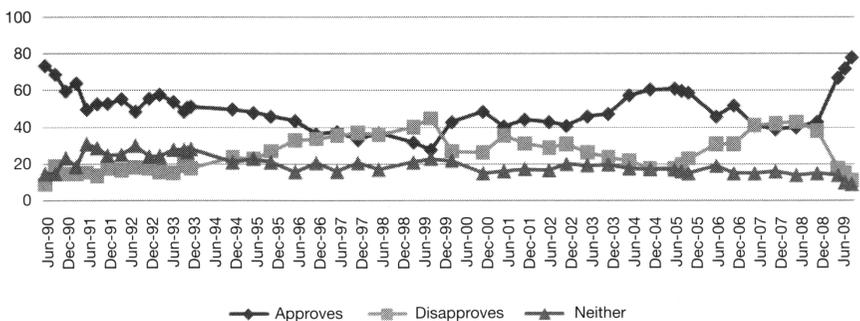


Figure 3 Presidential Approval in Chile, 1990–2009

Source: Author's calculation with data from <http://www.cepchile.cl>.

nochet, who retired from the army in 1998 to take a lifetime seat in the Senate, was arrested in London in October 1998 on charges of crimes against humanity committed during his time in power. With his arrest, the fundamentals of Chilean democracy were put to a test and proved strong. Most Chileans went about their own business as a long and complicated legal battle between those who sought to bring Pinochet back to the country and those who wanted to see him tried went on between October 1998 and March 2000, when Pinochet was sent back to Chile on humanitarian grounds.

Alleging that crimes committed in Chile must be tried in Chile, the Concertación government sought to secure Pinochet's return and use the arrest to improve on the insufficient progress that had been made to right the wrongs of the past (Acuña 2006; Baxter 2005; Lira and Loveman 2005; Loveman and Lira 2000). In the end, Pinochet was returned to Chile, and though he was tried, he was never sentenced for human rights violations. Yet the arrest in London allowed human rights issues to move forward as Frei mustered a *mesa de diálogo* (roundtable) with the military and human rights victims that produced a report that built on the significant progress initially made by the Rettig Commission on Truth and Reconciliation, created in 1990 under Aylwin. President Lagos also launched initiatives to advance transitional justice and reparation. The Valech Commission on Torture investigated human rights violations that did not result in deaths. Most recently, President Bachelet, who herself is a victim of human rights violations, actively participated in symbolic acts of reparation. However, human rights activists correctly contend that insufficient progress has been made, as well-known human rights violators have never been sentenced. Although many crimes have been investigated and there have been reparations, critics contend that the Concertación could have done more to right the wrongs of the past (Lira and Loveman 2005).

Support for Concertación presidents remained strong even after the Concertación lost the January 2010 runoff election. As figure 3 shows, presidents enjoyed more approval than disapproval for most of the twenty-year Concertación tenure. Only Frei and Bachelet saw their disapproval rates surpass their approval numbers. Frei experienced negative approval in 1999 in the midst of an economic recession, and Bachelet's approval numbers fell as a result of the failed implementation of a new transportation system in Santiago, the Transantiago, in 2007. Toward the end of her administration, her approval increased dramatically to the highest levels observed in Chile since democracy had been restored. Yet Chileans are satisfied with their democracy. In addition to presidential approval, the Latinobarómetro poll showed that 54 percent considered democracy the only legitimate form of government in 1996. Although there have been fluctuations over time (and Latinobarómetro slightly changed its methodology), in 2006, the figure was 56 percent and 46 percent in 2007.

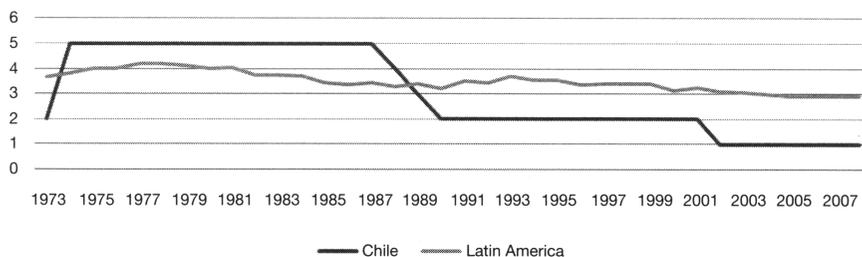


Figure 4 Restrictions on Civil Liberties in Chile and Latin America (Freedom House Index)

Source: Freedom House. The higher the value, the more restrictions there are on civil liberties.

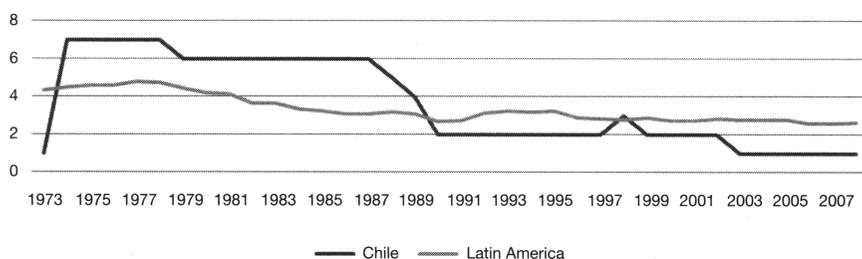


Figure 5 Restrictions on Political Right in Chile and Latin America (Freedom House Index)

Source: Freedom House. The higher the value, the more restrictions there are on civil liberties.

Support for authoritarian government has stayed below 15 percent. Thus, temporary dissatisfaction with democracy has not increased support for alternative types of government (Latinobarómetro 2007, 2008).

Satisfaction with democracy results from real progress made in economic development but also from progress in civil and political rights. As figure 4 shows, Chile has experienced significant progress in protection of civil rights. The Freedom House Index of Civil Liberties shows that restrictions to civil liberties increased under the dictatorship but quickly began to decline after 1990. Although Chile had more civil liberties restrictions than average for Latin American countries during the seventeen-year-old dictatorship, in the new democratic period, Chile has scored systematically better than Latin America overall. In fact, Chile reached the lowest possible level of restrictions to civil liberties in 2002 and has remained at the best possible standing in respect for civil liberties and political rights (see figure 5).

The quality of Chile's democracy is far superior than that observed before 1973. The institutional setting is more consolidated, and there is more transparency and accountability in campaign funding, government spending, lobbying, and interest groups' influence of the government and access to government information. Although there are areas in which there has not been sufficient progress, such as plurality in the printed media (Dermota 2002) or influence by citizens' rights groups and unionized workers (Posner 2003; Winn 2004; Oxhorn 1995; Roberts 1998; Olavarria 2003), the depth and reach of Chile's democracy in the post-Pinochet era is commendably superior to that which existed before the authoritarian period.

ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION

Representative democracy is based on electoral participation. When a society exhibits decreasing levels of participation, there are reasons for us to be concerned. As table 3 shows, Chile has experienced varying degrees of electoral participation since women first voted in presidential elections in 1952. Although only one in every three voting-age Chileans cast ballots in the 1958 presidential election, rapid enfranchisement almost doubled that number in the 1964 presidential contest. In 1970, when Allende was elected president, voter turnout decreased slightly, whereas in 1973, the last election before the dictatorship, almost 70 percent of voting-age Chileans cast valid votes.

After a fifteen-year interruption, interest in political participation was at its highest. Slightly less than 90 percent of eligible Chileans went to the polls in 1988, a record-breaking turnout. There was much at stake in the plebiscite, a momentous opportunity to shape the future of the nation. As table 3 shows, electoral participation has decreased constantly since 1988, with presidential elections attracting more voters than other contests. Yet in the most recent presidential election, in 2009, only 62 percent of voting-age Chileans cast valid votes, the lowest since 1970. Several reasons explain the apparent falling interest in the political process. Naturally, it would have been foolish to expect the same high turnout levels reached in 1988.

The fall in electoral participation should not be discarded as an irrelevant factor. Decreasing interest in the political process might mean that people are fully satisfied, but there is enough evidence that the lack of interest responds to discontent with politicians and dissatisfaction with politics. Some observers have pointed to a certain malaise with democracy, as the political system is insufficiently responsive to the demands and needs of citizens. Yet the problem is more nuanced than that. Table 3 also shows that, when measured as percentage of registered voters, electoral participation has remained remarkably stable and high since 1988.

Table 3 Electoral Participation in Chile, 1960–2005

Year	Voting age of population	Registered voters	Voters	Valid votes	Nulls, blanks, abstentions and unregistered	Voters/registered (%)	Valid votes/voting age population (%)
1958	3.654	1.497	1.250	1.236	2.418	83.5	33.8
1964	4.088	2.915	2.530	2.512	1.576	86.8	61.6
1970	5.202	3.540	2.955	2.923	2.279	83.5	56.2
1973	5.238	4.510	3.687	3.620	1.620	81.8	69.1
1988	8.062	7.436	7.251	7.187	889	96,6	89,1
1989	8.243	7.558	7.159	6.980	1.344	92,3	84,6
1992	8.775	7.841	7.044	6.411	2.345	81,9	73,2
1993	8.951	8.085	7.377	6.969	1.848	84,3	75,8
1996	9.464	8.073	7.079	6.301	3.085	76,6	65,3
1997	9.627	8.078	7.046	5.796	3.746	71,1	59,6
1999	9.945	8.084	7.272	7.055	2.890	90,0	70,1
2000	10.100	8.089	7.019	6.452	3.648	86,8	63,9
2001	10.500	8.075	6.992	6.107	4.393	86,6	58,2
2004	10.700	8.013	6.874	6.123	4.577	85.8	57.2
2005	10.800	8.221	7.207	6.942	3.758	87.7	64.3
2008	12.066	8.110	6.959	6.362	5.704	85.8	52.7
2009	12.226	8.285	7.186	6.938	5.284	83.7	56.7

Notes: Based on Navia (2004b); data from <http://www.ine.cl> and <http://www.elecciones.gov.cl>. Figures are in millions.

Nine of every ten registered voters cast ballots in each of the five presidential elections held since 1989. Among those registered, participation is fairly high—though there are no real penalties for those who fail to vote. Yet a growing number of people are not registered to vote. Thus, the real unique electoral participation phenomenon has to do with a flawed institutional design. The Constitution formally makes voting mandatory, yet in practice, registration is optional. To be eligible to vote, Chileans must first register. Ever after, they are legally compelled to vote, though penalties are seldom applied to those who abstain.

If registered, Chileans vote. Turnout among registered voters has consistently remained at 90 percent or higher. Yet younger Chileans—those who turned eighteen after 1988—are registered at lower rates. A natural solution would be to adopt automatic registration and hope that, when registered, voters will vote. Because the deadline for registration expires ninety days before an election, it is plausible that many unregistered Chileans who become interested in the political process during the official thirty-day campaign cannot vote. Polling data shows no difference in the depth and intensity of political views between those registered and those not registered.

A fierce debate over the mandatory nature of voting has blocked a seemingly trivial reform to make registration automatic. Presidents Lagos and Bachelet advocated for automatic registration and nonmandatory voting, but some Concertación legislators oppose eliminating mandatory voting. Right-wing legislators oppose automatic registration because of possible electoral fraud. Because Concertación governments historically linked electoral registration reform with a reform that would grant suffrage to Chileans residing abroad, the somewhat odd combination of mandatory voting and optional electoral registration has survived.

Low levels of electoral participation should constitute a warning. Chile's democracy is healthy but not invulnerable. In fact, the lack of participation, particularly among youths, hints to future problems of legitimacy. When people do not consider electoral participation the best mechanism for expressing their discontent or dissatisfaction, they will eventually use other means to channel their demands and frustration. Unless the political elite agree on reforms that can foster electoral participation, the future of Chilean democracy might not be as bright as its present.

SURVIVAL OF THE THREE-WAY SPLIT?

Historically, a strong and permanent three-way split (right, center, and left) has defined political preferences in Chile. The dictatorship polarized the political system and voters as the center and left united to bring about democracy. The Concertación's success was associated with the ability of centrist and leftist parties to put differences aside and govern effectively.

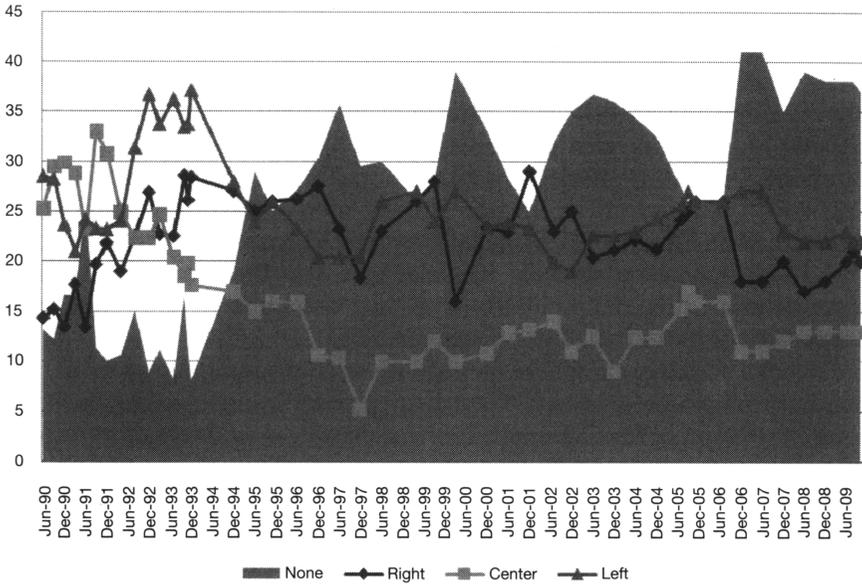


Figure 6 Self-Identification with Right, Center, and Left, 1990–2010

Source: Author's calculation with data from <http://www.cepchile.cl>.

Yet as figure 6 shows, the three-way divide does not fully capture electoral preferences today. Those who do not identify with right-wing, centrist, or leftist political parties are at an all-time high. Numbers of centrist sympathizers have fallen significantly since 1990. Although the left and right have experienced ups and downs, falling support for the center will likely weaken the electoral domination of the Concertación. Those who identify with the center or the left are no longer a solid majority among Chileans. Thus, elections are clearly more competitive—which is also a sign of a healthy democracy—than they were during the early 1990s.

TOP-DOWN AND BOTTOM-UP DEMOCRACY

The arrival of Bachelet to the presidency in March 2006 represented a political sea change. Beyond being a successful combination of change (first woman president) and continuity (fourth Concertación president), Bachelet championed bottom-up mechanisms of democracy as she identified participatory democracy as a defining characteristic of leftist politics. As opposed to the top-down approach that characterized previous Concertación governments, Bachelet promised to establish participatory democracy. Although the long-term effects of her initiatives aimed to strengthen a citizen government (*gobierno ciudadano*) are yet to be known,

Bachelet added a new dimension to the ongoing debate on consolidating and strengthening democracy.

As she campaigned as an outsider, the bad reputation of political parties did not affect Bachelet. She attracted voters who had historically been reluctant to support leftist candidates. Men have traditionally supported candidates of the center-left more strongly than have women. In 1999, Lagos won 54.3 percent of the vote among men and 48.7 percent among women voters. Yet in 2005, Bachelet captured 53.3 percent among women and 53.7 percent among men. Bachelet was also the favorite candidate among those who did not identify with the existing parties and coalitions (29 percent of those polled in November 2005).

Bachelet's (2006b) campaign focused on strengthening the social safety net. In promising to overhaul the private pension funds system, Bachelet sought to keep the fundamentals of the economic model and to introduce instruments that would allow the government to play a more active role as regulator and to foster redistribution. In addition, her policy initiatives included preschool reforms to increase coverage and subsidize low-income families, a set of reforms to foster more innovation and entrepreneurship in business, and improvements in the quality of life in urban areas. The four points of her platform sought to "construct a more humane environment and to promote a wider conception of human development" (Bachelet 2005b).

Consistent with that approach, Bachelet also made participatory democracy a priority. She promised during her campaign that her government would introduce gender parity in top governmental posts and promised new faces in key positions (Bachelet 2005b). As she stressed that her presidential bid was the result of her popularity among the people, Bachelet made clear that she wanted to increase popular participation and reduce the influence of party elites (Siavelis 2006; Bachelet 2006b). She emphasized the distinction between the left-wing and right-wing parties as resulting from a focus on the safety net and participation. For her, left-wing parties had to promote participation, and they cared about those the economy left behind (Bachelet 2004, 2005b, 2006b; Insunza and Ortega 2005).

In the campaign, Bachelet attempted to campaign as a citizen's candidate. In an interview in *El Mercurio* on December 25, 2005, she defended her emphasis on a "citizen's campaign": "My idea was a more participatory democracy. But I always worked with political parties. What I did not do was to tour Chile with leaders from all parties. I always said I was not a candidate chosen between four closed walls, but that I had a life experience and work record that people valued."

In celebrating her victory in the first round on December 11, 2005, she referred to herself as "continuity and change" (Bachelet 2005a). But she stressed that she would distinguish herself from the outgoing Lagos administration on building a safety net and promoting more citizens' par-

ticipation. In a speech to the Socialist Party on August 20, 2005, Bachelet defended her focus on participatory democracy: "Chile wants participation. Thus, my citizens' dialogue initiatives" (Bachelet 2005c). Hers would be the, as she called it, *gobierno de ciudadanos* (a citizen's government). She claimed that good standing in polls, not favor with party elites, was the reason for her candidacy. Her campaign sought to promote a bottom-up, nontechnocratic approach.

In her government program *I Am with You (Estoy Contigo)*, Bachelet (2005b) outlined some ideas for making democracy more participatory. In a section titled "Quality of Democracy," the document outlining the program promised to "promote a reform to introduce citizens' legislative initiative in all those areas that are not the exclusive legislative initiative of the president like those that affect taxes or international treaties. . . . Citizens will have the same legislative prerogatives as their representatives: deputies and senators" (Bachelet 2005b, 74). To be sure, although many liked the idea that citizens be allowed to introduce legislation, the Constitution currently gives the president sole power to introduce legislation on government spending (Siavelis 2000; Baldez and Carey 1999). The Constitution also allows the executive to control the legislative agenda. Many have called for reforms to strengthen the legislative branch and reduce the excessive power of the president (Fontaine, Larroulet, Viera-Gallo et al. 2007; Walker 2006; Linz et al. 1990). Thus, introducing mechanisms for a popular legislative initiative would empower citizens while sidestepping Congress, a measure that would probably be counterproductive.

The program also promised to "develop mechanisms of participatory budgets that allow for citizens to express their voice and exert influence over spending priorities" (Bachelet 2005b, 82). The idea of promoting participation and associating democracy with higher levels of participation ran through the entire document. The introductory section succinctly summarized the assumption that democracy entails participation: "Chileans . . . want to have more regional and local identity, more decentralization of power, authorities that are close to them and more participation. None of these occur automatically in a globalized market economy. We must correct that model" (Bachelet 2005b, 8).

Although participation and democracy were directly associated with each other throughout the document, the government program had few and scattered references to improving representative democracy. It discussed representation together with gender quotas for legislative elections and with increasing the number of women in government positions. In other places, representation was mentioned with respect to the electoral system. The government program focused on improving and deepening participatory democracy rather than on improving representative democracy. Naturally, representative and participatory democracy are not necessarily mutually exclusive. But given the widely agreed-on shortcomings

of representative democracy in Chile, the stronger focus on participatory democracy signaled Bachelet's priorities.

In her first speech as president, she stated, "I also want my administration to govern without hiding from the people. I want them to consult with the people. I believe citizens have a lot to contribute with to help us make the right decisions. . . . I have already indicated that we will promulgate a series of initiatives promoting citizen participation in issues that they consider important" (Bachelet 2006c). Tellingly, later that day, she did not mention political parties or the Concertación. A few weeks earlier, Bachelet had irritated political parties by ignoring them in her most important ministerial appointments. Because she kept her promise of gender parity and proved good on her promise to bring in new faces—and leave out former ministers of Concertación governments—the four parties that constitute the Concertación expressed their discontent. As a result, when pushing for a citizen's government, Bachelet inevitably confronted that new concept with the old government of political parties that had characterized previous Concertación administrations.

The idea of a citizen's government was not popular in Bachelet's administration. In fact, upon taking office, Bachelet issued a detailed list of thirty-six measures for her first one hundred days. None of the measures referred to participatory or citizen's democracy. The only two measures related to improving the quality of democracy were squarely placed in the context of representative democracy: a change to the two-seat proportional representation electoral system (called *binominal* in Chile) and automatic registration for all eligible voters (Bachelet 2006b). Nonetheless, in her public speeches, Bachelet insisted on the idea of participatory and citizen's democracy. In her first annual report to Congress on May 21, 2006, she stressed the point: "This is the government of and for citizens" (Bachelet 2006a). In her second annual report to Congress, in 2007, she restated her commitment to participatory democracy: "Decentralization, regions and municipalities are a fundamental part of our aspiration to have a more participatory and citizen's democracy" (Bachelet 2007). She abandoned the idea in her third annual report to Congress in 2008.

Bachelet did not have a comprehensive plan to introduce bottom-up democratic mechanisms. Although during the campaign she expressed a preference for referenda and plebiscites, her government did not send legislative proposals to Congress. Because the Concertación and her government did not all agree on how to promote participation, Bachelet encountered resistance when improvising ideas for the fostering of participatory democracy. For example, when Bachelet suggested in mid-2006 that a plebiscite be held on reforming the controversial electoral system, she was widely criticized for undermining ongoing negotiations between political parties.

Bachelet found her commitment to the idea seriously challenged when students took to the streets in mid-2006 to demand more equal access to education. The government was slow to react. Streets were filled for days with students and others, in protest against inequality in education and eventually complaining of the government's slow response. Because her coalition had been in power since 1990, Bachelet's government could not easily blame previous administrations for the shortcomings in education. Eventually, Bachelet fired several ministers, including the minister of the interior. Her first cabinet reshuffle, only four months after she took office, pretty much buried the idea of participatory democracy. Shortly after the protests, the government abandoned the rhetoric in favor of popular participation.

The students' protests in 2006 turned public opinion against the idea of popular participation. Her critics found it easy to associate popular participation with protests, destruction, and lawlessness. Inevitably, the commendable objective of strengthening civil society was associated with a soft hand that would bring about street demonstrations and would eventually end up undermining democracy. Because Bachelet had spoken about participatory democracy, the students' demonstrations opened a window for debate on contrasting definitions of democracy. Inevitably, by contrasting participatory and representative democracy, the idea that the former can be complementary to—and a necessary supplement for—the latter was undermined.

Successful democracies are based on representative democracy. It would be foolish to suggest that participatory democracy can replace representative democracy. When we vote, at least conceptually, we are all equal. When we participate, inequality is the norm. Some people have more financial resources (and can thus make their voices be heard more loudly); others have more time (and can thus march in the streets). Still others can throw rocks or make noise. Not surprisingly, students tend to have more success and more impact in street marches, whereas the elderly are probably better at organizing their peers to turn out on Election Day. Pregnant women and single mothers are less likely to find the time to organize a street demonstration. We all participate according to the tools and resources we have.

Thus, replacing representative democracy with participatory democracy would seem contradictory with equality. To address the problems of representative democracy, it would make more sense to elect authorities who will govern to defend our interests than to attempt to collectively govern ourselves. Yet securing that authorities will defend our interests, fulfill their promises, and govern transparently is not an easy task. For that reason, mechanisms of accountability are crucial for representative democracy to work well. Indeed, they are associated with the strength-

ening of participatory democracy. People participate when they exercise accountability over elected authorities. Introducing mechanisms of accountability that make representative democracy work better can foster participation.

As Bachelet's rise to power and popular discourse against established party elites showed, representative democracy is not working well. Lack of competition, insufficient transparency, and lack of accountability have unquestionably undermined representative democracy. Because the shortcomings of representative democracy are well known (Engel and Navia 2006; J. S. Valenzuela 2006; Portales 2000; Huneeus 2006), the election of Bachelet was an excellent opportunity to reduce the Chilean democracy's excessive dependence on top-down approaches. Bachelet rightly sought to introduce more mechanisms of participation, bottom-up democracy. The fact that Bachelet campaigned on a platform of inclusion and that her election itself symbolized inclusion created an opportunity to strengthen democracy through more participatory instruments. During the campaign, women regularly wore presidential sashes at Bachelet's rallies. But after the students' protests and the Transantiago incident, Bachelet adopted the more traditional Concertación-style top-down approach to government. The fact that Concertación parties felt uneasy about more popular participation partly led them to collaborate more with Bachelet's government when she abandoned her participatory democracy agenda.

Bachelet's symbolic departure from participatory democracy also included gender parity. During the campaign, she committed herself to honoring gender parity in her cabinet (ten of the twenty cabinet ministers she first appointed were women). In part, President Lagos had first championed that initiative when he appointed five women to his first sixteen-member cabinet in 2000. Bachelet was among those women appointed. Yet as president, Bachelet went further in adopting initiatives to promote gender parity and promised to introduce legislation to provide for gender quotas in Congress. When she reshuffled her cabinet for a second time in early 2007, she abandoned that principle (in the new twenty-two member cabinet, there were nine women). Yet she successfully introduced the issue of gender equality as a permanent item on the public agenda. There is no longer gender parity in the cabinet, but still we are not likely to see governments like those in the early 1990s, when only one woman was a part of a twenty-two-member cabinet. Lagos had appointed more women to higher posts, but Bachelet's commitment to gender equity will make it difficult for future presidents to ignore women when appointing key posts.

After reforms to the pension system came into effect in mid-2008, Bachelet delivered on her promise to create a stronger safety net. True, the success in building a stronger and more comprehensive safety net for all Chileans depends largely on the future performance of the economy. If the economy grows sustainably, a stronger safety net will exist for those

Chileans who fall behind. The fate of some of the participatory democracy initiatives she promised to introduce is less auspicious. The idea of creating a citizens' democracy seems to have a tougher road ahead.

Yet the fate of participatory, bottom-up democracy seems more problematic. Institutional changes that promote participatory democracy were not implemented during Bachelet's administration and are not a priority for Piñera's center-right government, inaugurated in March 2010. Even if the executive were to push for them, no significant reforms that incorporate participatory budgets, popular legislative initiatives, or plebiscites would be likely to gather support in Congress to be made into laws. Strict gender parity is unlikely to reemerge as a political priority in the coming years. Yet by setting new precedents, the position of women in society is significantly stronger now that Bachelet has completed her four-year term. Finally, the fate of the renewal in the Concertación seems less likely after it lost power in early 2010. Because Bachelet remains as the Concertación's most popular leader, the old promise of new faces embodied by her rise to power has turned sour. Bachelet is now yet another example that the Concertación's old guard makes it difficult to renewal within to take place.

Bachelet successfully initiated a debate between those who favor the traditional top-down approach to democracy that characterized the Concertación during its three first governments and those inclined to more bottom-up mechanisms of democracy. Future governments will be hard pressed to develop strategies to introduce more bottom-up mechanisms of participation and accountability. Moreover, if the demand for more participation that helped explain Bachelet's rise to power persists, one of the most significant legacies of her administration will be the push for more mechanisms of participatory democracy. Even if Bachelet does not succeed herself in introducing such mechanisms, she brought participatory and bottom-up democracy squarely to the center of the debate on democratic consolidation in Chile.

PEOPLE'S PRIORITIES

Since the restoration of democracy, Chileans have shown that they value democracy. They have also increasingly become more of protagonists as their demands for bottom-up mechanisms of participation have challenged the traditional top-down democratic practices that characterized the transition in the early 1990s. Figure 7 shows rankings of public opinion for government priorities over time. With the restoration of democracy, crime quickly became a leading concern. More than 60 percent of Chileans considered combating crime one of the three most important priorities for the government in 1990. Yet as democracy consolidated, concern with crime—which is also identified with uncertainty and fear the transition to democracy provoked—started to decline. Not surprisingly,

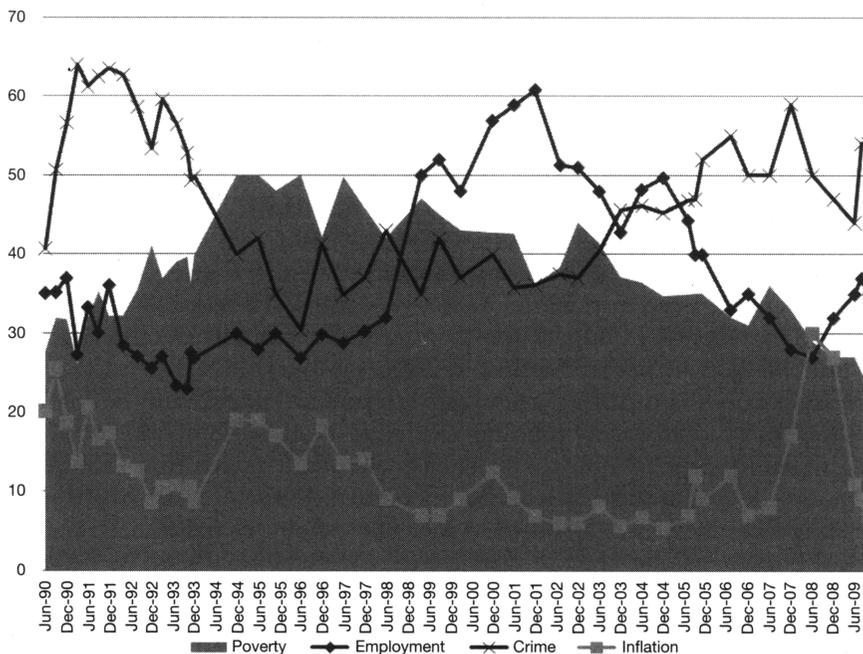


Figure 7 Top Three Government Priorities, Selected Items, 1990–2010

Source: Author's calculation with data from <http://www.cepchile.cl>.

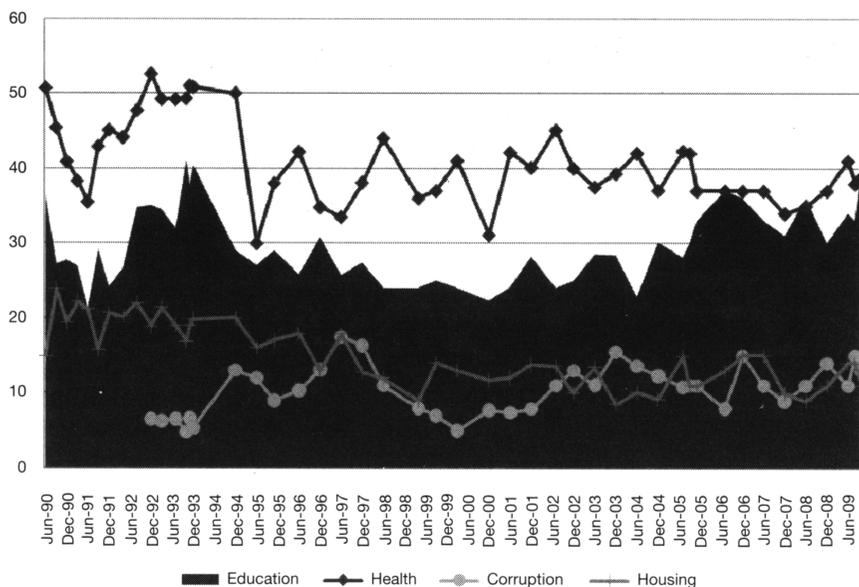


Figure 8 Top Three Government Priorities, Selected Items, 1990–2010

Source: Author's calculation with data from <http://www.cepchile.cl>.

the 1999 economic crisis contributed to make employment creation a government priority. Most recently, inflation has spiked—prices in 2008 showed the greatest increase in more than ten years.

Figure 8 shows other government priorities and the importance Chileans have attributed to them over the years. Concern with education, for example, remained highly stable until 2006, when student protests captured the attention of the nation. Concern over health has decreased over time, but remains the leading social priority for Chileans. Corruption and housing, however, do not seem to be as important for Chileans. Interestingly enough, the media seems much more preoccupied with corruption than housing, despite the fact that public opinion attributes almost the same importance to housing and corruption.

CONCLUSION

Since its transition to democracy in 1990, Chile has made significant progress in economic development, poverty reduction, and democratic consolidation. The country enjoys a consolidated democracy, as there is no fear of reversal to authoritarianism. Chileans value democracy, and autonomous institutions with a working balance of power have stabilized the political system. Elections are the norm, and respect for individual rights is widespread. Yet as in most democracies, Chile does face some significant challenges. The successes of the past should generate some optimism about the country's ability to strengthen, broaden, and deepen its democracy in the future. However, there are also some worrying signs. What proved successful in securing the transition and consolidating democracy in the 1990s might not work in the next phase. Chile must come up with a second generation of democratic reforms to meet the challenges of the future. As the country has just commemorated its bicentennial, the success of its first two decades of postauthoritarian democracy have generated high expectations about what the country can do in the future. Moving forward in uncharted territory will not be easy, nor will it be inevitably successful. Yet Chile today enjoys a strong, vibrant, and consolidated democracy more so than ever before in its history.

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