

**Polarization in the Chilean Party System:  
Changes and Continuities, 1990-1999**

LETICIA M. RUIZ-RODRÍGUEZ

Universidad de Salamanca



*Institut de Ciències Polítiques i Socials*  
Adscrit a la Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

WP núm. 236  
Institut de Ciències Polítiques i Socials

Barcelona, 2005

The Institute of Political and Social Sciences (ICPS) is a consortium created in 1988 by the Barcelona Provincial Council and the *Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona*, the institution to which the ICPS is officially linked for academic purposes.

“Working Papers” (WP) is one of the collections published by the ICPS, with the previous reading committee’s report, specialising in the publication of work currently being undertaken by social researchers –in the author’s original language– with the aim of facilitating their subsequent scientific debate.

Inclusion of work within this collection does not prohibit its future publication by the author, who maintains full rights over the article.

The work in question cannot be reproduced without the permission of the author.



Publication: Institut de Ciències Polítiques i Socials (ICPS)  
Mallorca, 244, pral. 08008 Barcelona (Espanya)  
<http://www.icps.es>

© Leticia M. Ruiz-Rodríguez

Design: Toni Viaplana

Printer: a.bís

Travessera de les Corts, 251, entr. 4a. 08014 Barcelona

ISSN: 1133-8962

DL: B-13.639-05

## **Introduction<sup>1</sup>**

The year 2000 began for the Chileans with the second round of the presidential election, the third presidential election since the reinstatement of democracy in 1989. For the first time since 1970, Chile has elected a socialist president. In addition, for the first time since the transition to democracy, the coalition of the parties on the right, traditionally identified with Pinochet's legacy, has obtained support similar to the other coalition. The narrow victory of the socialist Ricardo Lagos, leader of the center-left coalition, is the final piece of evidence that demonstrates that the Chilean party system is undergoing a series of changes<sup>2</sup>.

This paper addresses the transformation of the post-authoritarian Chilean party system in the ten years since the transition to democracy in 1990. To the debate surrounding the degree of continuity and change in the post Pinochet party system, which flourished just after the transition to democracy, must be added new evidence. In particular, I will focus on the evolution of polarization during the 1990s in Chile, and I will attempt to determine the main reasons that explain the pattern.

Until 1973, Chile was one of the most stable and longest-lasting democracies in Latin America. "In 143 years, Chile experienced only thirteen months of unconstitutional rule under some form of junta" (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 192). The Chilean party system, compared to other, more elitist-oriented Latin American political regimes, was the most European-like of the region (Dix, 1989). Four factors explain this characterization: first, the Chilean party system was highly institutionalized; second, a complete ideological spectrum, in which the electorate was distributed in three thirds, existed; third, the content of the societal cleavages that had been frozen into the party system was remarkably similar to European cleavages; fourth, partisan politics was highly inclusionary and representative in character (Yoclevky, 1996, p. 132). Together with these exceptional qualities, Chile was the only country in Latin America in which the left had won a presidential election. In this context, and despite the strength of the Chilean right, in 1970 Allende became president of the Republic, supported by a minority leftist coalition, Unidad Popular (UP)<sup>3</sup>.

Under this government, Chile underwent a process of increasing polarization and centrifugal competition among parties. On September 11, 1973, a coup d'état interrupted Chilean democracy<sup>4</sup>. The coup led to a military government that lasted until 1989. During this period, political parties were either banned or dismantled<sup>5</sup>. The interruption of the long tradition of democratic rule and its substitution by sixteen years of military rule has had an important impact on the democratic regime that has arisen subsequently.

The democratization process began with the 1988 referendum (followed by the 1989 presidential and congressional elections), and allowed the return of political parties to the political arenas<sup>6</sup>. Both the 1988 referendum and the 1989 elections confirmed the parties' ability to organize into coalitions as an adaptive strategy to the electoral system designed by Pinochet's regime. Both processes demonstrated that a majority of Chileans supported the alliance of the parties that represented the opposition to the authoritarian regime, the *Concertación de Partidos Por la Democracia* (CPPD).

Ten years later, there are both dramatic continuities from 1990 and important changes. One crucial continuity is the continued operation of the bicoalitional logic. In addition, the CPPD remains in government: it has won the presidential election three consecutive times. Third, the religious cleavage and the class cleavage remain strong forces in structuring party competition. In addition, the left and right poles have maintained their support over the 1990s, both in terms of people who identify with the left and the right when asked about their ideology and in terms of the vote.

In contrast, the center has experienced a progressive decrease in the number of people identified with it. The party that has traditionally occupied the center, *Partido Demócrata Cristiano* (PDC), has experienced a decrease in its electoral support; subsequently, its relative importance within the center-left coalition has been reduced. Other important changes which will be discussed and explained below include the expansion of the apolitical sector, the widening of the gap in citizens' perceptions between party and societal interests (Munck and Bosworth, 1998; Meseguer, 1999), the programmatic redefinition of certain political parties, the creation of new political parties, the consensus among parties on certain policy areas, and the

first evidence of a decrease in the salience of the authoritarian/democratic cleavage that arose in the transition to democracy.

Due to the interrelated character of changes and continuities, there are grey areas when we try to comprehensively understand the evolution of all these features of the party system. For example, there are the same number of parties now as there were before the coup. This overshadows the aforementioned transformations within the parties as well as the bipolar logic of the party system. Similarly, the argument regarding the continued importance of religion and class as structuring cleavages has to be combined with a reflection on the new authoritarian/democratic cleavage, which has become crucial when dealing with Chilean politics<sup>7</sup>. This cleavage is rooted on the Pinochet experience. Parties strongly disagree on historical aspects such as the interpretation of the authoritarian past, and its echoes in debates on the current role of the Armed Forces, solutions to Human Rights violations, as well as decisions about judging Pinochet and other military elites, among other topics. In addition to these historical aspects, this cleavage also encompasses issues related to redesignment of institutional arrangements inherited from the military rule. But, if there are grey areas in the description of the transformation of the Chilean party system, even less consensus exists in the literature that explains the evolution of different dimensions of the party system. In the following pages, attention will be focused on the evolution of polarization in the 1990s in Chile as well as the reasons that have shaped its evolution.

### ***The Study of Polarization in the Chilean Party System***

One of the most contested arenas of literature on the Chilean party system over the last decade surrounds both the extent of polarization and the reasons for its changing degree. Authors have agreed that a much lower degree of polarization exists in the present party system as compared to the 1973 party system (Valenzuela and Scully, 1997; Valenzuela, 1995; Munck and Bosworth, 1998). The earlier party system has been characterized as “extreme polarized pluralism” (Sartori, 1976). Anti-system parties, bilateral oppositions (two mutually exclusive oppositions), the metrical center of the

system occupied by a party, a large amount of ideological distance, prevalence of centrifugal drives over centripetal ones, congenial ideological patterning, and an irresponsible opposition are the main features that Sartori highlights in describing the Chilean party system before the military coup (Sartori, 1976). However, a systematic consideration of the reasons for the high levels of polarization that the system reached has not occurred. The literature has attempted to explain the high degree of polarization in the pre-authoritarian party system through discussion of the electoral system, the type of presidentialism (Shugart and Carey, 1992), the maximalist style of the elites' interaction, the emergence of a rigid and ideological center party (Scully, 1992), and socio-economic aspects, such as the economic recession and the nationalization of some of the industries, which made consensus difficult to reach.

With regard to the evolution of polarization from 1990 to the present, scholarly dispute exists both in terms of the extent and nature of polarization and in terms of the explanatory factors that have shaped it. It is clear that the post-authoritarian party system overall displays a much lower degree of polarization than the 1973 party system; however, a consensus has not been reached on its description from 1990 on.

Authors who identify a trend toward a progressive decrease in polarization over this past decade include Barrett, Agüero, and Scully. They consider the consensus reached among parties over certain policy areas as evidence of a decrease in the polarization of the party system that arose in 1990 (Barrett, 1998; Agüero, 1998; Scully, 1995). Similarly, Hinzpeter and Lehman's analysis of the trends of convergence in the public opinion surveys lead to a diagnosis of moderated patterns in the Chilean political arena (Hinzpeter and Lehman, 1999a). A similar conclusion is reached by Rabkin, who argues that the electoral system inherited from Pinochet has had stabilizing effects on contemporary Chilean politics and that it has contributed to the emergence of centripetal competence (Rabkin, 1996). This argument about a decrease in polarization is also defended by Rehren. His characterization of the evolution of the party system "from centrifugal multipartism to centripetal coalition" suggests that the coalitional dynamic has

led to a decrease in polarization (Rehren, 1997, p. 3).

In contrast, other authors point to some evidence that indicates that polarization may well have increased over the past decade, arguing that it is questionable to conclude that polarization has continued decreasing over the nineties. Siavelis' arguments about the strength of factors like the number and cultural importance of political parties<sup>8</sup>, the nature of electoral systems at the local and municipal level, and the continued salience of ideological cleavages demonstrate the need for caution when assessing a decrease in party fragmentation and a trend toward centripetal competition (Siavelis, 1997a). Valenzuela reaches a similar conclusion. He analyzes the effects of presidentialism in Chile, asserting that it is likely that this form of government will exacerbate conflict, leading one to question the idea of a decrease in polarization (Valenzuela, 1994)<sup>9</sup>.

It can be argued that part of the disagreement regarding the degree and direction of polarization over the 1990s arises from conceptualization differences. Sanni and Sartori conceptualize polarization as the distance between the poles (Sanni and Sartori, 1983). These poles do not have to be necessarily left and right, although they argue that left-right distance is the best way to measure polarization. However, what is more useful to take from these authors' approach is their distinction between pragmatic and ideological politics (Sanni and Sartori, 1983, p. 309). As Mair asserts, "ideological politics" refers to *domains of identification*. Therefore, it deals with core, and to some extent abstract, identities. Alternatively, "pragmatic politics" refers to *domains of competition*, dealing with particular issues, programs, or policies (Mair, 1997, p. 23). Polarization can occur in either dimension, operating at either the mass or the elite level, or both.

A complementary conceptualization of polarization defines it as "the dispersion of the vote away from the relative center of the party system" (Coppedge, 1998a). In other words, "polarized party systems are those tending toward a bimodal distribution of the vote on the left-right spectrum" (Coppedge, 1998b). This definition raises the idea of the relative center. Here, the distance between the poles can be reduced not only by movements from both sides to the center, but also by unilateral movements

of one of the poles toward the center. As Scully argues, the existence of a center has been alternatively interpreted as an evidence of a polarized party system (for example in Sartori's characterization of the 1973 Chilean party system), and as a sign of a moderated party system, since competition it is not reduced to a bipolar logic (Duverger, 1954). In response to these counterarguments, Scully asserts that it is not the existence of a center, but rather the nature of the center that matters for polarization (Scully, 1992). In fact, according to Scully, the nature of the center, whether programmatic or positional, is the key aspect to understanding the level of polarization. The more programmatic the center, the more likely the party system is polarized; the more positional (that is, less ideological and more flexible the center party is) the easier it is to reach agreement and to decrease polarization.

The different levels at which polarization can be studied (the elite level and the mass level) is one source of disagreement in the assessment of the polarization in the post-authoritarian party system. Hinzpeter and Lehman examine the level of the electorate, whereas the other authors are looking at the elite level. As will be argued later, the Chilean elite seems to be more polarized than Chilean electorate. Among the main reasons for less polarization at the electorate level are the general lower ability of the electorate to make distinctions between programmatic options (Sanni and Sartori, 1983), and the process of depoliticization that has taken place in Chile at the mass level.

The differences in the literature also arise from the dimension of politics that was being examined, whether ideological or programmatic. Here, as it will also be demonstrated, the programmatic level is more likely to experience reformulation than the ideological level. The latter aspects related to identity are less likely to change over time. A third source of disagreement arises within the programmatic dimension. Conclusions about polarization here depend on the issues that are considered. The left-right continuum has traditionally been dominated by the class cleavage. Therefore, it is understandable that the trend toward convergence on socio-economic aspects has been frequently interpreted as a decrease in



polarization. This interpretation, however, ignores that other issues are structuring party competition and have to be translated onto the left-right continuum, such as religion and the authoritarian/democratic cleavage. This applies for Chile after the transition to democracy, when the meaning of left and right categories was more dominated by the democratic-authoritarian legacy than socioeconomic issues. The scenario was one where rightist parties had tended to justify Pinochet's rule by making positive balances of that period. In contrast, parties placed near the center and left of the ideological continuum had condemned the authoritarian past and, in different degrees, remarked its negative outcomes.

In addition to these conceptualizations of polarization, the term polarization has also been used to characterize the type of party competition (centrifugal and centripetal) and the ability to reach consensus within the political system. The arguments regarding institutional exacerbation or amelioration of conflict are closer to this meaning; at the same time, this meaning of polarization is more closely related to the search for the aspects that lead to a polarized situation, than to the description of it.

The conceptualization of polarization that will be used here is based on the idea of polarization as distance between the left and right poles from the relative center, but it also benefits from the distinction between programmatic and ideological polarization. Based on this, I will examine how the Chilean parties that occupy different positions along the left-right continuum differ (as they move farther from the relative center) and converge (as they get closer to the relative center) on different programmatic issues. From this conception, the existence and relative importance of a center depends on the amount of distance between the left and right poles. The more distance between the poles, the more likely that a programmatic center exists, and vice versa.

### ***Objectives, Approach and Structure of the Paper***

This paper seeks to provide a clearer understanding of the pattern that polarization has followed in the nineties in Chile. Although there is

consensus about the decrease in the polarization of the party system between 1973 and 1990, it is not so clear whether the party system has become more or less polarized in the 1990s. Together with this description of the evolution in party polarization, I also seek to clarify the main reasons for the pattern of polarization I identify.

In order to answer these two questions, this paper recognizes links between the ideological and pragmatic dimensions of politics, but it is more focused on the latter dimension. This programmatic-oriented approach assumes that party competition is more determined by the distance between electoral platforms and stands of the parties than by the core identities people hold. Therefore, this paper will examine the programmatic dimension of polarization more closely than the ideological one. In addition, attention will be mainly focused on the elite level. Despite the often-highlighted strong links between society and parties in Chile, elites retain a stronger and more direct impact on the party system dynamics than the masses.

From this starting point, this paper demonstrates that a movement of the left to the center of the political spectrum with regard to socio-economic issues has occurred at the elite level. Despite this reduction in polarization over socio-economic issues, considerable distance continues with regard to religious-value related issues (such as abortion, divorce, and censorship) and similar distance exists on issues related to the authoritarian legacy (such as role of the Armed Forces and human rights violations). At the same time, I argue that instead of the type of center (programmatic or positional) affecting polarization (Scully, 1992), the positions of the center are a reflection of the changes in the other ideological options (left and right). A decrease in the differences between the poles on some programmatic issues has narrowed down the political space in Chile, causing a loss of political space to the center. This accounts, to an important extent, for the decrease in the support to the center.

Secondly, the paper examines the factors that explain the evolution of programmatic polarization over the nineties. The argument that I will defend is partially rooted in the explanation for the decrease in polarization

between 1973 and 1990. At the same time, it is based on the idea that the pattern followed by polarization in the Chilean party system and, at a more general level, the transformations in the Chilean party system, cannot be explained by a simple factor, such as the electoral system or a learning experience. In this sense I argue that the evolution of polarization in the 1990s has been affected by the continued effects of an earlier learning experience (Munck and Bosworth, 1998; Lasagna, 1999) with the institutional framework derived from the authoritarian regime (mainly, the electoral system) (Rabkin, 1996), and socio-economic dynamics. The combination of these three aspects has shaped political elites' strategies to a great extent, their distance on various issues, and ultimately, the evolution of polarization over the 1990s.

A study of polarization in Chilean politics is linked to three important topics. First, it will illuminate the discussion of the changes and continuities in the post-authoritarian Chilean party system by focusing on a single dimension of that system. Second, this discussion is related to democratic consolidation in Chile. It is not clear whether there is a general threshold of polarization among parties above which democratic governability is problematic, or if problems with governability arise only when there is a sudden increase in the normal degree of polarization for a particular country (Coppedge, 1998a). Despite this, it is reasonable to assert that democracy can exist for decades despite ideological polarization, but polarization makes governing more difficult (Mainwaring and Scully, 1995, p. 32). This is especially true for the case of Chile, given the crucial role that political parties have played in the development, maintenance, and breakdown of democracy, and given the recognized importance of party system configuration in the performance of democratic institutions (Siavelis, 2000, p. 110-111). Third, the study of polarization is connected to the discussion of cleavages and to the summary of these cleavages in the left-center-right dimension<sup>10</sup>. The study of polarization allows discussion of the main cleavages in terms of their polarizing effects and identification of dominating issues in the definition of the meaning of the left and right poles.

I begin in the next section with an explanation of the central changes and

continuities in the Chilean party system over the 1990s, as well as the factors that account for those changes. In the third section, I will focus my attention on the evolution of polarization in the post-authoritarian party system. I will examine the degree of polarization on the issues that have dominated party competition in Chile over the nineties: issues related to religion and values, socio-economic issues, and issues related to the authoritarian/democracy cleavage. In addition, I will consider the interaction between the programmatic and the ideological level of polarization, as well as the differences between the elite's and the electorate's degree of polarization. In the fourth section I will explain the way in which the authoritarian experience, institutional factors, and socio-economic aspects interrelate with parties' strategies to determine the pattern that polarization has followed in the post-authoritarian Chilean party system.

The data in this paper in part have been obtained from surveys to Chilean Congressmen. These surveys were made in 1994 and again in 1998 to a representative sample of congressmen from the five most important parties in the House of Deputies (PDC, RN, UDI, PPD, and PS). In these surveys, congressmen were asked their opinions on a variety of issues including political-institutional arrangements, socio-economic aspects, and value issues<sup>11</sup>. Additional information is found in the programs of the political parties for the 2000 Presidential Election. Some of the arguments in the paper will be based on or complemented with electoral results, public opinion surveys, and information published in the press.

### **The Chilean Party System Landscape (1990-1999)**

In 1988 Pinochet's regime failed its self-designed exam. The referendum organized by the authoritarian regime resulted in a rejection of another eight-year presidential term by 55% of voters (against 43% who supported Pinochet). In the following year, 1989, the first democratic elections in seventeen years brought a coalition of center-left parties to government, the *Concertación de Partidos Por la Democracia*. The degree of change and continuity in the party system displayed in these processes, as well as the evolution of the system in the 1990s, has generated a great

deal of discussion. Depending on the dimensions that are being analyzed and their attributed impact on the party system, some authors emphasize the changes in the post-authoritarian party system (Barrett, 1998), and others highlight the continuities (Baño, 1989; Coppedge, 1998b).

In this section I will try to capture the evolution of these changes and continuities on the main dimensions of the party system over the nineties. The main dynamics that characterize the evolution of the party system over the 1990s have occurred such that changes and continuities are interrelated. In addition, this section addresses the factors that account for these transformations. The evolution of the Chilean party system sets the framework for a discussion of polarization that will follow.

### ***Transformations in the Post-Authoritarian Party System***

The most important transformation in the post-authoritarian party system is that a coalitional logic has dominated the partisan landscape. The main parties have joined efforts under two electoral alliances: *Concertación de Partidos Por la Democracia* and *Democracia y Progreso* (then changed to *Alianza para el Progreso* and now known as *Alianza por Chile*). Although historically multiparty coalitions were crucial to governing in Chile, they were more transitory and less solid than those that exist at present (Siavelis, 2000, p. 134; Carey, 1998). More remarkable than the existence of coalitions is the success of one of them. The center-left coalition *Concertación* has won all three presidential elections that have taken place in the country since the transition to democracy (see table 1).

**Table 1**  
**Results of Presidential Elections**

1989 Elections		1993 Elections		1999/2000 Elections	
Candidates and coalitions	% votes	Candidates and coalitions	% votes	Candidates and coalitions	% votes
<i>Concertación</i>		<i>Concertación</i>		<i>Concertación</i>	
Patricio Aylwin	55.17	Eduardo Frei	57.98	Ricardo Lagos	47.96 51.31
<i>Alianza</i>		<i>Alianza</i>		<i>Alianza</i>	
Hernan Buchi	29.40	Arturo Alessandri	24.41	Joaquín Lavín	47.52 48.69
Independents		Independents		Independents	
Fco Javier Errazuriz	15.43	Jose Piñera	6.18	Arturo Frei Bollar	0.38

<i>Cristian Reitze</i>	1.17	Sara Marín	0.44
<i>Eugenio Pizarro</i>	4.70	Gladys Marín	3.19
<i>Manfred Max</i>	5.55	Tomás Hirsch	0.51

---

Source: TRICEL (Tribunal Calificador de Elecciones)

The confrontation between the coalitions is rooted in the experience of repression and persecution of the parties during the dictatorship and in the parties' joint effort on the 1988 referendum. This dynamic has continued in subsequent elections, in which parties have been linked (and separated from others) by their stances on Pinochet's legacy and their views on democracy. The emergence and stability of the so-called authoritarian/democratic cleavage as the central division in terms of party competition is the second important transformation in the post-authoritarian party system.

However, the 2000 Presidential Election suggests a decrease in the ability of the authoritarian/democratic cleavage to structure partisan dynamics. Two facts support this idea. The CPPD won by a more narrow margin than before, suggesting a decrease in the power of the elements related to Pinochet's regime as polarizing elements at the mass level. If people who used to vote for that coalition are voting now for the opposing coalition, this can be explained by the emergence of other issues (such as socio-economic ones) as central issues in contemporary party competition. At the elite level, the decrease in the importance of Pinochet's cleavage is evidenced by the content of the leaders' campaigns. Both coalitions have focused almost exclusively on issues related to the class cleavage, such as the organization of the state, policies to decrease the unemployment rate, health, education, and pensions. However, the high level of mobilization caused by Pinochet's return to Chile after sixteen months in London suggests an unclear scenario. It demonstrated that electoral marketing, more than a decrease in the importance of authoritarian/democratic issues, determined the content of the 2000 election campaign.

Together with the authoritarian/democratic cleavage, the aforementioned class cleavage, now converted into a socio-redistributive cleavage, and a religious cleavage continue to be important lines of division

(Hidalgo, 1991; Scully, 1992). The programmatic differences between parties over these issues have also structured part of Chilean party competition, although, as Sanni and Sartori argue, the dimensions of competition vary over time and from one country to another (Sanni and Sartori, 1983). For a few years, the authoritarian/democratic issues have had a greater effect in structuring Chilean party competition than have the religious-value cleavage and the socio-redistributive cleavage.

At the mass level, there are some transformations that must be examined. The most remarkable one refers to the electorate's ideological distribution. As table 2 shows, from the end of the dictatorship to the present, left and right poles have remained relatively stable in terms of their importance as ideological options in comparing 1970 to 1999. Between 1990 and 1999, the right has been able to dramatically increase its support. However, compared to the sustained support of the left and right, the center has experienced two prominent and interconnected transformations. As an ideological option, the center has fallen out of favor with Chileans, dropping from 24.2% in 1970 to 10% in 1999. Secondly, this ideological alienation has been evidenced by the electoral results: PDC, the party that has traditionally been identified by the electorate as the party of the center has experienced a progressive drop in electoral support in Congressional elections (Table 3). However, when assessing the support obtained by the left, center, and right, it must be remembered that these categories have relative meanings and that, as will be shown later, there have been important redefinitions in the meaning of these poles in the post-authoritarian party system. Therefore, when noting that left and right have maintained their support, it must be noted that it is not the same right, nor, more particularly, is it the same left. The same applies for the center.

**Table 2**  
**The Electorate's Ideological Distribution (1970-1999) %**

Year	left/center left	center	right/center right	independent/don't know/other
1970	26.0	24.2	26.6	23.2
1973	42.9	26.8	21.9	8.4
1986	28.0	41.2	16.6	28.0

1990	26.8	28.2	14.3	32.7
1991	24.2	23.2	13.4	39.1
1992	30.7	23.2	22.8	23.2
1993	34.8	20.1	25.6	17.1
1994	28.0	17.0	28.0	26.0
1995	25.0	16.0	25.0	34.0
1996	23.0	23.5	27.0	37.0
1997	21.0	10.0	22.0	47.0
1998	26.0	10.0	23.0	43.0
1999	27.0	10.0	26.0	37.0

Source: adapted from Siavelis 2000 and some data added from surveys of CEP

**Table 3**  
**Results of Elections to Congress and Senate**

Elections for the House of Deputies by Party and Coalition							
Year	1989			1993		1997	
Pact	Party	% votes	number of seats	% votes	number of seats	% votes	number of seats
<i>Concertación</i>		51.5	72	55.4	70	49.9	70
	PDC	26.0	39	27.1	37	22.3	39
	PS	0	18	12.0	15	11.1	11
	PPD	11.5	7	11.8	15	12.6	16
	Other	14.0	2	4.5	3	3.9	4
<i>Alianza</i>		34.2	48	36.7	50	36.2	47
	RN	18.3	32	16.3	29	16.8	23
	UDI	9.8	14	12.1	15	14.4	17
	Other	6.1	2	8.3	6	5.0	7
Independent		14.3	0	7.8	0	13.2	3

  

Elections for the Senate by Party and Coalition							
Year	1989			1993		1997	
Pact	Party	% votes	number of seats	% votes	number of seats	% votes	number of seats
<i>Concertación</i>		54.4	22	55.5	21	49.9	20
	PDC	31.9	13	20.3	14	29.4	14
	PS	0	4	12.7	4	14.6	2
	PPD	11.5	7	11.8	15	12.6	16
	Other	10.4	4	7.8	1	1.6	0
<i>Alianza</i>		34.9	25	39.5	26	36.6	28
	RN	18.8	13	14.9	11	14.8	7
	UDI	5.1	2	11.2	3	4.6	6
	Other	19.0	1	13.4	3	4.6	6
	Appointed	0	9	0	9	0	10
Independent		10.7	0	5.8	0	13.5	0

Source: adapted from Siavelis 2000



A trend of depoliticization is another of the important transformations that have taken place during the nineties. At least three factors point to the depoliticization of the Chilean society. First, as table 4 shows, there has been a decline in voter turnout over the nineties<sup>12</sup>. Second, the percentage of people who do not feel identified with any of the positions of the left-right continuum has increased, as the column of “independents” and “don’t knows” in table 2 shows. Third, even though Chilean parties continue to be more representative and rooted in society than in other Latin American countries (Munck and Bosworth, 1998), a progressive decline of the traditional recognition by the Chilean society of the political parties as the main intermediates between the state and the society has occurred (Hagopian, 1998)<sup>13</sup>.

**Table 4**  
**Blank and Null Votes and Abstentions in Chilean Elections (1988-1997) %**

Election	Year	Null	Blank	Abstention
Plebiscite	1988	1.30	0.90	2.69
Presidential	1989	1.40	1.10	5.28
Senators	1989	2.90	2.10	5.28
Deputies	1989	2.68	2.37	5.28
Municipal	1992	3.06	5.86	10.20
Senators	1993	3.68	1.85	8.71
Presidential	1993	4.92	3.45	8.71
Deputies	1993	5.29	3.35	8.71
Municipal	1996	7.95	3.02	12.14
Senators	1997	12.57	4.37	NA
Deputies	1997	13.54	4.22	NA
Presidential	2000	NA	NA	NA

NA = not available

Source: Siavelis 2000

In addition to these transformations, the decade after the transition to democracy has seen a tendency toward consensus that contrasts with the maximalist style of doing politics that dominated part of the sixties and especially the early seventies (Valenzuela, 1995, p. 64). This pragmatic style has allowed leaders of the right, center and moderate left to negotiate agreements for important policy initiatives (Oxhorn, 1994, p. 744). Within this trend toward consensus, the center’s disposition to form coalitions, in

comparison to its earlier ideological character, is one of the remarkable changes (Scully, 1995, p. 136).

However, the evidence is mixed with regard to this new style of interaction. Contemporary events such as the reactions to Pinochet's detention call into question the continuity of such a moderating pattern, now that the "transitional spirit" is over. Hand in hand with the importance of the contextual features of the transition are the collaborative efforts both within parties and among branches of government. Siavelis argues that the initially high inter-party and inter-branch collaborative patterns that have occurred since the transition to democracy, despite the extreme presidentialism, show signs of temporality and likely disappearance (Siavelis, 2000).

Changes and continuities are interrelated, as we have seen in the discussion of the patterns of cleavages and in the stability of the support to right and left, which goes hand in hand with decreasing support to the center. Similarly, continuities are present in the return of political parties to the electoral arena, while changes in that arena can be seen in the foundation of new ones. The UDI and the RN are new parties, but they were formed by politicians who supported the regime. The RN is the new label for the former PN<sup>14</sup>. It is less related than the UDI to Pinochet's regime, in terms of its cadres and in terms of their interpretation of the authoritarian regime. The UDI, however, includes a larger number of political leaders in its ranks that held prominent positions in the military government and it identifies readily with the policies and programs put into place by the authoritarian regime (Valenzuela and Scully, 1997, p. 514). The UCC is another party that emerged on the right in 1992. In turn, the Party for Democracy (PPD), on the left, was conceived as an instrumental party of the PS, but it became independent when the PC and the PS were able to register legally using their old names<sup>15</sup>.

The interrelation between changes and continuities is also apparent in the return of parties that existed before the coup, but returned in the post-authoritarian period with programmatic redefinitions. Especially remarkable is the encroachment of the left on more centrist positions. The

programmatic reformulation of the Socialist Party (PS) implied the acceptance of the role of the market in the economy, the abandonment of the Marxist component, and the acceptance of democracy as more than an instrumental and transitory stage. As Mainwaring and Scully argue, the case of the Chilean Socialist party is the most pronounced in Latin America in terms of its redefinition toward the center during the eighties (Mainwaring and Scully, 1995, p. 465).

The transformation of the PS was framed in a context of generalized redefinition that is likely to take place in transitional contexts. Yoclevky argues a shared vision regarding economic development has emerged around the neoliberal model imposed by the dictatorship and continued by the democratic government (Yoclevky, 1996, p. 141). The PS is not the only party that moved positions: the PDC has moved to the right, though in a more gradual and less dramatic manner. Currently, the right wing of the PDC seems to have much more weight, leading to disagreements between the leftist parties (PS and PPD) and the PDC within the *Concertación*, and to a crisis inside the PDC itself (Hinzpeter and Lehman 1999c). Valenzuela asserts that the party is unable to differentiate itself from the Left on economic issues and it is divided on key issues such as divorce, driving a part of the party toward the right (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 238).

The right has also undergone some transformation, although this has been mostly confined to the RN. Siavelis summarizes the changes in the reformulated RN. He asserts that it is a much more politically and technically sophisticated cadre of leaders, that it elaborates its own strategies, plans, and platforms, rather than simply reacting negatively to its opponents' programs of transformations; and third, that the organization and leadership has improved (Siavelis, 2000, p. 117).

### ***Factors Explaining the Transformations in the Party System***

The electoral system, the authoritarian experience, and certain socio-economic transformations account for the landscape described above of interrelated changes and continuities over the 1990s in the Chilean party

system.

### **Electoral System**

The electoral system designed by the authoritarian regime, and inherited by the new democracy, must be considered in order to understand the transformation that has taken place in the Chilean party system. In designing the electoral system, the authoritarian regime considered the high degree of fragmentation, the high degree of polarization, and the excessive politicization of the society as responsible for the 1973 breakdown of democracy<sup>16</sup>. The reduction of the multiparty system into a two-party system and the overrepresentation of the pro-government forces of the right were the main goals of Pinochet's electoral reform (Siavelis and Valenzuela, 1996). A majoritarian electoral system with two-member congressional districts was adopted and still remains. Under this system, parties or coalitions present lists that include a candidate for each of the two seats to be filled. The first seat is awarded to the candidate with the most votes from the party or coalition list that receives the plurality in that district. The second seat is awarded to the candidate with the second highest vote total only if his or her total, taken in combination with that of his or her list partner, is greater than two thirds of the vote, or at least double that of the next closest list. Hence, the system tends to favor the second-largest list because, to obtain the two seats, the largest party must receive twice the vote of the second largest party, or 66.7% of the vote of the two largest parties or coalitions<sup>17</sup>.

The extent to which Pinochet's goals have been achieved has been a matter of discussion among authors. The military's electoral engineering was carried out with the expectation that parties could not reach the consensus that they, in fact, exhibit now (Scully, 1995). However, parties have taken advantage of the legal possibility to form electoral pacts, and the center-left coalition has defeated the coalition of the rightist parties three consecutive times. In this context, it can be said that the great incentive for pact formation has created a bicoalitional logic: two alliances dominate the partisan landscape resembling, to an extent, the military's ideal of a two

party system. Of course, as Carey argues, this claim about the effects of the reform on the reduction of the fragmentation “depends on whether one regards the traditional parties or the broader coalitions as relevant units of analysis” (Carey, 1998, p. 4).

Despite the bicoalitional dynamic of Chilean party system, the identities of the parties have been preserved, and the electorate continues to be able to identify party labels (Siavelis, 1997a; Valenzuela and Scully, 1997). Two factors explain the persistence of party labels. First, the deep roots that political parties have in the Chilean society have prevented the erosion of the party labels, not only during the time when parties were banned, but also under the current coalitional logic (Munck and Bosworth, 1998). Second, in municipal elections, a proportional system exists, in which individual parties present candidates in all districts. Although they may nominate their candidates as part of pacts or even sub pacts, the proportional system contributes to the electorate’s ability to differentiate party labels. Therefore, despite the electoral system’s bicoalitional logic, there has not been a transformation of the multiparty character of Chilean partisan politics (Valenzuela and Scully, 1997; Siavelis, 1997a).

In contrast to the partial success in transforming party loyalties, the goal of favoring the political parties that supported the military has been largely achieved. The second largest majority, which the electoral system tends to overrepresent, is the right. Apart from the benefits of the disproportionality of the electoral system bestowed upon it, the right is favored by the existence of nine appointed senators. Established by the 1980 Constitution, under this arrangement some of the senators are nominated by organisms that are either favorable to or dominated by the military and which, therefore, are likely to choose candidates from the right<sup>18</sup>.

The theoretical justification for this electoral system was to favor the stability and governability of the country<sup>19</sup>. However, it can be argued that this electoral system has promoted a pattern of moderation and centripetal competence. Proportionality has been undermined under this system and exclusion has increased. Siavelis and Valenzuela argue that an

exclusionary electoral system can also affect the internal dynamics of smaller parties on the right and the left in ways that influence the stability of the political system as a whole. "Moderate elements within these parties can fall prey to their more extremist colleagues, who have proof that participation in electoral politics has nothing to offer in regard to political influence and that extra-parliamentary routes to power may be more appropriate and effective" (Siavelis and Valenzuela, 1996, p. 92). This could be the case, for example, for the Communist Party and its current lack of influence on the partisan game in Chile, which contrasts with its strong mobilization during the transition to democracy<sup>20</sup>.

### **Authoritarian Experience**

The electoral system is not the only legacy of the authoritarian period that has shaped the party system that arose in 1990. The authoritarian experience itself was the initial glue for the coalitions. During the referendum and in the first democratic elections, the main element cementing the coalitions together was the rejection of Pinochet's regime and the struggle for democracy. Once the authoritarian regime was overcome, the memories of the former period (leaders being killed, exiled, or persecuted), the interpretations of the past, and differing conceptions of democracy have divided coalitions from one another.

Part of the strength of the opposition between coalitions, which can be conceived as the strength of the authoritarian/ democratic cleavage, is explained by the electoral system. The incentives for pact formation have reinforced the continuity of this cleavage: the issues contained in the authoritarian/democratic cleavage have been the link between the coalitions. From this point of view, if it had not been for this electoral framework, the coalitions would most probably not have lasted, given the existence, as will be shown in the following pages, of programmatic disagreements within the coalitions. The strength of the Pinochet cleavage should decrease as parties cease building their identities on it<sup>21</sup>. Based on these disagreements, some authors have predicted a shift in the composition of the alliances, in which the PDC might form a coalition with

the RN (Siavelis, 1997a, p. 670). If this took place, it would be a clear confirmation of the decrease of Pinochet's legacy as a cleavage among parties: the RN and the PDC have maintained confrontational positions on the issues contained in this cleavage and the alliance would be based on their agreements in economic, social, and religious/value issues. However, it would support the idea that the electoral framework is the basis for the coalitional dynamic, as opposed to the authoritarian/democratic cleavage and programmatic agreement forming the base of the coalitions.

In addition to its role in the creation of Pinochet's cleavage, the authoritarian regime has contributed to create the consensus that has characterized partisan relations over the 1990s. The learning experience of the elite is an explanation for the extensive ability of the parties to reach consensus in Chile (Scully, 1995, p. 137). This trend was initiated with the agreement that the parties made at the beginning of the transition (Godoy, 1994). These collaborative patterns have, in the case of the opposition to the authoritarian regime, a precedent in informal contacts during the authoritarian regime. These contacts were initiated by the militants of the parties, more than by the party leaders, and were translated into collaborations like the *Comando por el No* during the 1988 referendum (Valenzuela, 1995, p. 69).

The programmatic redefinitions that have taken place in some of the Chilean parties are also partially explained by the authoritarian experience. For the left, the experience in exile allowed leaders to view the failures of "real" socialism and the merits of social democracy and led to agreement around democracy as a form of government (Valenzuela, 1995, p. 69). Concurrently, the PDC has evolved into a less ideological and more pragmatic center party willing to make pacts. In contrast, the authoritarian experience has not had the same learning effect on the parties on the right. This is especially remarkable for the case of the UDI. As will be demonstrated, the members of this party still display authoritarian tendencies, including rationalization of the 1973 military coup and the defense of authoritarian regimes in cases of economic or political crisis.

Finally, the depoliticization trend has its roots in the Pinochet regime,

which developed a strategy of radical depoliticization that was only partially successful. Although there has been an increase of anti-partisan feelings (Meseguer, 1999), one of the goals of the military regime, obviously not realized, was to eradicate political parties (Yocelovsky, 1996).

### **Socio-Economic Transformations**

Part of the transformation of the party system is explained by socio-economic changes. Pinochet's regime implemented a package of neoliberal policies that led to economic liberalization and social transformation<sup>22</sup>. These were continued after the transition to democracy the governments of the *Concertación*. "The CPPD's very preferences and objectives had undergone a significant change as it began to look increasingly favorably on the regime's economic model and the dynamic potential of Chilean business. The importance of the latter to sustain economic growth also led the CPPD to moderate its programmatic objectives considerably so as to overcome business deep seated distrusts of the center-left and thereby avoid a destabilizing fall in investments" (Barrett, 1998, p. 30).

As a result of the policies implemented, there have been important interconnected changes in the socio-economic structure. First, Chilean macroeconomic statistics, including GDP growth, private consumption, unemployment, and inflation, point to a wealthier society (Siavelis, 2000). Second, the economic transformation led to a change in the structure of employment in both the urban and rural sectors. During the authoritarian regime, the relative proportions of employment (and production) in the goods-producing sector, in utilities, and in transport declined. Especially remarkable is the decrease in public sector employment. In contrast, employment grew in commerce, finance and services (Scully, 1992). This change in employment evidences a diversification of the economy, including for example, an increase in non-copper exports.

Third, there have been changes in the nature of state-labor and employer-worker relations in that much lower levels of labor activism exist (Siavelis, 2000, p. 81). The economic transformation extensively weakened



the labor movement. For example, transport, which had been a strongly unionized sector, experienced a decline in its relative importance in the economy. Similarly, the reduction in agricultural labor implies a decline in the bargaining power of rural labor. However, this decrease in labor activism is also rooted in some changes in labor legislation. During the authoritarian period, unions were banned and the rights to strike and bargain collectively were eliminated. As a result, and despite the 1990 reform of the 1979 labor code, union membership in the post-authoritarian period is dramatically lower than in the seventies.

As a consequence of these dynamics, Chilean society appears to be less prone to class and ideological conflict, and consensus exists around the basic political and economic model that should guide the country's future. This consensus is reflected in the party programs that display agreement on important socio-economic aspects. Especially remarkable is the programmatic reformulation of the PS as a result of the changes in Chilean society. In addition to the socio-economic context, the aforementioned learning experience and the need to form coalitions led to a moderated pattern in the center, to some extent in the RN, and especially in the left, and to programmatic redefinitions. The transformation of the Chilean left is also framed in a Latin American and international context of redefinition of the left which entailed the almost unanimous acceptance of neo liberal policies. This process was accelerated by the experience of leftist leaders in exile.

However, the fact that Chilean society does not express conflict on these issues can be a function of despair more than real agreement with the current situation. Siavelis argues that despite the overall positive trends in macroeconomic statistics, there is evidence of future conflicts regarding the economic model. The consensus model has internal contradictions, around such critical areas as the distribution of income, poverty, and social benefits. The "important political divisions within Chilean society have been masked by the process of democratic transition and the *forced consensus* it created. This consensus is perhaps much thinner than analysts of Chilean politics have suggested" (Siavelis, 2000, p. 108).

Socio-economic transformations play an important role in the explanation of the depoliticization trend. Munck and Bosworth argue that social and economic changes introduced by Pinochet's government have had a great impact on the strength of social actors. Changes like the reduction of the country's industrial base (which led to the spread of rural-based production in isolated localities and triggered the growth of the informal sector) made it difficult for actors in civil society to become organized and strong (Munck and Bosworth, 1998, p. 483).

In addition, the depoliticization trend could be related to the citizen's perception of a progressive blurring of the differences between ideological options. As it has been the case for other countries, some sectors of Chilean public opinion appear to believe that left and right programs are indistinguishable from one another. This blurring of the differences is accentuated by the strategies of politicians in two ways<sup>23</sup>. First, politicians try to capture the median voter by proposing programs and policies that are not very radical nor ideologically linked. A clear use of this strategy is found in the 2000 Presidential election, during which the two final candidates tried to place themselves in the center to capture as many votes as possible. Second, according to some authors, "elites have played an active role in encouraging the demobilization of society and called for restraint in the name of avoiding overloading the state with demands viewed as contradictory to the imperatives of the country's new economic model" (Munck and Bosworth, 1998).

Societal dynamics also help to explain the decrease in the support of center. Part of the explanation of the decrease in the support to the PDC is found in the eroding effect that results from its position as central party of the governing coalition two governments (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 238)<sup>24</sup>. However, the process of secularization that is occurring in Chilean society might also contribute to this decrease in center support since the PDC was created with, and still maintains, a Social-Christian profile. Over the last few years, there has been a decline in the practice of religion. Weekly church attendance has fallen from 27% in 1995 to 18% in 1999 (survey from Centro de Estudios Públicos, June 1998; Centro de Estudios Públicos,

May-June 1995).

The decrease in support to the center and the depoliticization trend are, to some extent, related. Some of the people who do not feel identified anymore with the policies and programs of the center have not shifted their support to other partisan options. This is suggested by public opinion data. The group of people who does not feel identified with any of the options on the left-right continuum displays attitudes that are similar to the PDC's positions. For example, they prefer "economic development to equality in opportunities and social justice" as well as "public order and security to democracy and public and private liberties". Only a small part of people who feel alienated from the left-right continuum shows attitudes that would indicate that they would vote for leftist parties. Among the people choosing "none" there are people who are likely to vote for the right. The electoral left (i.e. Socialist Party) gets some votes from the "independents". The dominance of rightist attitudes inside the PDC, combined with the "hidden" voters of the right in the "non answer" category supports the hypothesis that a shift to the right in the Chilean arena has occurred (Hinzpeter and Lehmann, 1999b, 1999c). In addition, the depoliticization trend is caused, but also evidenced, by anti-partisan feelings, which are very much related to the dissatisfaction with the performance of Chilean democracy (Meseguer, 1999; Linz and Stepan, 1996).

The depoliticization trend is caused by the reaction to the authoritarian experience, together with disenchantment. Part of the public is alienated from the traditional left-right continuum and disappointed with the governing coalition. As PDC has been the main party of the coalition and the party of the center, people feel less connected with it.

The evolution of the party system during the 1990s demonstrates that, despite certain continuities, there have been changes in the Chilean party system. Pinochet's regime seems to be behind these changes in at least three ways: institutional legacy, especially the electoral features; the learning experience; and socio-economic engineering. These features, together with declining support of the PDC, have also shaped the contemporary partisan landscape in Chile. We now turn to the discussion of

polarization.

### **Evolution of Polarization in the Chilean Party System (1990-1999)**

The dynamics of the party system just described suggest neither a uniform decrease in polarization nor an increase. The electoral system, for example, favors a collaborative pattern among the members of the same coalition since they are forced to reach consensus on different programmatic aspects, but it also favors a logic of opposition between coalitions with the consequent increase in the distance between parties of contending coalitions. The example of the progressive substitution of authoritarian/democratic issues by socio-economic aspects in party competition evidenced by the 1999-2000 campaign suggests a decrease in polarization, since the central issues are now those around which more consensus exists. However, events like the massive mobilization caused by Pinochet's return to Chile suggest that the authoritarian/democratic cleavage still has an important polarizing effect. This section describes the pattern of polarization in Chilean partisan politics over the last decade in the context of the complex dynamics of the system.

There are three central sets of issues that structure current party competition in Chile and which have alternated as the most salient cleavages of party competition<sup>25</sup>. Religious issues were the main line of division in the early days of the independent Republic of Chile. They came to be substituted by class conflict as a main dividing issue prior to the 1973 coup. Since the military regime ended, issues related to authoritarianism and democracy as well as Pinochet's legacy have been the main axes of party competition. The distance between parties on these different issues is what has been called the polarization in the pragmatic dimension of politics. In this section, the paper focuses on differences among the main parties on these issues, with the goal of contributing to an understanding of the evolution in the degree of polarization in the Chilean party system.

## **Religious-Value Issues**

Religious disputes dominated Chilean politics for several decades of the nineteenth century. Class issues came to replace them as a new division. However, even after this replacement, religious issues and, more broadly, value issues, still played an important role in structuring party competition in Chile (Valenzuela, 1995). Perhaps the two most emblematic issues of religious-value issues in contemporary politics are abortion and divorce.

With regard to abortion, the elite data in table 5 shows that the PDC is closer to the RN and the UDI positions than to the positions of its coalition partners. PDC elites and the elites of the parties on the right (UDI, RN) are almost unanimously against abortion, whereas some pro-choice deputies may be found among the congressmen of the PPD and the PS.

These positions have evolved over this decade. The number of congressmen in the PS and PDC who favor abortion has increased. At the same time, although the different response options for 1994 and 1998 make comparison problematic, it seems clear that PPD congressmen in 1998 are nearer to PDC, RN and UDI opinions than in 1994. In addition, these four parties have seen a radicalization of the opinions against abortion. However, there are outliers within these parties who are nearer to the opinions of the PS congressmen. The UDI congressmen are the most homogeneous both in 1994 and 1998 [*against legalization of abortion* (1994) and *totally against liberalization of abortion* (1998)].

**Table 5**  
**Opinions on Abortion among Chilean Congressmen, 1994 and 1998 %**

	Concertación de Partidos Por la Democracia			Alianza por Chile	
Opinion Abortion (1994)	PS 1994	PPD 1994	PDC 1994	RN 1994	UDI 1994
In favor	7.1	9.1	0	0	0
Only in the cases established by the law	85.7	72.7	20	22.7	0
Against	7.1	18.2	80	77.3	100
Total (N)	(12)	(12)	(29)	(22)	(12)
Opinion Abortion (1998)	PS 1998	PPD 1998	PDC 1998	RN 1998	UDI 1998

Totally in favor	12.5	0	3.4	0	0
There should be a liberalization	50	33.3	6.9	0	5.9
There should be a limitation	12.5	16.7	0	0	0
Totally against	25	41.7	89.7	88.2	94.1
No Answer	0	8.3	0	11.8	0
Total (N)	(8)	(12)	(29)	(17)	(17)

Question: what is your opinion about abortion?

Source: Élités parlamentarias en América Latina

However, party programs do not reflect these divisions within parties over abortion. As expected, the RN, the UDI and the PDC express a rejection of abortion, but it is striking that the PS and PPD also reject abortion. Neither PS nor PPD defend changes in the law regarding this issue. Consequently, both the *Alianza* and the *Concertación* exclude liberalization of abortion from their electoral programs.

With regard to divorce, less distance between the opinions of the parties exists than on abortion: PS and PPD elites are more pro-divorce (Table 6). The PDC and RN are somewhat less favorable toward changes in divorce law. In sharp contrast, UDI's opposition to divorce is unanimous. In addition, the evolution of opinion on this issue is inverse from that followed by abortion opinion. Between 1994 and 1998, a remarkable increase of congressmen who are in favor of divorce occurred. In addition to the already pro-divorce positions of PS and PPD congressmen, some members of RN, and especially of PDC, are now in favor of divorce. Within the UDI, despite a decrease in their opposition to divorce, a large number of deputies still display attitudes against it. From a coalition perspective, PDC is not as far from its coalition partners on divorce as it is on abortion.

Party programs reflect to some extent the evidence suggested by the elite data. PS and PPD programs defend the legalization of divorce. In particular, one of the goals of the PS, according to their election program is to support the approval of the *Ley de Divorcio vincular* (PS program for the 2000 Presidential Election). In contrast, the programs of the PDC, RN and UDI were against it. On the issue of divorce, congressmen's opinions correlate with their party programs. However, in the electoral program of

the *Concertación*, due to interparty disagreements, the position of PDC (against divorce) is the official one.

**Table 6**  
**Opinions on Divorce among Chilean Congressmen, 1994 and 1998 %**

Opinion Divorce	Concertación de Partidos por la Democracia			Alianza por Chile	
	PS 1994	PPD 1994	PDC 1994	RN 1994	UDI 1994
In favor	42.9	54.5	13.3	4.5	0
Only in the cases established by the law	50	45.5	60	59.1	0
Against	7.1	0	23.3	36.4	100
No Answer	0	0	3.3	0	0
Total (N)	(12)	(12)	(29)	(22)	(12)
Opinion Divorce	PS 1998	PPD 1998	PDC 1998	RN 1998	UDI 1998
In favor	100	100	58.6	29.4	17.6
There should be a liberalization	0	0	17.2	41.2	11.8
There should be a limitation	0	0	3.4	0	5.9
Against	0	0	13.8	23.5	64.7
No Answer	0	0	6.9	5.9	0
Total (N)	(8)	(12)	(29)	(17)	(17)

Question: what is your opinion about divorce?

Source: Élités parlamentarias en América Latina

The differences within the *Concertación* and between the coalitions are also evident in issues like censorship, values that the educational system and mass media should enforce, and the possibility of campaigns for sexual education in television and colleges (Programa JOCAS) (Fuentes, 1998a). Especially remarkable is the position of the UDI favoring censorship (Program of the UDI for the 2000 Presidential Election) and the PS opposition to it (Program of the PS for the 2000 Presidential Election)<sup>26</sup>.

In addition to these issues, the presence of the Catholic Church in politics is a point of disagreement among parties. The elite data suggests that the PPD and the PS are the least favorable to the presence of Christian values in politics (Table 7). That is consistent with the secular tradition of these leftist parties. Secularization of politics has been very important to both the UDI and RN since each party was founded. The RN

has a secular profile, and the UDI maintains that society should be adjusted to the moral order that is the basis of the Christian Western civilization<sup>27</sup>. This support of the Church by the right is reciprocal: the Catholic Church aligns with the political right in opposing current government policy in areas like sex education. This is interesting given the democratic role that the Chilean Church played during the democratization process<sup>28</sup>.

**Table 7**  
**Degree of Preference on the Presence of Christian Values in Politics among Chilean Congressmen, 1998 %**

Preference (1998)	Concertación de Partidos Por la Democracia			Alianza por Chile	
	PS 1998	PPD 1998	PDC 1998	RN 1998	UDI 1998
Christian values (1)	0	0	27.6	11.8	56.3
(2)	0	8.3	31	23.5	6.3
(3)	50	41.7	34.5	41.2	31.3
(4)	12.5	16.7	0	11.8	6.3
Secular principles (5)	37.5	33.3	6.9	11.8	0
Mean	3.88	3.75	2.28	2.88	1.88
Total (N)	(8)	(12)	(29)	(17)	(16)

Question: are you more in favor of the presence of Christian values in politics or secular principles? Use a scale where "1" is high preference of Christian values in politics and "5" is high preference of secular values in politics

Source: Élités parlamentarias en América Latina

As this discussion shows, there are important differences between parties regarding religious-value issues. Polarization in this decade around these issues has not decreased as much as some authors suggest. Abortion, divorce (to a lesser extent), secularization, and censorship are issues around which parties differ. However, it is clear that there are more differences within the *Concertación* on religious-value issues than within the *Alianza*. In addition, the position of the PDC on these issues is remarkable, first, because the source of disagreement within the *Concertación* is the PDC positions, which tend to be nearer the rightist coalition in aspects related to religion and values than to its coalition partners. Second, PDC positions are adopted by the whole coalition when presenting a shared electoral program.



## Socio-Economic Issues

We turn now to socio-economic issues. Table 8 outlines party differences on how much ability congressmen attribute to the state in the resolution of conflicts, and table 9 presents the preferred degree of state intervention in the market. Parties on the left of the political spectrum have given up their hope for a mainly state-regulated economy, but they continue to attribute greater ability to the state to affect the economy than parties on the right. RN and UDI, on the other hand, favor the market. On these issues, PDC opinions are closer to its coalition partners than to RN and UDI.

A similar degree of difference is reflected in the congressmen's perceptions of the necessity of state intervention in the economy (Table 10), although the existence of only two alternative responses makes answers look more radical than in table 8 and table 9.

**Table 8**  
**Ability of the State to Solve Problems, Opinion of Chilean Congressmen, 1994**

State's ability (1994)	Concertación de Partidos Por la Democracia			Alianza por Chile	
	PS 1994	PPD 1994	PDC 1994	RN 1994	UDI 1994
Most of the problems	14.3	0	6.7	0	0
Quite a few of the problems	42.9	63.6	30	13.6	10
Some of the problems	35.7	36.4	60	59.1	50
Very few of the problems	7.1	0	3.3	27.3	40
Total (N)	(12)	(12)	(29)	(22)	(12)

Question: in your opinion, The State can solve all the problems, most of them, some of them or very few of the problems from our society?

Source: Élités parlamentarias en América Latina

**Table 9**  
**Congressmen's Preferred Degree of Regulation of the Economy by the State, 1998 %**

Intervention (1998)	Concertación de Partidos Por la Democracia			Alianza por Chile	
	PS 1998	PPD 1998	PDC 1998	RN 1998	UDI 1998
State (1)	0	0	0	0	0
(2)	12.5	8.3	13.8	0	0

(3)	75	83.3	55.2	17.6	5.9
(4)	12.5	8.3	24.1	58.8	35.3
Market (5)	0	0	3.4	23.5	58.8
No Answer	0	0	3.4	0	0
Mean	3.00	3.00	3.18	4.06	4.53
Total (N)	(8)	(12)	(29)	(17)	(17)

Question: are you more in favor of an economy regulated by the state or by the market? Use a 1-5 scale, where "1" means maximum presence of the state in the economy and "5" means maximum regulation through the market.

Source: Élités parlamentarias en América Latina

**Table 10**  
**Necessity of State Intervention in the Economy, Opinions of Chilean Congressmen, 1998 %**

	Concertación de Partidos Por la Democracia			Alianza por Chile	
	PS 1998	PPD 1998	PDC 1998	RN 1998	UDI 1998
The intervention of the State in socio-economic life is the only possible way to reduce social inequalities					
Agreement	87.5	100	79.3	29.4	0
Disagreement	12.5	0	20.7	64.7	100
No Answer	0	0	0	5.9	0
The State should intervene little as possible in the society and leave in hands of the private sector the attention of the citizens' needs					
Agreement	12.5	25	31	94.1	94.1
Disagreement	75.0	75	69	5.9	5.9
Total (N)	(8)	(12)	(29)	(17)	(17)

Question: what is your degree of agreement with the two following assessments?

Source: Élités parlamentarias en América Latina

There are pragmatic aspects in political economy that need to be considered within this cleavage. Table 11 shows congressmen's answers regarding tax policy. The data suggests that RN, UDI and PPD are more divided on this question than PDC and PS. At the same time, there are very different views on this issue. In contrast, regarding privatization, party positions have converged much over the nineties (Table 12 and table 13). Table 12 shows that center-left parties (PDC, PPD and PS) are more willing in 1998 to privatize those industries with low benefits, than in 1994. Table 13 demonstrates that the number of members of UDI and RN willing to privatize all public services has decreased between 1994 and 1998.

**Table 11**  
**Opinions on Tax Policy among Chilean Congressmen, 1994 and 1998 %**

Evaluation	Concertación de Partidos Por la Democracia						Alianza por Chile			
	PS		PPD		PDC		RN		UDI	
	1994	1998	1994	1998	1994	1998	1994	1998	1994	1998
Direct Taxes	81.8	100	81.8	66.7	66.7	82.8	27.3	17.6	30	6.3
Indirect Taxes	18.2	0	18.2	25	26.7	10.3	68.2	47.1	70	18.8
No answer	0	0	0	8.3	6.7	6.9	4.5	35.3	0	75
Total (N)	(12)	(8)	(12)	(12)	(29)	(29)	(22)	(17)	(12)	(16)

Question: in case it was necessary to raise taxes, do you think that it should be done through the increase of direct or indirect taxes?

Source: Élités parlamentarias en América Latina

**Table 12**  
**Attitudes toward Privatization of State-Owned Industries among Chilean Congressmen, 1994 and 1998 %**

Assessments	Concertación de Partidos Por la Democracia						Alianza por Chile			
	PS		PPD		PDC		RN		UDI	
	1994	1998	1994	1998	1994	1998	1994	1998	1994	1998
Privatize all state-owned industry	0	0	0	0	3.3	3.4	50	41.2	70	56.3
Privatize only industries with low benefits	21.4	50	9.1	41.7	36.7	24.1	0	11.8	10	0
Privatize only industries which are not key to the country's development	28.6	25	45.5	58.3	46.7	37.9	36.4	47.1	20	43.8
I would leave things as they are now	28.6	12.5	27.3	0	10	13.8	4.5	0	0	0
No Answer	21.4	12.5	18.2	0	3.3	20.6	9.1	0	0	0
Total (N)	(12)	(8)	(12)	(12)	(29)	(29)	(22)	(17)	(12)	(17)

Question: which one of the following assessments reflects better your attitude toward privatization of state-owned industries?

Source: Élités parlamentarias en América Latina

**Table 13**  
**Attitudes toward Privatization of Public Services among Chilean Congressmen, 1994 and 1998 %**

Assessments	Concertación de Partidos Por la Democracia						Alianza por Chile			
	PS		PPD		PDC		RN		UDI	
	1994	1998	1994	1998	1994	1998	1994	1998	1994	1998
Privatize all public services	0	12.5	0	0	0	3.4	50	41.2	70	56.3
Privatize only services with low benefits	14.3	25	9.1	41.7	30	24.1	0	11.8	10	0
Privatize only services with low impact on the population	21.4	0	45.5	58.3	36.7	37.9	36.4	47.1	20	43.8
I would leave things										

as they are now	42.9	50	27.3	0	16.7	13.8	4.5	0	0	0
No answer	21.4	12.5	18.2	0	16.7	20.6	9.1	0	0	0
Total (N)	(12)	(8)	(12)	(12)	(29)	(29)	(22)	(17)	(12)	(16)

Question: which one of the following assessments better reflects your attitude toward privatization of public services?

Source: Élités parlamentarias en América Latina

This data demonstrates that some differences across parties remain in economic matters. However, these differences are much less than in the pre-authoritarian party system. The evolution of the PS, and the position of the new created party PPD, demonstrate an important shift to the center that the left has made in the last decade.

Differences among parties are reduced. A review of the party programs for the last presidential election shows that there are important points of convergence between the two coalitions in the four socio-economic issues that have dominated the arena of discussion and there are some minor differences. Table 11 presents a summary of the policies proposed by the two presidential candidates on health, education, labor reform, and crime. The differences between the parties are lower than in the era before Pinochet's regime, but there are still "differences of degree". For example, the PS demands a more comprehensive reform of labor legislation as well as more state funding for health and for education than do the other parties. In contrast, UDI and RN are more cautious and reluctant to make comprehensive changes in labor legislation and tend to prefer a greater role for the private sector in health care and education.

**Table 14**  
**Suggested Policies of the Two Coalitions on Four Socio-Economic Issues**

Issues	Alianza	Concertación
Health	-gradual adoption of a system that allows users to choose the service they prefer (public or private) -decentralization of the health system -creation of emergency health insurance ( <i>seguro de emergencia</i> ) so that economic solvency does not have to be	-option of choosing private or -provide autonomy in generating plans and management of the centers to the 26 Health Services. -elimination of the need for proving economic solvency before any intervention ( <i>cheque en garantía</i> )

proven before surgery when  
 proving economic solvency  
 before any surgery (*cheque en  
 garantía*)

Education	-funding for low income families whose children meet established criteria. -system of loans for those who attend University	-free education for children under six -complete program of grants for those who attend University
Labor legislation	-free choice of each worker to join a union or not. -recognition of collective bargaining as a workers' right	-widening of the union rights to all sectors -defense of collective bargaining -improvement of welfare: raising the minimum wage and unemployment benefits.
Crime	-increase of police surveillance -fulfillment of the sentences -drug rehabilitation programs, especially among young people	-a faster and more efficient judiciary and penitentiary system -improvement of the efficiency of the police -active support to initiatives from communities -programs of drug prevention

Source: Electoral programs for 1999/2000 Presidential Election; La Tercera, 9 January, 2000

Finally, Carey's index of party and coalition unity, calculated from the voting behavior of parties in Congress, shows that the *Concertación* and the *Alianza* have high levels of coalitional cohesion on economic issues, and a somewhat less cohesion on social issues (though still high) (which the index analyzes with military issues)<sup>29</sup>. At the same time, this index shows more cohesion within the center-left coalition than in the coalition of the right on socio-economic issues (Carey, 1998).

### **Authoritarian/Democratic Issues**

With the return of democracy, a series of issues related to Pinochet's era and to the new democracy emerged and divided political parties. Two sets of issues can be distinguished: the first related to interpretations of the history and of political culture, and the second, a group of issues related to the organization of the Chilean political system.

## Historical Issues and Political Culture

The interpretation of the authoritarian past is the first element of polarization in the party system within these historical and cultural issues. The center and left parties unanimously reject the experience. However, there are differences within the parties on the right. According to Barrett, the fundamental issue dividing the UDI and the RN are their positions on the military regime and its “accomplishments” (Barrett, 1998, p. 51). The RN has made an effort to distinguish itself from Pinochet’s regime and to present itself as a new democratic party, whereas the UDI defends the 1973 coup d’état and it asserts that the years of authoritarian rule were necessary and positive for the country.

The congressional evaluation of the military between 1973 and 1990 gives some clues about the interpretation of the past. As table 15 shows, deputies’ positions are divided into two groups. The RN and the UDI evaluate the role of the Armed Forces during the authoritarian period as *positive* or *very positive*. PDC, PPD and PS, however, remember this period as *negative* or *very negative*. This division between parties is consistent within the coalitions (*Alianza por Chile* and *Concertación de Partidos Por la Democracia*).

**Table 15**  
**Congressional Evaluation of the Role of the Armed Forces during Pinochet’s Regime, 1994 and 1998 %**

Evaluation	Concertación de Partidos Por la Democracia				Alianza por Chile					
	PS		PPD		PDC		RN		UDI	
	1994	1998	1994	1998	1994	1998	1994	1998	1994	1998
Very negative (1)	78.6	100	90.9	83.3	73.3	79.3	0	0	0	0
(2)	7.1	0	0	8.3	10	10.3	0	0	0	0
(3)	7.1	0	9.1	8.3	10	6.9	4.5	17.6	0	0
(4)	0	0	0	0	3.3	0	36.4	35.3	30	76.5
Very positive (5)	7.1	0	0	0	3.3	3.4	59.1	47.1	70	23.5
Mean	1.50	1.00	1.18	1.25	1.53	1.37	4.55	4.29	4.70	4.23
TOTAL (N)	(12)	(8)	(12)	(12)	(29)	(29)	(22)	(17)	(12)	(17)

Question: given a 1-5 scale, where would you place the role of the Armed Forces in Chile during Pinochet’s regime?

Source: Élités parlamentarias en América Latina

Related to the memory and interpretation of the past, the positions of

the parties on human rights violations by the Pinochet regime is evidence of existing polarization. Crespo argues that remarkable differences across countries in the way they address human rights violations exist. Any solution has to combine the demands of the victims with a strategic calculus of political stability and the degree of threatening from the armed forces (Crespo, 1995, p. 19). In this context, there have been not only differences between coalitions but also within each of the coalitions. The *Concertación* represents Pinochet's victims and it is committed to overcome authoritarian enclaves, but at the same time, the *Concertación* is the governing coalition, committed to a program of modernization and social democratization that requires stability and governance<sup>29</sup>. This places the *Concertación* in a difficult conundrum. The PS and PPD have been more maximalist in terms of the solutions to the problem, and the PDC less willing to address human rights violations. On the other side, the rightist coalition has also dealt with some internal dissent. Some members of the RN are more sensitive to human rights violations and others adopt the UDI's strategy of ignoring the problem (Garretón, 1996, p. 48).

The type of political culture within parties polarizes them and shapes party labels. Chilean parties differ in their models of democracy. Table 16 shows congressmen's attitudes toward political parties. The elites of the parties of the *Concertación* believe that political parties are central to political systems, while the RN and the UDI attribute less centrality to parties. RN and UDI exhibit the lowest percentages of deputies assigning political parties a great centrality, and some of their congressmen strongly disagree that political parties are important to democracy.

**Table 16**  
**Necessity of Political Parties to Democracy, 1994 and 1998 %**

Evaluation	Concertación de Partidos Por la Democracia						Alianza por Chile			
	PS		PPD		PDC		RN		UDI	
	1994	1998	1994	1998	1994	1998	1994	1998	1994	1998
Strong Agreement (1)	85.7	75	72.7	70	96.7	89.7	63.6	41.2	70	41.2
Agreement (2)	7.1	25	27.3	10	3.3	6.9	22.7	23.5	30	23.5
Disagreement (3)	7.1	0	0	20	0	0	13.6	17.6	0	5.9
Strong Disagreement (4)	0	0	0	0	0	3.4	0	17.6	0	29.4

Total (N) (12) (8) (12) (12) (29) (29) (22) (17) (12) (17)  
 Question: what is your degree of agreement with the sentence "without political parties democracy cannot exist"?  
 Source: Élités parlamentarias en América Latina

A second aspect of political culture that demonstrates distance between parties is the degree of tolerance towards differing ideologies (Table 17). PS and PPD, and to a lesser extent PDC, are highly tolerant to the legalization of all political parties, RN and UDI, conversely, could be characterized as intermediately tolerant towards the legalization of all political parties.

**Table 17**  
**Congressional Attitudes toward the Legalization of Political Parties, 1994 and 1998 %**

Assessments	Concertación de Partidos Por la Democracia						Alianza por Chile			
	PS		PPD		PDC		RN		UDI	
	1994	1998	1994	1998	1994	1998	1994	1998	1994	1998
All parties should be legalized	78.6	100	81.8	91.7	80	58.6	45.5	47.1	20	35.3
All parties legalized, except those which are clearly antidemocratic	21.4	0	18.2	8.3	20	41.4	54.5	47.1	80	64.7
There is a serious risk of instability for the system if all political parties are legalized	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5.9	0	0
Total (N)	(12)	(8)	(12)	(12)	(29)	(29)	(22)	(17)	(12)	(17)

Question: from the following statements, which one do you agree the most?  
 Source: Élités parlamentarias en América Latina

Generally speaking, PDC, PPD, and PS display higher level of trust of the democratic model that includes political parties, elections, and citizen participation. As table 18 shows, UDI and RN justify the existence of authoritarian governments when conditions of political and economic instability exist. In Garretón's words "rightist leaders still do not have a value-based commitment to democracy; rather, they have an instrumental acceptance of it" (Garretón, 2000, p. 79). A more detailed analysis of the profile of those nine congressmen from RN and UDI who display a more



authoritarian profile shows that, except for one deputy of UDI, the rest are highly educated: seven have college degrees and one from UDI has post-graduate studies. Excepting one congressmen of the RN, they have been in politics from at least 1989: one entered politics in 1971 and one in 1969. All but one deputy were in politics during the transition to democracy, but this experience did not positively affect their views about democracy.

**Table 18**  
**Congressional Assessment of Democracy, 1998 %**

Assessments (1998)	Concertación de Partidos Por la Democracia			Alianza por Chile	
	PPD (1998)	PS (1998)	PDC (1998)	RN (1998)	UDI (1998)
Democracy is always the best form of government	100	100	100	64.7	64.7
Sometimes an authoritarian government is better than a democratic one	0	0	0	29.4	23.5
Don't know	0	0	0	0	0
No answer	0	0	0	5.9	11.8
Total (N)	(12)	(8)	(29)	(17)	(17)

Question: from the following statements, which one do you agree the most?

Source: Élités parlamentarias en América Latina

### Political-Institutional Issues

With regard to the political dimension of the authoritarian/democratic issue, several aspects are important in explaining party competition. Around these issues, there are different degrees of polarization. The first issue over which polarization arises is the role of the Armed Forces in contemporary Chile. The parties on the right evaluate this role much more positively than do the PS and the PPD (Table 19).

**Table 19**  
**Congressional Evaluation of the Present Role of the Armed Forces, 1994 and 1998 %**

Evaluation	Concertación de Partidos Por la Democracia				Alianza por Chile					
	PS		PPD		PDC		RN		UDI	
	1994	1998	1994	1998	1994	1998	1994	1998	1994	1998
Very negative (1)	0	0	0	0	0	3.6	0	0	0	0
(2)	35.7	75	18.2	66.6	13.3	53.6	0	0	0	0
(3)	35.7	25	54.5	33.4	43.3	14.3	4.5	17.6	0	5.9

(4)	14.3	0	27.3	0	36.7	28.6	13.6	11.8	30	23.5
Very positive (5)	14.3	0	0	0	6.7	0	81.8	70.6	70	70.6
Mean	3.07	2.25	3.09	2.33	3.37	2.67	4.77	4.52	4.7	4.64
No answer	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total (N)	(12)	(8)	(12)	(12)	(29)	(29)	(22)	(17)	(12)	(17)

Question: given a 1-5 scale, where would you place the role of the Armed Forces in contemporary Chile?

Source: Élités parlamentarias en América Latina

In addition to differing evaluations of the Armed Forces and the authoritarian past, each party has a different view of the proper role of the military, and the degree of constitutional autonomy it should have. Fuentes asserts that this ongoing discussion causes disagreements within different coalitions, and within the parties of each coalition (Fuentes, 1999a, 1999b). Broadly speaking, the parties in the *Concertación* defend subordination of the Armed Forces and control by civilian rule, whereas the *Alianza* defends the autonomy of the military. However, there are disagreements over the military within the RN. The RN appears to favor political neutrality over the autonomy of the institution (Program of the RN). The argument surrounding the role of the military creates disagreements within coalitions. While PDC and PPD favor the participation of the military in the development of the country, the PS rejects it. Within the *Alianza*, the UDI and some sectors of the RN favor a developmental role for the Armed Forces, whereas the rest of the RN rejects such a role (Fuentes, 1999b).

Agreement exists in the *Concertación* on the elimination of part of Article 90 of the Constitution, which assigns the Armed Forces the role of guarantors of the institutional order of the Republic. The *Concertación* argues that such a role should be performed by all the organs of the state, as well as the citizenry (Program of the *Concertación* for 2000 Presidential Election). In contrast, the UDI defends this role (Program of UDI).

In general terms, the issue of the military creates conflict within both coalitions. According to the voting behavior of the parties in Congress, however, the *Alianza* seems to be more divided than the *Concertación* over this issue. The RN is the party that is clearly the most divided (Carey, 1998).

Other institutional arrangements cause polarization between parties.

The most salient institutional issue is the reform of the electoral system, advocated by the center-left coalition. The 2000 Electoral Program of the *Concertación* suggests that the existing electoral system should be replaced by a proportional system (*proporcional corregido*). A second institutional issue that polarizes parties is the suggested elimination of the designated and lifetime senators, established by the 1980 Constitution. Third, the *Concertación* claims that legislative power should be increased; therefore, it proposes a modification of certain attributes of that executive power. This is consistent with Carey's argument. His unity index shows that the parties from the *Concertación* display higher levels of agreement when voting on issues related to government reforms, than do the parties from the *Alianza*. The latter coalition is much more divided on politico-institutional arrangements (Carey, 1998).

There is an agreement among parties from both coalitions on the necessity of decentralization. However, the meaning of decentralization varies between coalitions. The *Concertación* proposes deep decentralization of the organization of the state (Program of *Concertación* for the 2000 Election). In contrast, the RN and UDI talk of decentralization through transferring power to the individual in order to avoid concentration of power by the state (Program of the UDI), so that neither the state nor any other social organization invade personal liberty (Program of RN).

The issues related to the authoritarian past and the democratic present divide parties. Parties are divided on these issues in two blocs whose composition is coincident with the party composition of the two coalitions. The parties on the right display some antidemocratic attitudes and conceptions of democracy, especially within the UDI. The RN, however, appears to be a more democratic party of the right. The degree of dissent within the rightist coalition, *Alianza*, is higher than in the center-left coalition on these issues<sup>30</sup>.

### ***Polarization in Pragmatic Politics and Ideological Politics***

It is an assertion of this paper that an analysis of programmatic polarization, or "pragmatic politics" polarization, provides a more accurate

picture of the degree of polarization of a party system than an analysis of polarization at the level of ideological politics<sup>31</sup>. However, a complete assessment of polarization in the post-authoritarian party system must address the ideological dimension of politics. Despite the trend toward convergence over certain issues that Chilean parties have exhibited, party labels indicate differences among parties. Parties are differentiated not only on the differences in stances on the issues, but also on the representation of different political cultures. These cultures appeal to rational aspects, such as programs, but also to irrational aspects.

The identities of the parties after 1990 have been mediated by the authoritarian experience. The center, and especially the left, were persecuted, and they have built part of their identity in post-authoritarian Chile on this experience. Hilte argues that today's Chilean left continues to be plagued by shared memories of the chaos and drama surrounding the Allende years and by the repression which followed. "The left also faces the challenge of framing positions within a dominant culture which emphasizes the will of the individual rather than the collectivity and within a universal context in which socialist models have, for the most part, collapsed" (Hilte, 1996, p. 302). In this context, "the PS struggled to reconcile its commitment to a moderately reformist center-left coalition with the need to preserve its own political identity and survival. This came to be expressed primarily through the presidential candidacy of Ricardo Lagos, the most visible renovated figure" (Barrett, 1998, p. 46). On the other hand, the parties on the right, especially the UDI, defend the authoritarian past.

The existence of these core identities affects the programmatic level. It has been argued that "political tendencies persist because they are partly the product of collective memories of past political divisions that shaped and reshaped the party system" (University of Miami 2000). Hilte asserts that "traumatic political experiences possess the ability to challenge the very core of individual political identity" (Hilte, 1996, p. 323). For this reason, evidence of a decrease in the distance among parties at the ideological dimension of politics is not to be found. The elite data show an increase in ideological polarization: between 1994 and 1998, the parties on the right

have moved farther to the right and the parties on the left have moved farther to the left. The Chilean congressmen place their parties on a scale ranging between 2.93 and 6.80 in 1994, whereas in 1998, the placement of parties varied between 2.50 and 8.18. This would suggest, first, an increase in ideological distance between the poles (from 3.87 points to 5.68 points). Second, the movement of the parties on the right has been greater than the small movement of the left. This second trend indicates that the mean score of whole party system has shifted to the right.

The increase in the distance between the poles is not the only surprising feature of the elite data on ideological placement, especially given the convergence displayed by Chilean parties on some programmatic aspects. It is also remarkable that the data in table 20 do not point to a convergence to the center. The programmatic reformulation of the PS toward the center does not seem to be captured by an ideological movement to the center; rather, the party has moved, in ideological terms, even farther to the left.

However these results can only be considered suggestive. A statistical test of differences in means shows that the differences between 1994 and 1998 are not significant<sup>32</sup>. In other words, there is not enough evidence to infer from these differences in our sample of deputies a general increase in Chilean congressmen's ideological polarization over the 1990s.

**Table 20**  
**Ideological Locations of Chilean Legislators, by Party, on 1-10 left-right Scale, 1994 and 1998**

Mean legislator placement of:	Concertación de Partidos Por la Democracia						Alianza por Chile			
	PS		PPD		PDC		RN		UDI	
	1994	1998	1994	1998	1994	1998	1994	1998	1994	1998
Self	3.21	2.50	3.60	4.09	4.50	4.52	6.59	6.71	6.40	7.94
Own party	2.93	2.50	4.36	4.00	4.40	4.83	6.36	6.76	6.80	8.18
The party by congressmen of other parties	2.53	2.47	4.19	3.71	4.85	4.62	7.83	7.85	9.13	9.58
Mean of 3 measures	2.89	2.49	4.05	3.6	4.58	4.6	6.92	7.10	7.44	8.56

Source: *Élites parlamentarias en América Latina*

In addition, a contextual factor might be biasing elites' responses for 1998. The 1998 survey was partially coincident with Pinochet's detention.

This might be influencing, to an important extent, elites' apparently higher polarization between 1994 and 1998. As Valenzuela and Scully argue, "political tendencies are recreated over time by the differential impact of new political events on them" (Valenzuela and Scully, 1997, p. 524). A third note of caution in interpreting the ideological locations is highlighted by Carey. He argues that the most sophisticated analysis of Chilean legislative voting behavior suggests that relative partisan locations on economic and social policies do not map onto a single left-right dimension scale perfectly. Given this multi-dimensional character of partisan locations, the unidimensional ideological location scale would not be completely reliable in summarizing the ideological universe (Carey, 1998, p. 16).

Nevertheless, despite the possible bias derived from political momentum and from the multi-dimensional character of Chilean politics, two ideas can be inferred from this data. First, since political events like Pinochet's detention can accentuate differences among parties, a much more conflictive arena is suggested here than is suggested by other authors (Barrett, 1998; Rabkin, 1996; Rehren, 1997). Second, the data suggests that identities are built over different issues through time. In other words, parties use different issues through the years in building their self-images, depending on the current dominant issues. For 1998, it may be the case that deputies had in mind the authoritarian/democracy cleavage, along which parties differ more markedly. This would also explain the slight, though striking, movement to the left that the interviewed deputies of the PS and the PPD exhibit. The memory of the authoritarian period may have reemerged due to Pinochet's detention and may have tended to increase the difference on parties' self images.

### ***Elites' polarization and Masses' polarization***

The assumption that I made at the beginning of this paper that elites have a greater impact on the degree of polarization of a party system does not imply that masses do not have any effect on party system dynamics. The polarization of the masses matters, at least because they apply pressure on the political parties. Although data do not exist which could

make possible a systematic comparison between the elite and the mass polarization on the pragmatic level, the data on public opinion support a conclusion that the masses are less polarized than the elites.

First, opinion surveys show that there are important agreements on key issues related to the political and economic momentum of the country between those who feel identified with the left and those who feel identified with the right. There is agreement, for example, on the main problems to be solved, as well as regarding how Frei's government should be evaluated. Second, opinion surveys also suggest a reduction in the importance of Pinochet's cleavage. This is inferred from factors like the decrease in importance attributed to solving human rights violations (Hinzpeter and Lehman, 1999a). However, events like the large mobilization of people with the return of Pinochet to Chile point to the persistence of an important degree of polarization.

Some dynamics explain the higher polarization of elites. First, elites tend to make sharper distinctions between left, center, and right. Their judgments are likely to be more sophisticated given the greater familiarity with those concepts (Sanni and Sartori, 1983). Second, partisan elites' effort to differentiate their parties from other parties contributes to this higher degree of polarization of the elites. This argument based on political agency also reveals its usefulness when dealing with other dimensions of Chilean party politics, such as cleavage structures. In this sense, Torcal and Mainwaring (2003) suggest that elites' actions are more powerful than sociologically based approaches when explaining the main cleavages over the nineties in Chile. In addition, the mentioned trend of elites affecting polarization should be aggravated if Downs' argument is true. Downs argues that in multiparty systems, the politicians' effort to differentiate the content of their party labels is higher than in two-party systems (Downs, 1957). Third, part of the lower degree of polarization in the masses is due to the depoliticization trend in Chile, from which political elites are obviously excluded.

### ***Over-all Assessment of the Evolution of Polarization Over***

### ***the Nineties***

In order to complete the assessment of the evolution of polarization in the Chilean post-authoritarian party system, general conclusions will be drawn:

- Consensus over certain policy areas has been reached, mostly on socio-economic issues. Important distances between parties on moral and religious issues remain, as well as on issues related to the authoritarian/democratic cleavage.

- The lowest distance between coalitions is on the socio-economic cleavage, and the most polarizing issues are the authoritarian/democratic ones.

- Polarization on issues occurs not only between the coalitions but also there is distance within each coalition. The most divisive issues for the *Alianza* are those related to the authoritarian/democratic cleavage. For the *Concertación*, the issues with the greatest polarizing effect are religious value-related.

- The party system has moved to the right. The PS and PPD programs have been redefined and have a more centrist profile, and the PDC right wing has increased in strength, moving the party to the right.

- Empirical and theoretical reasons exist to justify the contention that polarization at the elite level is higher than at the mass level.

### **Towards an Explanation of the Polarization in the Chilean Party System (1990-1999)**

The description of the evolution of polarization during the 1990s demonstrates a decrease in distance between parties on socio-economic issues, but a persistence of differences over religious-value issues and the authoritarian/democratic cleavage. Polarization, depending on the issue, is higher between coalitions than within coalitions, or vice versa.

In this section, the paper aims to explain the factors that produce this pattern of low polarization in socio-economic issues, in combination with a persistence of distance on religious-values issues and on the



authoritarian/democratic cleavage. I argue that three sets of factors have affected elites' choices: socio-economic changes; institutional framework; including the electoral system and form of government; and the authoritarian experience. In addition, the cross-cutting nature of cleavages and differing degree of "negotiability" of issues intervene in the evolution of polarization in the 1990s.

### ***Authoritarian Experience***

The authoritarian period has affected polarization in two ways. First, the memory of the military period has split the party system into two coalitions, each joined by a shared experience and view of the past regime. This has contributed to a decrease in polarization among the parties of each of the coalitions. At the same time, the authoritarian/democratic cleavage has contributed to an increase in polarization between the two coalitions.

The second effect of the authoritarian period on polarization is through the learning experience of elites during the military period. This has led to a general pattern of moderation. Elite experiences, together with the way that transition occurred, have contributed to a convergence on certain socio-economic issues and, in a more unclear way, to consensus on some aspects related to democracy. As the elite data shows, parties on the right do not display a clear democratic profile. Secondly, the convergence on socio-economic issues has been almost exclusively a product of a movement of the left, as I will argue below.

Over all, the authoritarian experience has been a moderating force during the 1990s, due to its interaction with other factors. The institutional framework of Chile retains certain authoritarian enclaves that prevent parties on the center-left from taking maximalist strategies that they may prefer, like the reform of the 1980 Constitution. In addition, Chile's economic success, due in part to the neoliberal model implemented under Pinochet, made impossible a frontal attack on all the elements of the authoritarian period. Due to this interaction of factors, polarizing effects from the authoritarian experience have been attenuated during the 1990s.

## ***Institutional Framework: Electoral System and Form of Government***

As in the case of historical memory of authoritarianism, the electoral system inherited from the authoritarian period has led both to an increase and a decrease in polarization. On one side, it promotes a coalitional system that has led to a bipolar logic, with the subsequent increase of competition between coalitions. The elite data and analyses such as Carey's study of the voting behavior of parties in the Chilean Congress confirm the existence of sharp divisions between coalitions that are the result of coalition membership rather than the ideological difference between coalitions (Carey, 1998).

However, the electoral system also contributes to the reduction of polarization. Parties need to follow a coalitional strategy in order to attain power; therefore, they must reach agreement with their coalitional partners. In addition, coalitions are important in constraining legislators' voting behavior. These two effects of coalitions explain part of the differences that we have observed between deputies' opinions and their official party and coalition programs. Carey argues that negotiations over nominations and policy are a constant source of tension within each coalition (Carey, 1998). However, these tensions are resolved in compromise and cohesion within the coalitions.

Overall, the electoral system and its incentives for coalition formation hide some of the real divisions among parties that are evidenced when analyzing party programs individually. For example, divisions within the *Concertación* related to religious-value issues have been ameliorated during the 1990s through the adoption of consensus stances which have been closer to *Alianza's* position than if parties within *Concertación* had competed individually.

Another institutional aspect that should be considered, due to its effects on partisan polarization, is the strong type of presidentialism adopted by the 1980 Constitution. Siavelis asserts that it has features highly conducive to increases in political conflict. The great power of the president and the minimum role of the legislature do not tend to promote

interparty and interbranch collaboration and lead to increases in polarization. However, due to contextual features, this has not been fully appreciated (Siavelis, 2000). Therefore, for the case of polarization in the post-authoritarian party system, the electoral system seems to be the institutional aspect that has the clearest impact upon the pattern of polarization.

In addition to the electoral system and the existence of appointed senators, other authoritarian enclaves remain in the Chilean political system. These include the constitutionally established direct and indirect presence of the Armed Forces in certain organs of the state apparatus<sup>33</sup>. They have prevented radical transformations. Concurrently, as was noted in the third section, these authoritarian enclaves are objects of polarization, and are considered here as part of the authoritarian /democratic cleavage.

### ***Socio-Economic Transformations***

Transformations in Chilean social and economic structure, resulting from Pinochet's neoliberal policies, led to the reformulations of leftist parties' socio-economic policies. The Chilean Left experienced a shift to the center that, consequently, means a decrease in the distance between leftist and rightist parties on socio-economic issues.

The positive economic results of Pinochet's regime have placed the right in a privileged position because their socio-economic policies for the development of the country have been legitimized. "The economic success of the later Pinochet years bolstered confidence among neoliberals and the subsequent regeneration among political forces of the right" (Mainwaring and Scully, 1995, p. 469). As a consequence, the right has not had any incentive to reformulate their economic program, because there has been a progressive increase in electoral support.

Socio-economic change and positive economic outcomes demonstrate that the convergence on socio-economic issues has been the result of a unilateral movement of the left to the center. Almost all of the agreement on socio-economic issues is derived from movement of the left and the center to the right, and in almost no issue-areas have the right moved to the

center. However, there is a danger of overestimating the degree of agreement on socio-economic issues between left and right. In analysis of party programs, the researcher must remember that these can be largely mediated by electoral strategies<sup>34</sup>. As the elite data demonstrates and as the electoral platforms show, differences remain between left and right regarding the intervention of the state in economy. These differences are confirmed in legislators' voting behavior. For example, despite the apparent consensus in party programs on certain issues related to labor legislation, legislators have been unable to agree to a package of reforms regarding this issue<sup>35</sup>.

Due to the traditional dominance of economic content in the meanings of left and right, the movement of the Chilean left toward somewhat more rightist positions on socio-economic aspects has tended to be interpreted as an overall movement of the entire party system to the right. However, as I have argued above, there are other issues that structure party competition and which have to be considered when assessing an increase or a decrease in the distance between left and right poles.

### ***Degree of “negotiability” of the Issues***

The differing nature of the issues that dominate party competition also helps to explain why convergence exists on some issues, but not on others. Lipset and Rokkan argued that the issues related to the religion-values cleavage are more difficult to negotiate, since they touch on irrational and deeply embedded beliefs, whereas on economic issues, agreement and convergence are less difficult to reach (Lipset and Rokkan, 1967). This idea seems to explain why the reduction of polarization has occurred more often on socio-economic aspects and not on the religious-value cleavage in the Chilean case. As the authoritarian/democratic cleavage also deals with deep-seated beliefs, the nature of this cleavage also precludes consensus. However, it is unclear if the Lipset and Rokkan argument travels well for any country at any time. For example, part of the conflict in pre-authoritarian Chile were based on the existence of three very different socio-economic projects, defended in turn by the right, the center, and at

that time the governing left. Despite its *a priori* more negotiable character, convergence on these issues among the different parties has only been reached after seventeen years of authoritarian rule.

### ***Cross-Cutting Nature of the Cleavages***

The opinions and policies held by the parties are structured in such a way that depending on the issue, the party that holds the opposite opinion varies. In other words, the opinion of party *A* on issue *x* is similar to the opinion of party *B* on issue *x* and opposed to the opinion of party *C*; while on issue *y*, the opinion of *A* is opposed to *B* and similar to *C*. This cleavage structure prevents an increase of polarization in the overall party system since conflicts between parties are combined with agreements on other issues.

Despite the cross-cutting nature of Chilean cleavages, there are also overlaps between parties' opinions on socio-economic and authoritarian/democratic issues. The origin of these overlaps lies in the fact that human rights violations, a core aspect of authoritarian/democratic issues, was targeted at the ideological opponents of the military: those who in aspects such as welfare and the role of the state had exhibited very different opinions (especially the Socialists who nationalized industries and attempted a land redistribution program in the 1970-1973 period)<sup>36</sup>.

Proximity and distance between parties varies depending on the issue. Table 21 illustrates in broad terms the pattern of polarization. The existence of crosscuttings on some issues neutralizes, to some extent, interparty opposition, leading to lower levels of polarization than if confrontation occurred in a cumulative way. This balance of forces is mediated by the PDC's positions. The religious positions of this party, dramatically different from the parties which are closer to its positions on socio-economic issues and authoritarian/democracy issues, precludes a partisan landscape of three overlapped cleavages where the opposing poles would be occupied by the same parties on the three cleavages. On the contrary, what occurs is that there is quite an overlap between socio-economic and authoritarian/democratic positions and the religious-value cleavage takes

the nature of a cross cutting cleavage. From a coalitional perspective it can be said that, on religious issues, the division is not coincident with coalitions composition: the PDC is nearer to the *Alianza* than to its *Concertación* partners.

**Table 21**  
**General Pattern of Spatial Party proximity/distance by Issues**

Religious-values issues	Socio-economic issues	Authoritarian/Democracy
UDI		UDI
RN	UDI	
PDC	RN	RN
	PDC	
	PPD	PDC
PPD	PS	
PS		PPD
		PS

From an empirical point of view, given that PDC neutralizes polarization, the center is critical for the understanding of polarization in Chile. In addition, from a theoretical point of view, a great deal of discussion focuses on the impact of a center in the degree of polarization. Empirical and theoretical reasons, therefore, suggest that the drop in the ideological and electoral support of the center is a critical dynamic in explaining polarization in Chile.

I argue that the decrease that has taken place in the support to the center and its movement to the right is to a great extent the result of other parties' movements, mainly the movements of leftist parties. The left has moved to the center on some issues (socio-economic issues, but also in their acceptance of democracy and political parties and the abandonment of their Marxist claims), resulting in a decrease in the support to the center and an incentive for the party that occupies it, PDC, to move to the right, since it needs its own ideological space.

If, as we argue, the movement of the center to the right is the result of tightening the space for party competition, it can be argued that the positions of the center are a reflection of the changes in other ideological options (left and right). In other words, the nature and relative importance of

the center depends on the amount of distance between left and right poles: a decrease in the differences between left and right poles reduces the political space, and the center loses its political space. This is contrary to Scully's argument that it is the center that shapes the degree of polarization. Rather, in this case, polarization has shaped the center.

Although electoral reasons explain why the left and right have moved to the center, not all convergence is explained in these terms. The elite data suggest that a decrease in the distance between the poles of the party system, especially on socio-economic issues, has occurred.

Apart from the links with polarization, the decrease in the importance of the center has two important consequences for Chilean partisan dynamics. First, the changes within the PDC that evidence the increasing weight of the rightist wing of the party over the nineties, have reduced the ideological distance between it and the major moderate party of the right, the RN. The distance is now not so wide as to preclude formation of a center-right coalition (Siavelis, 2000, p. 132). Second, the decrease in the electoral importance of the PDC implies a loss of relative importance within the *Concertación* and might ameliorate a situation of dominance by the PDC. "Leaders on the left have contended that their parties' national stature and importance have been overshadowed by the dominance of the Christian Democrats during the first ten years of democracy" (Siavelis, 2000, p. 133).

## **Conclusions**

The explanation of the pattern that polarization has followed in the 1990s confirms the appropriateness of the study of the post-authoritarian Chilean party system in terms of the interrelation of changes and continuities. Some issues continue to polarize parties, whereas agreements among parties have arisen on other issues. Polarization in religious-value issues remains, but a trend toward reformulation and consensus exists with regard to socio-economic issues. Disagreements exist on politico-institutional arrangements, on interpretations of the authoritarian experience, and in the democratic profile of the parties. In the 1990s, these have been important sources of polarization

in the Chilean party system.

Disagreements on these issues take place in the Chilean party system at three levels. Polarization exists between coalitions and among parties. At the same, distance exists within coalitions.

-polarization between coalitions: The least polarization between coalitions is on socio-economic issues. Distance between coalitions is much higher on religious-value issues and on the authoritarian/democracy cleavage.

-polarization among parties: The highest polarization among parties is on religious-value issues, and the lowest distance among parties is on socio-economic issues.

-distance within coalitions: Issue disagreement within the *Concertación* is higher than within the *Alianza* on religious-value issues. In contrast, on authoritarian/democratic issues, there is much higher issue disagreement within the *Alianza* than within the *Concertación*. Distance is fairly equal within the coalitions regarding socio-economic issues, though *Concertación* is slightly more cohesive.

The coalitional incentives established by the electoral system allow the existence of formal agreements within each of the coalitions that lead to moderated patterns. However, despite the surface convergence among parties, the individual programs and the opinions and attitudes of congressmen display a higher level of polarization than if the coalitions alone are examined.

To answer the question of how much overall movement of the left and right poles to the center (and therefore, to answer the question of how much decrease in polarization has occurred), we must understand that this question is dependent on which issues are used to define the poles. Given the traditional dominance of socio-economic aspects for the definition of left and right, the consensus that has taken place over those issues has tended to be interpreted as a decrease in the polarization between parties. At the same time, the left has adopted center positions on aspects related to democracy and political parties and it has left behind its Marxist claims. This is more evidence for a movement to the center. However, there are important differences between parties on religious-value issues as well as



on issues related to the authoritarian past, including the institutional legacy, human right violations, and the role of the armed forces. The persistence of differences on some issues and convergence on others has led to a reformulation of the meanings of left and right. Due to this reformulation, through which parties have decreased distance on some issues, the center has lost part of its political space. Distance between the poles remains, but the meanings of left and right have changed.

The authoritarian experience, the electoral system, and socio-economic transformations are powerful factors in the explanation of the evolution of polarization in Chile over the 1990s. However, two additional aspects that the polarization literature has ignored must be considered: the degree of negotiability of the issue and the nature of cleavages (cross cuttings and overlaps). These aspects, which have been considered in theoretical accounts of polarization and in other geographic areas, (Sanni and Sartori, 1983; Lipset and Rokkan, 1967), illuminate on explanation of polarization in post-authoritarian Chile. Examining the degree of the negotiability of the issues enables an explanation of the persistence of polarization over religious-value issues and authoritarian/democratic issues, while programmatic polarization in socio-economic issues has been reduced. At the same time, the cross-cutting nature of the cleavages accounts for the lack of an increase in programmatic polarization in Chile over the 1990s.

This paper has attempted to demonstrate the need of caution when assessing a decrease in programmatic polarization at the elites' level in post-authoritarian Chile. There is a danger of overemphasizing the degree of consensus between parties. Second, the convergence of the poles has originated more from movements of the left than from movements of the right. This seems to be the case for leftist parties all around the world, especially in economic issues. In this area parties on the left have almost unanimously moved from their earlier maximalist claims into moderate social democrat ones. Regarding economic matters in Latin America, there is an almost general acceptance of the Washington consensus, that promotes the continuity of neo liberal reforms, and which has been successfully installed in the programmatic views of most political parties of the region (Luna,

forthcoming). This does not mean that party programs are all the same, but that there is evidence of a shortening of distances among parties on certain issues.

Two final implications can be inferred. First, the degree of polarization in the current party system is not a problem *per se* for Chilean democracy, as it was not the only explanation of the 1973 breakdown of democracy. However, the problem arises with the interaction of institutional arrangements. The electoral system might continue to force cooperative patterns due to the coalition formation incentives. However, the presidential system does not promote interparty collaboration and, therefore, it increases polarization. In charting future trends, it is likely that an important part of the content of the authoritarian/democratic cleavage might progressively disappear as the authoritarian enclaves are erased and, therefore, this cleavage will cease being the main line of division in structuring party competition in Chile.

Second, the study of the distance between parties on different programmatic issues demonstrates that the left, center, and right categories are able to capture part of the content of partisan divisions. At a general level, left and right categories indicate either a preference for change (the left) or a preference for the maintenance of the *status quo* (the right) (Bobbio, 1996). This holds true in detailed study of programmatic differences among parties, but it is not the whole story. First, the cross cutting nature of the cleavages in Chile makes inaccurate unidimensional summation of the entire spectrum of partisan encounters. It seems that the religious-value cleavage cannot be translated into the left-right continuum for the Chilean case. Second, important redefinitions of these categories have occurred in many countries, including Chile. This is especially true for the left, while the center has been squeezed due to the movement of the left. Any argument that asserts that these categories persist must be accompanied by a reflection on their changing meanings.

#### **List of Abbreviations**

CPPD                      Concertación de Partidos Por la Democracia

PC	Partido Comunista
PDC	Partido Demócrata Cristiano
PN	Partido Nacional
PPD	Partido Por la Democracia
PS	Partido Socialista
RN	Renovación Nacional
UCC	Unión de Centro-Centro
UDI	Unión Demócrata Independiente
UP	Unidad Popular

#### Notes

1. The text was originally written the author's Master Thesis, under the direction of Professor Jonathan Hartlyn, and was defended in the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in May 2000.
2. Ricardo Lagos, candidate of the Concertación, won 51.31% of the vote (3.675.255 votes) versus the 48.69% (3.486.696 votes) obtained by Joaquín Lavín, candidate of the Alianza.
3. The core of this coalition were the Socialist and the Communist Party, along with the Radical Party and other small parties.
4. For an analysis of this period, see Valenzuela 1978, Valenzuela 1989, and Valenzuela 1994.
5. See Garretón, 1995a for a discussion of parties and opposition during the Pinochet years.
6. For some authors the Chilean transition to democracy has its antecedents in the 1983 social revolts. At the same time, there is a great amount of disagreement among authors when defining the end of the transition. Authoritarian enclaves that remain the basis for the argument that transition is unfinished or incomplete. See Linz and Stepan, 1996; Garretón, 1995b.
7. In Torcal and Mainwaring's words "the cleavage between those who supported military rule and those who opposed it stands out above all else" (2003: 83).
8. "The historical three-way division of Chilean politics persists not only at the electoral level but also at the elite and policy levels. Political leaders in Chile continue to have strong political and personal ties with individual party organizations and subcultures, which serve as important referents of self-identification and political solidarity" (Siavelis and Valenzuela, 1996: 83).

9. Siavelis also emphasizes the effects of the extreme presidentialism of Chile and the way in which some contextual variables have contributed to reduction in political conflict during the 1990s in the Chilean political system. At the same time, he argues that the variables that once counterbalanced the effects of presidentialism have started to lose strength and that, therefore, an increase in conflict is likely to occur (Siavelis, 1997b; Siavelis, 2000).
10. For an exploratory study of the meaning of left and right in Latin America based on the analysis of elite' positions on different issues, see Alcántara 1995.
11. The data used are part of the research "Élites parlamentarias en América Latina" (Ref. EC95/0845), funded by the CICYT, Spain.
12. The average of abstention between 1952 and 1973 is 14.7 for presidential elections, 25% for congressional elections and 29% for municipal. However, the data are not disaggregated into null, blank, and abstentions, therefore it is difficult to establish comparisons with the data about the nineties. For abstention data for 1925-1973, see Cruz Coke, 1984.
13. The extent to which political parties were part of Chilean life is captured in Garretón's famous characterization of "parties as the backbone of the Chilean society," see Garretón 1989.
14. After the transition to democracy, the party formerly known as PN, Partido Nacional, had represented Chilean traditional right since the sixties, was divided into two different political parties: UDI and RN.
15. PPD was formally founded in 1992, although it had emerged in 1987 within the PS. The RN was formally founded in 1988 and UDI in 1989, although both of them existed as political movements during the early eighties. See Cañas, 1998.
16. This argument is still used by the parties on the right to justify the 1973 coup d'état.
17. The Senate and Chamber of Deputies are elected via this method. For the Chamber of Deputies, the members are elected from 60 binomial districts (there is a total of 120 members in this chamber). Thirty eight members of the Senate are drawn from 19 binominal districts. The remainder of the Senate is appointed members.
18. From these nine appointed senators, four are selected from the Armed Forces by the National Security Council, two by the president (one has to be a university president and the other one has to be a former minister), and three by the Supreme Court. All are appointed for eight-year terms. In addition to the nine appointed senators, all former presidents (who have ruled for six years) are automatically members of the Senate. Given the fact that the three presidents that have been elected in the post-authoritarian period belong to the Concertación, the artificial overrepresentation of the right in the Senate will be progressively reduced.

19. It is paradoxical that the institutional engineering argument was used to justify the electoral reforms (they would fix the instability in the country and to avoid a new 1973), but is ignored when explaining the process of polarization and collapse experienced in 1973. When the military and current rightist parties blame the UP for the polarization and collapse experienced in 1973, aspects such as the type of presidentialism, which largely affected the 1973 outcome (Shugart and Carey, 1992), are ignored.
20. A discussion of the PC's electoral problems in the newly founded democracy can be found in Roberts 1995.
21. For a discussion of the disagreements within and between coalitions, see Fuentes 1999a.
22. For a detailed analysis of Pinochet years and their socio-economic policies, see Collier and Sater, 1996.
23. Regarding this, see "Why nothing much is at stake on Sunday", in Rocinante, 10 December, 1999.
24. The Chilean writer Antonio Skarmeta argued that two of the errors of the second government of the Concertación had been the lack of a cohesive and clear strategy regarding Pinochet's detention and the increase in the unemployment rate (Antonio Skarmeta, Los domingos de ABC, 12 December, 1999).
25. Together with these issues, other aspects that are progressively being included in Chilean partisan politics are issues related to the environment and indigenous claims (from the Mapuches) These issues are not as salient as the three sets of issues to be analyzed here. It is too early to assess if these are the first signs of a new line of division in Chilean party competition.
26. To end censorship and to guarantee freedom of information is one of the goals under the section called "cultural aspects" of the Program of the PS for the 2000 Presidential Elections.
27. The UDI believes that "there is an objective moral order inherent to human nature. The organization of the society has to be such that all its cultural, institutional and economic development is fitted and subordinated to that moral order, basis for the Christian and Western civilization (my translation). "Existe un orden moral objetivo, que está inscrito en la naturaleza humana. A ese orden moral, fundamento de la civilización occidental y cristiana, debe ajustarse la organización de la sociedad y debe subordinarse todo su desarrollo cultural, institucional y económico" (Declaration of Principles of the UDI).
28. As Haas asserts, "Ironically, with regard to much of the current social agenda in Chile, the Catholic Church locates its main support among those political elements that were most supportive of the dictatorship and are most ambivalent about the virtues of the democratic process". See Haas, 1999.
29. For an analysis of the policies of the Concertación regarding the issue of

- Human Rights, see Lira and Loveman, 1999.
30. However, according to some analysts, Pinochet's detention in London has had the effect of strengthening the links between the rightist parties which had weakened. See Wolter, 1999.
  31. I distinguish ideology from issue positions. Ideology includes positions on issues, but it also has other aspects. Hiltes' definition is thus: "an individual's more or less articulated set of visions for society, a kind of programme which encompasses individual understandings of democracy, leadership, participation, social justice, the roles of parties and party leaders, and of 'lo posible' in their given society". See Hilte, 1996.
  32. They are not significant at 95.0% of confidence.
  33. An example of the presence of the military in the post-authoritarian political system is the existence of the Constitutional Court. In 1990, this Court had seven members who had been appointed by Pinochet. These members could not be removed until they reached the retirement age of 75. Further, the Constitution mandated that the incoming democratic president could, in the future, nominate only one of the Court's seven members. Two would be nominated by the National Security Council, three by the Supreme Court (most of whom in 1990 were Pinochet appointees), and one by an absolute majority of the Senate (where, due to appointed senators, the democratic government did not have a majority). See Linz and Stepan, 1996.
  34. For example, a few days after the second round of the 2000 Presidential Election, Ricardo Lagos ironically characterized Lavín's electoral program as "too 'social democrat' for a UDI leader" and that, he continued, "if the consensus over the different policy areas that seem to exist during the campaign was true, then agreements were going to be easily reached between the two coalitions" (Interview to Ricardo Lagos, *El Mercurio*, 30 January, 2000).
  35. Just before the first round of the 1999-2000 Presidential election, in December 1999, the Senate rejected labor legislation reform that had been initiated in January 1995 in the Congress. See summary of *La Tercera* for the year 1999.
  36. A complete analysis of the overlaps can be found in Londregan, 1998.

### **Bibliography**

- AGÜERO, Felipe: "Conflicting Assessments of Democratization: Exploring the Fault Lines" in AGÜERO, F.; STARK, J. (eds.): *Fault Lines of Democracy in Post-Transition Latin America*. Miami, North-South Center Press, 1998, p. 1-21.
- ALCÁNTARA, Manuel: "La elite parlamentaria latinoamericana y el continuo izquierda-derecha" in HOFMEISTER, W.; THESING, J.: *La transformación de*

- los sistemas políticos en América Latina*. 1995, p. 385-410.
- BAÑO, Rodrigo: *Acerca del sistema de partidos probable*. Cuadernos de trabajo. Santiago, Flacso-Chile, 1989.
- BARRETT, Patrick S.: "Redemocratization and the Transformation of the Chilean Party System", *Paper prepared for delivery at the 1998 Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association*. Boston, 1998.
- BOBBIO, Norberto: *Left and Right. The Significance of a Political Distinction*. Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1996.
- CAÑAS, Enrique: "Los partidos políticos" in TOLOZA, C.; LAHERA, E. (eds.): *Chile en los noventa*. Santiago, Dolmen, 1998, p. 53-90.
- CAREY, John M: "Parties, Coalitions, and the Chilean Congress in the 1990s", *Paper presented in the conference on "Latin American legislatures"*. Mexico City, 1998.
- CENTRO DE ESTUDIOS PÚBLICOS: *Opinion Survey*. Santiago, Centro de Estudios Públicos, 1995.
- CENTRO DE ESTUDIOS PÚBLICOS: *Opinion Survey*. Santiago, Centro de Estudios Públicos, 1998.
- COLLIER, Simon; SATER, William F.: "The Pinochet Years", *A history of Chile, 1808-1994*. New York, Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- COPPEDGE, Michael: "The Evolution of Latin American Party Systems" in MAINWARING, S.; VALENZUELA, A. (eds.): *Politics, Society, and Democracy: Latin America*. Boulder, Westview, 1998a, p. 171-206.
- COPPEDGE, Michael: "The Dynamic Diversity of Latin American Party Systems", *Party Politics* 4 (4), 1998b, p. 549-570.
- CRESPO, Ismael: "¿Hacia dónde van las democracias latinoamericanas?" in ALCÁNTARA, M.; CRESPO, I. (eds.): *Límites de la consolidación democrática en América Latina*. Salamanca, Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca, 1995.
- CRUZ-COKE, Ricardo: *Historia Electoral de Chile, 1925-1973*. Santiago, Editorial Jurídica de Chile, 1984.
- DIX, Robert: "Cleavage Structures and Party systems in Latin America", *Comparative Politics* 22 (1), 1989, p. 23-37.
- DOWNS, Anthony: *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. New York, Harper Brothers Editions, 1957.
- DUVERGER, Maurice: *Political Parties*. New York, Wiley, 1954.
- FUENTES, Claudio: "Partidos y coaliciones en el Chile de los '90. Entre pactos y proyectos" in DRAKE, P.; JAKSIC, I. (eds.): *El modelo chileno: democracia y desarrollo en los noventa*. Santiago, LOM, 1999a, p. 191-222.
- FUENTES, Claudio: "After Pinochet: Civilian Unity, Political Institutions, and the Military in Chile (1990-1998)", *Working Paper Series* 28. Duke-University of North

- Carolina Program in Latin American Studies, 1999b.
- GARRETÓN, Manuel Antonio: *The Chilean Political Process*. Boston, Unwin and Hyman, 1989
- GARRETÓN, Manuel Antonio: "The Political Opposition and the Party System under the Military Regime" in DRAKE, P.; JAKSIC, I. (eds.): *The Struggle for Democracy in Chile, 1982-1990*. Nebraska, University of Nebraska Press, 1995a, p. 211-50.
- GARRETÓN, Manuel Antonio: "Redemocratization in Chile", *Journal of Democracy* 6, 1995b, p. 146-158.
- GARRETÓN, Manuel Antonio: "Human Rights in Democratization Processes" in JELIN, E.; HERSHBERG (eds.): *Constructing Democracy: Human Rights, Citizenship and Society in Latin America*. Boulder, Westview University Press, 1996.
- GARRETÓN, Manuel Antonio: "Atavism and Democratic Ambiguity in teh Chilean Right" in MIDDLEBROOK, K.J. (ed.): *Conservative Parties, the Right, and Democracy in Latin America*. The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000, p. 53-79.
- GODOY ARCAYA, Óscar: "Las elecciones de 1993", *Estudios Públicos* 54, 1994.
- HAAS, Liesl: "The Catholic Church in Chile: New Political Alliances" in SMITH C.; PROKOPY, J. (eds.): *Latin American Religion in Motion*. New York, Routledge, 1999.
- HAGOPIAN, Frances: "Democracy and Political Representation in Latin America in the 1990s: Pause, Reorganization, or Decline?" in AGUERO, F.; STARK, J. (eds.): *Fault Lines of Democracy in Post-Transition Latin America*. Miami, North-South Center Press-University of Miami, 1998, p. 99-144.
- HIDALGO, Paulo: "Perfil y evolución del sistema de partidos en Chile", *América Latina Hoy* 1. Salamanca, SEPLA-Instituto de Estudios de Iberoamérica y Portugal, 1991, p. 21-26.
- HILTE, Katherine: "The Formation and Transformation of Political Identity: Leaders of the Chilean Left, 1968-1990", *Journal of Latin American Studies* 28, 1996.
- HINZPETER K, Ximena; LEHMANN S-B, Carla: "Polarización o moderación en Chile. Análisis en base a la última encuesta CEP", *Puntos de Referencia* 218, 1999a.
- HINZPETER K, Ximena; LEHMANN S-B, Carla: "El fin de los tres tercios tradicionales. La irrupción de una nueva fuerza política", *Puntos de Referencia* 217, 1999b.
- HINZPETER K, Ximena; LEHMANN S-B, Carla: "Las dos alas de la DC. La fuerte tensión interna del principal partido", *Puntos de Referencia* 211, 1999c.
- LASAGNA, Marcelo: "Los límites de la democracia chilena", *Claves* 90, 1999.
- LINZ, Juan J.; STEPAN, Alfred: *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe*. Baltimore,



- Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996.
- LIPSET, Seymour Martin; ROKKAN, Stein: *Party Systems and Voter Alignments: Cross-National Perspectives*. New York, Free Press, 1967.
- LIRA, Elizabeth; LOVEMAN, Brian: "Derechos humanos en la transición "modelo": Chile 1988-1999" in JAKSIC, I.; DRAKE, P. (comps.): *El modelo chileno: democracia y desarrollo en los noventa*. Santiago, Ediciones LOM, 1999.
- LONDREGAN, John: *Ideology and Legislative Institutions in Chile's Transition Towards Democracy (manuscript)*, 1998.
- LUNA, Juan Pablo: "Political Representation in Latin America: A study of elite-mass congruence in nine countries" *Draft in progress (forthcoming)*.
- MAINWARING, Scott; SCULLY, Timothy R. (eds.): *Building Democratic Institutions: Parties and Party Systems in Latin America*. Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992.
- MAIR, Peter: *Party system change*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1997.
- MESEGUER YEBRA, Covadonga: "Sentimientos antipartidistas en el cono Sur: un estudio exploratorio", *Instituciones y Desarrollo* 5. Madrid, Centro de Estudios Avanzados en Ciencias Sociales Instituto Juan March, 1999, p. 165-193.
- MUNCK, Gerardo L.; BOSWORTH, Jeffrey A.: "Patterns of Representation and Competition: Parties and Democracy in Post Pinochet Chile", *Party Politics* 4 (4), 1998, p. 471-494.
- OXHORN, Philip: "Understanding Political Changes after Authoritarian Rule: the Popular Sectors and Chile's New Democratic Regime", *Journal of Latin American Studies* 26 (3), 1994, p. 737-759.
- RABKIN, Rhoda: "Redemocratization, Electoral Engineering, and Party Strategies in Chile, 1989-1995", *Comparative Political Studies* 29, 1996, p. 335-356.
- REHREN, Alfredo: "La redemocratización de la política chilena: ¿hacia una democracia capitalista?", *Paper prepared for delivery at the 1997 meeting of the Latin American Studies Association*. Guadalajara, Mexico, April 17-19, 1997.
- ROBERTS, Kenneth M.: "From the Barricades to the ballot Box: Redemocratization and Political Realignment in the Chilean Left", *Politics and Society*. 23 (4), 1995, p. 495-519.
- SANI, Giacomo; SARTORI, Giovanni: "Polarization, Fragmentation and Competition in Western Democracies" in DAALDER, H.; MAIR, P. (eds.): *Western European Party Systems*. Beverly Hills, Sage, 1983, p. 307-340.
- SARTORI, Giovanni: *Parties and party systems: A framework for analysis*. New York, Cambridge University Press, 1976.
- SCULLY, Timothy: *Rethinking the Center: Party Politics in Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Chile*. Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1992.
- SCULLY, Timothy: "Reconstituting Party Politics in Chile" in MAINWARING, S.;

- SCULLY, T. (eds.): *Building Democratic Institutions. Party Systems in Latin America*. California, Stanford University Press, 1995, p. 100-137.
- SHUGART, Mathew Soberg; CAREY, J.M.: *Presidents and assemblies. Constitutional design and Electoral Dynamics*. New York, Cambridge University Press, 1992.
- SIAVELIS, Peter M.: "Continuity and change in the Chilean Party System. On the Transformational Effects of Electoral Reform", *Comparative Political Studies*, 30 (6), 1997a, p. 651-674.
- SIAVELIS, Peter M.: "Executive-legislative relations in post-Pinochet Chile" in MAINWARING, S.; SHUGART, M Soberg (eds.): *Presidentialism and democracy in Latin America: A Preliminary Assessment*. Cambridge University Press, 1997b, p. 321-362.
- SIAVELIS, Peter M.: *The President and Congress in Post-authoritarian Chile. Institutional Constraints to Democratic Consolidation*. Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000.
- SIAVELIS, Peter M.; VALENZUELA, Arturo: "Electoral Engineering and Democratic Stability: The Legacy of Authoritarian Rule in Chile" in LIJPHART, A.; WAISMAN, C. (eds.): *Institutional Design in New Democracies*. Boulder, Westview Press, 1996, p. 77-101.
- TORCAL, Mariano; MAINWARING, Scott: "The Political Recrafting of Social Bases of Party Competition: Chile, 1973-95", *British Journal of Political Science* 33. Cambridge University Press, 2003, p. 55-84.
- UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI: "Elections 2000 in Chile: The Final Results", *Update*. University of Miami, North-South Center, 2000.
- VALENZUELA, Arturo: *The breakdown of democratic regimes: Chile*. Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978.
- VALENZUELA, Arturo: "Chile: Origins, Consolidation, and Breakdown of a Democratic Regime" in DIAMOND, Larry; LINZ, Juan J.; LIPSET, Seymour Martin (eds.): *Democracy in Developing Countries: Latin America*, vol. 4. Colorado, Lynne Rienner, 1989.
- VALENZUELA, Arturo: "Party Politics and the Crisis of Presidentialism in Chile" in LINZ, J.J.; VALENZUELA, A. (eds.): *The Failure of Presidential Democracy*. Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994, p. 165-224.
- VALENZUELA, Arturo: "Chile: Origins and Consolidation of a Latin American Democracy" in DIAMOND, L.; HARTLYN, J. et al. (eds.): *Democracy in Developing Countries. Latin America*. Boulder, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1999, p. 191-249.
- VALENZUELA, Samuel J.: "Orígenes y transformaciones del sistema de partidos en Chile", *Estudios Públicos* 58, 1995.
- VALENZUELA, Samuel J.; SCULLY, Timothy R.: "Electoral Choices and the Party System in Chile: Continuities and Changes at the Recovery of Democracy",

*Comparative Politics* 29 (4), 1997, p. 511-527.

WOLTER, Matilde: "Chile: Pinochet sigue marcando", *Nueva Sociedad* 159. Venezuela (4-14), 1999.

YOZELEVKBY, Ricardo: "Democratización y recomposición del sistema político en Chile" in YOCELEVKY, R. (coord.): *Experimentos con la democracia en América Latina*. México, Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, 1996, p. 125-146.