POPULAR MOBILIZATION AND THE MILITARY REGIME IN CHILE: THE COMPLEXITIES OF THE INVISIBLE TRANSITION

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ABSTRACT

This paper attempts an analysis of the popular mobilizations in Chile from the perspective of the problem of transition from a military regime to democracy. It begins with some general reflections on the role of social mobilizations under military regimes, distinguishing among various regime phases and types of mobilizations, and goes on to outline changing state/societal relations in Chile in the pre-1973 period to provide the historical context for an extended discussion of popular protest in Chile under the military regime. In this next section the author describes the mobilizations of the 1973-1983 decade and the cycle of protests and strikes after 1983, and gives an analysis of the principal sectors involved. The concluding section presents some interpretative hypotheses about the paradoxical role of mobilizations: their fundamental importance in reconstituting civil society and transforming dictatorial regimes, and their limits with respect to bringing about an end to dictatorship and the restoration of full democracy.

RESUMEN

Este trabajo intenta un análisis de las movilizaciones populares en Chile, desde la perspectiva del problema de transición de régimen militar a la democracia. En la primera parte se desarrollan algunas consideraciones analíticas sobre el papel de las movilizaciones sociales en los regímenes militares, distinguiendo diversas fases y diversos tipos de movilizaciones. El autor destaca las relaciones estatales-sociales cambiantes en Chile durante el período anterior a 1973, proporcionando un contexto histórico para una discusión extensa de las protestas populares bajo el régimen militar. En la próxima parte se analizan las movilizaciones en el decenio 1973-1983, el ciclo de protestas y paros después de 1983 y las movilizaciones de los sectores principales. En la última parte se intentan algunas hipótesis interpretativas respecto de la paradoja de las movilizaciones, que juegan un rol fundamental en la recomposición de la sociedad y en la transformación de la dictadura, pero tienen límites respecto de provocar su término.

In 1973 the democratically elected Chilean president, Salvador Allende, was overthrown in a coup d'état by the Commanders-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. General Augusto Pinochet has since ruled Chile. His repressive regime quickly ended both the Left coalition's efforts to promote the "Chilean road to socialism" of the Allende period and decades of democratic stability. For ten years after the coup civilian opposition to the regime was expressed either sectorally by socioeconomic groups, or under the umbrella of the Catholic Church, or through underground activities of political parties and social organizations. It was almost impossible to organize public and massive expressions of dissent and opposition, and when such outbreaks did occur they were severely repressed. However, beginning in May 1983 there were some mass mobilizations, which came to be known as National Protests. This article addresses the significance of these challenges to the military's authoritarian rule.

What role can the Protests play in restoring democracy? The opposition movement is divided on this matter. Some opponents see the Protests as a means of wearing down the regime and forcing it to negotiate a democratic transition, while others believe that the mobilizations will in and of themselves destabilize the regime to the point that it will be forced to rescind power. As social mobilizations have become ever more frequent in the years since the first Protest, some regime opponents remain committed to them as the strategy of opposition, while others attribute Pinochet's success in retaining power to the failure of this strategy (see Garretón 1985, 1986a, 1987).

The political debate is connected to a more academic debate about the role of social mobilization in transitions from authoritarian to democratic regimes (see O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986; Garretón 1986b). Is mobilization indispensable for redemocratization, or does it result in greater repression and greater consolidation of military power? How does it relate to other aspects of political transitions, such as regime decomposition, external influences, or internal mediations between regime and opposition? If mobilizations can play an instrumental role in the transition process, is the timing of the defiance consequential and are some types of mobilization more effective than others?

The political debate also addresses a debate over new social movements. It has been argued that structural and cultural change in industrial or post-industrial societies, as well as in less developed and dependent countries including Latin America, are generating new types of expressions of defiance and mobilizations for change (see Touraine 1978, 1984, 1987; Campero 1986; Garretón 1984). Do the social mobilizations in Chile constitute something more than mass discontent with authoritarian rule? Do they represent the seeds of new social movements involving new political actors, premised on a redefinition of the relationship between politics and society?

The "invisible transition" to democracy, entailing the recomposition and reorganization of civil society (see Garretón 1983, 1986c), must be distinguished from the formal transition to democracy. The latter involves specific measures that are designed ultimately to end military rule. Since civilian groups mobilized much more in Chile than under repressive governments in other Latin American countries in the 1970s, and since the military remain in power in Chile whereas they have returned to the barracks elsewhere in the region, the Chilean case raises the question of the potential and limits of "invisible transitions" to democracy.

In the first part of this essay I discuss general characteristics of social mobilization under military regimes. In the second part, I review the evolution of the mobilizations under the Chilean military government. In the third part, I present some interpretative hypotheses to account for the effects of different types of mobilizations, their social bases, and the relationship between protest movements and opposition articulated through political parties.

SOCIAL MOBILIZATIONS AND MILITARY REGIMES

A review of the characteristics and evolution of the military regimes that emerged in the 1960s and 1970s in the Southern Cone of Latin America is not possible here (see Collier 1979; Garretón 1984, 1986d). For present purposes, only some features will be outlined.

First, the regimes were hostile towards "popular" mobilizations. Having imposed themselves on highly politicized societies, they sought to demobilize the civilian populace. They did not even attempt to build up a political base of their own. Their concern with depoliticization led them not only to dismantle established forms of mobilization but also to prevent new forms and new social actors from arising. Under such conditions, the presence of social mobilizations represents an authoritarian regime's inability to rule through repression and the existence of pockets of space in civil society for the reconstitution of collective action.

Second, the likelihood and nature of mobilizations are partially contingent on the phase of regime evolution. When military regimes first come to power, they are especially repressive: if there is any civilian mobilization it is minimal and limited to testimonials or defensive expressions by groups directly affected by the repression. Even such restricted mobilization generally occurs under the shelter of such powerful institutions as the Catholic Church. However, once the regimes go beyond staking out their claims to power and begin to try to transform the economic and social order and establish new bases of hegemony, sectors adversely affected by the transformations also begin to mobilize in opposition. Should the regime's transformative project show itself not to work, mobilizations may become massive.

The first large-scale mobilizations reflect a loss of fear. However, these mobilizations, and the demands that participating groups make, alone do not produce a sufficient crisis to

undermine the regime. To bring down the state and usher in a democratic transition, political leadership and coordination is also needed. The political leadership must address the multiple and varied expressions of discontent and the aspirations of protesters in a manner that unifies the groups opposing the regime.

Large-scale mobilizations can be found under the whole spectrum of regime types. However, under dictatorships and highly repressive governments the movements are aimed, explicitly or implicitly, at the termination of the regimes, and they are shaped by the institutional context which prohibits or constricts their activity. As a consequence, protests and mobilizations under dictatorships and authoritarian states have an emotional and "heroic" aspect, which contributes to their politicization. Moreover, social movements under military governments represent efforts of groups in civil society who were eliminated, weakened, and denied political expression to regroup and reassert themselves, and the mobilizations may exacerbate regime crises and unleash or accelerate the process of redemocratization. The latter two processes do not always coincide, and they may involve contradictory dynamics.

Third, social mobilizations may also assume a diversity of meanings and functions under military regimes. One type of mobilization is expressive and symbolic, with a strong ethical and emotional component. Above all else, this type of mobilization affirms or defends an identity and community that has been threatened and it involves rebellion for its own sake. Fastings and hunger strikes in defense of the right to live by families whose kin have "disappeared" under the military exemplify this type of mobilization. The other types of mobilizations are more instrumental and oriented toward specific ends. One centers on mobilization as a means of strengthening organizational identity, autonomy, and legitimacy, as illustrated by organizational elections. Another is the classic mobilization, in which protesters assert demands to improve their level of well-being. Land seizures and strikes for higher wages exemplify this type. Still another type of mobilization is explicitly political. It is aimed directly at the termination and replacement of authoritarian regimes. The Brazilian movement for "direct elections" is illustrative of this type of mobilization.

The analytically distinguishable mobilizations in practice often exist in combination. The mixes, however, vary. One of the basic problems for the opposition is to combine the different types of mobilizations without having them identified with the particularistic concerns of any one participating group (or class). Another problem is to avoid excessive politicization, which may make mobilizations unappealing to many.

Finally, the political significance of the mobilizations depends on the effect they have on the state. This significance is not inherently determined either by the level or the type of mobilization. Social mobilizations do not in themselves bring about transitions from authoritarian to democratic rule. They can play a critical role in such a transition, but they are not *the* source

of change. For the transition to be completed, the governing bloc must decompose. Some negotiation between power-holders and opposition must occur, and normally other actors or institutions must effectively press for such negotiation. For such reasons, the opposition strategy must take the "state effect" of mobilizations into account. If it does not, the effect is likely to be determined by power-holders. The relationship between civilian mobilizations and political negotiation is, therefore, of crucial significance (see Garretón 1986b).

OCIAL MOBILIZATIONS AND CHANGING STATE/SOCIETAL RELATIONS IN CHILE

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BEFORE 1973

Since the decade of the 1930s three processes occurred concomitantly in Chile. There was a process of political democratization involving progressive citizen participation, with a party system including the complete spectrum from the Right to the Left. Chile also experienced social democratization: social welfare benefits were progressively extended to the middle classes and, to a lesser extent, organized labor (workers in the so-called formal sector). The state played a crucial role in this. Until the 1960s the peasants and the urban *marginales* (impoverished workers in the "informal sector," living in *poblaciones* or shanty towns) were excluded from social welfare benefits. During the 1960s, though, peasants were mobilized for agrarian reform and unionization, while the urban *marginales* mobilized for goods and services through state-linked local organizations. In the post World War II period Chile also experienced capitalist import-substitution industrialization, with a strong state presence in the economy. The country industrialized at the same time that the state continued to rely heavily on the copper sector for trade revenue. Foreign capital dominated the copper industry.

The three processes implied a gradual and institutionalized, but conflictual, integration of socioeconomic groups into the body politic, and highly politicized struggles for state benefits. While the political parties, including those on the Left, accepted the political system, their involvement in social and economic struggles made for an exceptionally politicized society. This gave a distinctive mark to the Chilean integration process: a strong emphasis on social organization, with political party ties, and high value placed on demanding benefits from the state. It also resulted in legal and quasi-legal mobilizations, with the state as the focus of collective action.

In the 1960s, the dynamics of dependent capitalist development came into conflict with the process of democratization (see Garretón 1983, 1986e; Moulián 1983; Pinto 1971; Loveman 1979). The political parties radicalized and the party system became highly polarized. The traditional Right unified in the National Party, with increasingly authoritarian and nationalistic tendencies. The Christian Democratic Party, which had a strong messianic and transformative content, replaced the more pragmatic Radicals as the main center party. The Christian Democrats believed that they were the only party capable of ruling and promoting social change, and they accordingly resisted political alliances. Their vision of politics was highly ideological and non-pragmatic. Meanwhile, the two major parties of the Left--the Socialists and the Communists--formed an alliance, together with some groups that splintered off from the Center; they pressed for radical socialist changes within the confines of democracy. The ideological climate was further radicalized by the Cuban revolution.

In 1964, President Eduardo Frei, a Christian Democrat, initiated a process of capitalist modernization and democratization that incorporated previously excluded peasants and urban *marginales*. (On the Frei period see Moulián 1983, Stallings 1978, Molina 1972, and Loveman 1979.) His government promulgated an agrarian reform and partially nationalized the copper industry. Mid-way through his government, however, the reform process bogged down. The state failed to respond adequately to the demands of the highly politicized civilian population. There were widespread strikes and urban land seizures, which the government sometimes severely repressed. The increasing isolation of the Christian Democrats from both the Right and the Left, in a social and ideological context that legitimated social change, helped the Left win the 1970 election.

Salvador Allende's government of the Left (Unidad Popular) tried to implement reforms that benefited the "popular" sectors at the expense both of foreign capital and Chilean monopoly capital. From the inception of his administration the vast "popular" sectors, the government, and the parties of the Left were, as a consequence, in conflict with the Right and the upper classes. The confrontations drove the Center and, most importantly, the middle classes into militant opposition to the Allende government. Massive mobilizations ensued, among all groups, and the society became progressively polarized politically. Little by little, an increasing number of middle and upper class sectors abandoned institutional politics, culminating in their support of a coup d'état.

Although Allende's Unidad Popular received 44% of the vote in the March 1973 parliamentary elections, once a large majority of the middle class and the Christian Democratic Party sided with the Right, the government was politically isolated. Allende's problems were further compounded by the U.S. government's refusal to continue to extend much needed economic aid, and by its strategy of "political destabilization." In the context of polarization and

deinstitutionalization, the Armed Forces, under the leadership of General Pinochet, usurped power on September 11, 1973; they did so under the pretext of "restoring the broken institutional system." (On the Allende period and the military coup, see Valenzuela 1978, Garretón and Moulián 1983, Garcés 1976, and Prats 1985.)

The military regime had to address the crisis of Chilean capitalism, as well as the highly politicized Unidad Popular and the socioeconomic sectors it represented. It promoted a technocratic free-market economic restructuring, relying on the "Chicago boys," close associates of Milton Friedman. It accordingly retracted state programs that favored the "popular" sectors. Politically, it relied heavily on repression and confronted the Church which denounced human rights violations and protected political victims. It eliminated all channels of collective expression. The parties of the Left were outlawed, and the activities of other parties were highly restricted as well. Power, including the authority structure within the armed forces, was personalized in the hands of Pinochet. However, Pinochet gradually began a process of political institutionalization, resulting in a new Constitution in 1980. The Constitution allows for a transition from a military dictatorship to an authoritarian regime, under the presidency of General Pinochet until 1989. The period until 1989 is officially called a period of "transition," during which time the governing Junta has legislative power and no political activity is permitted. In 1989, the heads of the Armed Forces and the National Police must propose one name for the next presidential period, which extends until 1997; Pinochet is making all efforts to be the designated nominee. The candidate is to run in a single candidate plebiscite. In 1989 the new Constitution is to take full effect. The Constitution lays the basis for a strong Executive and a weak Parliament; it excludes parties of the Left from the political party system; and it gives the Armed Forces veto power. The stipulations of the document make Constitutional revisions nearly impossible.

Beginning in 1981 the military's economic and political programs ran into difficulty. Many domestic businesses were hard hit since the laissez-faire economy made them exceptionally vulnerable to a global economic recession. The living standards of the middle classes plunged, while the livelihood of the "popular" sectors deteriorated even further than during the first years of Pinochet's rule. The regime's civilian bloc of support began to wither, in turn, to the point that the military was increasingly isolated politically. Meanwhile, "popular" expressions of protest and pre-coup political parties--which had never been inactive but were necessarily limited in their public action--began to reassert themselves. In 1983, massive political and social protests began. The discontented middle classes supported the demonstrations and other forms of mobilizations. The regime responded with repression, although it allowed for limited, informal channels of political articulation (*aperturas*). It enforced the institutionalization designated in the 1980 Constitution, which was designed to ensure authoritarian rule after 1989.

Although the opposition has become increasingly outspoken, it remains very fragmented to date. Various efforts to establish alliances among the reconstituted political parties have been short-lived, and they have failed to bring about a common strategy of transition. The social mobilizations described below must be understood in this political and economic context.

ROTEST UNDER THE CHILEAN MILITARY REGIME

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Collective Expressions of Defiance: 1973-1983

mobilizations.

Until 1983, anti-regime activity was rarely expressed through large mass

When social mobilizations occurred, they either addressed government abuses or specific concerns of individual socioeconomic sectors.

The mobilizations included defensive protests against such human rights violations as assassinations, detentions, torture, and "disappearances." These protests took the form of fasts, hunger strikes, and quick, limited public rallies.

When the populace mobilized around economic issues, concerns varied. In low income neighborhoods people organized for subsistence needs: they set up soup kitchens and their own employment agencies, and they pressed local authorities for land and housing. Workers and university students, in turn, pressed for their own set of claims. Workers pressured for higher wages and changes in labor legislation through work slow-downs and other work disruptions. Students began to mobilize through cultural activities, and they held short rallies to protest high

education fees, the presence of repressive agents in the universities and, more generally, the military intervention in academic life.

There were also some mobilizations of a more explicitly political nature. There were rallies, for example, to celebrate International Labor Day (May 1st) and to protest the 1980 plebiscite concerning the Constitution proposed by the military.

These diverse mobilizations between 1973 and 1983 shared certain features in common. First, they were isolated incidences, erratic, and generally brief in duration. The size, irregularity, and brevity of the demonstrations reflected people's fears of government reprisals. Second, the mobilizations were rarely directed at anyone in particular, and there was little expectation that demands would be addressed. Instead, the mobilizations reflected efforts of groups to assert themselves. When groups attempted to push for specific claims and their efforts were repressed, the mobilizations disintegrated (see Bano 1985). Third, many of these mobilizations occurred under the institutional protection of the Catholic Church. This protective environment helped social organizations to reconstitute themselves gradually as autonomous entities. Fourth, some militants and activists, associated with the political parties, human rights groups, and church organizations, gave a degree of continuity to the mobilizations during this period. They operated with a certain amount of autonomy from their respective institutions, and they were always more radicalized than rank-and-file members. This emergent intermediate political class, linked with groups in civil society, helped lay the groundwork for the massive 1983 Protest.

The Cycle of Protests and Strikes Since 1983

The first massive demonstration, known as the National Protest, occurred in May of 1983. The Copper Workers' Confederation (CTC) had initially called for a National Strike. However, a few days beforehand they decided instead to call for a broad-based protest. They shifted their strategy because, on the one hand, important union locals refused to support the strike and, on the other hand, they felt they could capitalize on the growing discontent among the population at large. The CTC was well situated to lead such a mobilization because it is centered in a crucial sector of the Chilean economy; ever since Chile has been dependent on copper for foreign exchange earnings the CTC's political importance has been far greater than the size of its membership would suggest.

On the day that the CTC called for the National Protest, there were strikes, high rates of absenteeism, work slowdowns, and demonstrations at work centers. At the universities there were assemblies and demonstrations. Children stayed away from school. In the city center and on main thoroughfares car-drivers honked their horns and people staged brief demonstrations. In middle and lower class neighborhoods alike residents boycotted stores; at night they turned out their lights and banged their pots and pans. Large sectors of the middle classes, many of whom

had used their kitchen utensils to express their opposition to Allende, now used them to symbolize their opposition to the very regime they had helped bring to power. Some shanty towns, in addition, erected barricades. Although the government had sought to ignore the Protest, it responded with force once it became apparent that the mobilization proved to have broad support and to be politically threatening: two died, fifty were injured, and three hundred people were detained. (For general descriptions and analyses of the Protest cycles, see de la Maza and Garcés 1985, Martínez 1986, Campero 1986, and Agurto, Canales, and de la Maza 1985.)

Subsequent National Protests were called, almost monthly. As of July 1983 the mobilizations also became more widespread throughout the country. They varied in their success and in the groups who joined in. More barricades were set up, and electricity blackouts became increasingly frequent. The government responded, in turn, with greater use of force. For example, Pinochet announced the presence of 18,000 soldiers in the streets of Santiago during the Fourth Protest in August 1983. A large number of the troops were sent into low income neighborhoods, and hundreds of protesters were either detained or sent into internal exile.

The opposition movement during this period did not merely involve the monthly Protests. New forms of mass mobilizations occurred, such as political rallies, marches, and campaigns for human rights and "the right to live."

The Eleventh Protest, in October 1984, turned into a kind of general strike. The government responded by imposing a state of siege, which nearly ended the cycle of protests. While there were new calls for Protests after the government lifted the state of siege half a year later, the mobilizations were smaller than in 1983 and they generally involved only limited sectors of the opposition. However, at the end of 1985 a massive rally was convoked by the Democratic Alliance (Alianza Democrática), one of the political blocs--comprising some small parties of the Right, the Christian Democrats, social democratic parties, one Socialist party, and other socialist groups--that opposed the regime. This rally was supported by other political groups in the opposition, such as the Popular Democratic Movement (Movimento Democrático Popular) which included the other Socialist party, the Communist Party, the Left Revolutionary Movement (MIR), and other leftist groups.

There was an effort in the autumn of 1986 to strengthen the Protest movement, under the aegis of a newly formed group, the Civic Assembly (Asamblea de la Civilidad). With ties to the political parties, the Asamblea organized a politically effective two-day national strike. The regime responded, as in the past, with repression. This time, though, the burning of two youths gained international as well as national attention. Nonetheless, the detention of the Protest leaders, division within the opposition over the role such protests should assume as a political strategy, the discovery of arsenals among pro-insurrectional groups, and the imposition once

again of a state of siege following an attempted assassination of Pinochet undermined the Protest movement.

What accounts for the emergence of the Protest movement on the one hand, and for its inability to sustain itself on the other hand? The surprising success of the initial Protest can be traced to three factors: its multi-class base, the involvement of Chile's most powerful union, and stress on broadly based defiance rather than more delimited work-based strikes. Since the Pinochet regime is more reluctant to use force against the middle classes than against the working and lower classes, middle class participation reduced fears that the protest would end in a massacre. The 1983 Protest marked the first time in decades that the middle and "popular" classes had allied; under Allende, in particular, they militantly opposed one another. The involvement of the Copper Workers' Confederation, in turn, was important, not only because the union is very influential but also because it includes representatives of diverse opposition parties. For all these reasons it could mobilize large-scale support, which further minimized participants' fear of government reprisal (see Martínez 1986). The call for a mass protest, rather than for more limited and traditional expressions of defiance (such as strikes), moreover, created a feeling among participants that they were creative subjects, opposing the regime as they so wished.

The three factors were not equally present in the subsequent Protests. The CTC, for example, later assumed a less activist role because the government severely repressed it for involvement in the First Protest. A broader based organization, the National Workers' Command, instead sought to mobilize organized labor. Although it incorporated unions in diverse economic sectors, including peasants, salaried white collar employees and small businessmen, and workers in both the state sector and private sectors, unions at the time lacked their former ability to mobilize rank-and-file. Moreover, the National Workers' Command had to share leadership of the opposition movement with political parties, which became increasingly influential in subsequent mobilizations. As the political parties gained force, massive mobilizations could only occur when convoked by the entire spectrum of parties. The parties, meanwhile, came to assign different meanings to the social mobilizations. The more centrist parties with time came to view the Protests as a means of compelling the Armed Forces to negotiate democratization. The Left parties, by contrast, believed that mobilizations in themselves could destabilize the regime to the point that it would collapse. The opposition movement, in addition, was not equally committed to militant mobilizations, and the style of activism differed among participating groups. As the party blocs distanced themselves from each other, it became increasingly difficult to mobilize support for the Protests.

The formation of the Asamblea de la Civilidad represented an effort to overcome the emergent differences within the opposition movement. The Asamblea included representatives of a wide variety of socioeconomic groups and political parties, though middle class organizations

dominated it. Indicative of its broad base, the Asamblea included the National Workers' Command and representatives of groups of *pobladores*, university students, professional organizations, truck drivers, women's associations, human rights organizations, and the Study Group for an Alternative Constitution.

Most of the organizations in the Asamblea were committed to pluralism. Moreover, all the opposition parties participated in the Asamblea, although the Christian Democrats dominated it. With such a broad base, there was support for a two day Protest in July 1986. But the Protest movement had undergone change between 1983 and 1986. The middle class, for one, became increasingly reluctant to support mobilizations. The combination of government repression, some concessions to middle class *gremios* (trade and professional associations), and expectations that the government would negotiate with the opposition made the middle class increasingly disinclined to oppose the regime openly. Labor remained more favorably predisposed toward the Protests, but government repression undermined its capacity to mobilize. As a consequence, students, and especially the young urban *pobladores*, over time came to constitute the core of the Protest movement. They tended to express themselves more aggressively than had the middle and organized working classes, and they were distrustful of political negotiation and coordination. Young shantytown dwellers were also radicalized by groups such as the Frente Patriótico Manuel Rodríguez and the Milicias Rodriguistas (both linked to the Communist Party) and the MIR (the Revolutionary Left Movement), which began to organize in their neighborhoods. These groups pressed for violent confrontation and insurrection. They viewed the Protests as heroic moments of confrontation and liberation, but their tactics served to isolate them from the rest of society.

The limits of the Protests notwithstanding, their impact has been substantial. They have enlarged the field of collective action in a highly repressive environment. As a result of the mobilizations people have become less fearful of the military, and the relationship between civil society and the state has changed. Moreover, the Protests compelled the military to make some economic concessions (such as debt relief), above all to the middle classes in order to coopt them. Pressures from civil society have forced the government to modify certain labor practices and aspects of its laissez-faire economic model. The Protests resulted in some political changes as well. After the Fourth Protest the regime began to combine a political logic with its military strategy. The government appointed an old politician of the Right as Minister of the Interior. He initiated an "opening" (*apertura*), designed to mobilize civilian support for the regime and to institutionalize the regime's base of rule, while limiting the political options for the opposition. Although the political "project" failed, certain political concessions were tolerated. For example the government allowed some exiles to return, and it permitted some opposition journals to be published.

From the viewpoint of the opposition, the Protests allowed for the public appearance and revitalization of political parties, and the grouping of parties into larger political blocs (such as the Democratic Alliance and the Popular Democratic Movement). However, once the parties assumed leadership of the Protests, differences in goals and strategies among them adversely affected the fate of the mobilizations. None of the parties provided a basis for consensus among the opposition. Although all the parties attached considerable importance to the mobilizations, none offered a coherent opposition strategy to put an end to the military regime. In the absence of any consensus among the party-dominated opposition, such general goals as "Democracy Now" helped the civilian population overcome their fears and isolation. But such general goals did not provide a basis for transforming the mobilization of the civilian population into a more stable political force.

Thus, the mass mobilizations since 1983 changed the face of the society. They allowed people to overcome fear. They revealed the military's failure to dissolve collective identities and collective action, and they reintroduced political "space" for civil society. They also forced some concessions from the regime. However, they have failed, to date, to bring about the widely desired transition to democracy.

Sectoral Mobilizations and Their Limits

A full understanding of the dynamics of the Protest movement requires a more detailed analysis of the role of specific socioeconomic sectors (see Campero 1986). With respect to organized labor (see Campero and Valenzuela 1984; Barrera 1986; Ruiz-Tagle 1985), its leadership--as noted above--played a central role in the convocation of the Protest movement. However, rank-and-file workers did not play a very forceful role in the mobilizations. Their relatively weak presence is rooted in the military regime's impact on the labor movement. The economic crisis brought about by the "Chicago boys'" laissez-faire economy cost many workers their jobs, and the military drastically restricted labor's capacity to organize and defend its own interests. The unionized labor force declined by 54% between 1972 and 1981, leaving only about 9% of the labor force unionized after a decade of military rule (Ruiz-Tagle 1985). No doubt many of the workers who were fortunate enough to hold on to their jobs feared that they might be fired if they defied the government. Political divisions at the union leadership level also had the effect, if not the intent, of undercutting labor's capacity to organize. Labor leadership was divided even on whether to form a single labor confederation. The Democratic Workers' Central, associated with the Christian Democrats, advocated independent, ideologically distinct centrals, while the National Union Coordinating Organization, associated with the Left (but including the more progressive sectors of the Christian Democrats), sought a unitary labor organization. Such division among the labor leadership affected labor relations at the base level.

The critical role that the urban *pobladores* came to assume has had great bearing on the dynamics and impact of the Protest movement. The core group to mobilize tended to be young *pobladores*, perhaps the sector most adversely affected by government repression and educational, employment, and housing policies. Socially and economically marginalized, the poor gained a sense of participation and belonging from the Protest movement, and affirmed their individual and social identity. The mobilizations were of expressive and symbolic significance to the young *pobladores*, whose style was aggressive, and, on occasion, violent. They have set up barricades, burned tires, and engaged in rock-throwing. Their style has, however, served to isolate them from other socioeconomic groups, reinforcing, in turn, their communitarian and anti-society feelings.

As important as their participation came to be to the Protest movement, most *pobladores* mobilized for specific demands, such as demands for land rights (building sites) and housing. Thus, their participation tended to be short-lived, whether or not their demands were satisfied. Their demands did not provide a base on which the Protests could build. Moreover, the sector is so large that efforts to unify it have failed. The political parties have added to the problem of mobilizing shantytown dwellers. The Christian Democrats, the Christian Left, the Communist Party, and the MIR have all tried to build up their own political bases in low-income neighborhoods; in so doing they have created divisions among the poor. The competing activity of the political parties contributed to the failure of such efforts as the Unitary Congress of Urban *Pobladores* to organize the shantytown dwellers collectively in 1986. The *pobladores* therefore remain without a broad-based organization of their own through which their activities could be coordinated and their interests collectively articulated.

Within the middle class, at least three sectors must be distinguished.

(1) Small- and medium-sized businesses, including independent truck drivers, and petty bourgeois shop owners. This sector was hard-hit by the "Chicago" economic model. Yet it has tended to support mobilizations, through individual *gremios*, only when the groups felt they could thereby negotiate concessions for themselves from the regime. They have never supported sustained anti-regime activity, nor coordinated their efforts with other socioeconomic sectors (see Campero 1984).

(2) Professional groups. Professional *gremios* have mobilized in defense of their own interests. They have accordingly organized against regime legislation constricting professional association activities and against repression suffered by membership. They have pressed for association rights, including the right to select their own association leadership; in so doing they have strengthened their organizations and their autonomy from the state on the one hand, and politicized their groups on the other hand. Candidates linked to the opposition movement have won *gremio* elections in nearly all associations affiliated with the Federation of Professional Associations. The impact of the opposition has not, however, been confined to the internal affairs of the *gremios*. Professional associations, for example, have been active in the Civic Assembly, through which they have issued declarations and called rallies in opposition to specific military legislation or abuses.

(3) The university students. Their activities most approximate a sustained social movement through which specific interests of the group's social base are linked with more general goals of democratization (see Valenzuela and Silva 1985; Agurto, Canales, de la Maza 1985). In recent years the student federations associated with anti-Pinochet political parties have successfully consolidated in all the universities. In 1985, for example, 22 of the 24 student federations had as their heads democratically elected opposition leaders. Within the university system the student groups have pressed for reduced tuition fees, as well as for more radical changes such as a revision of the system of rectorship appointments. Student activities have not been confined to the universities. Students have played an important role in the Protests. They have seized campuses, and in so doing brought university activity to a halt, and they have organized street meetings.

Linkages with national political parties have, however, had the same adverse effect on students as on other mobilized sectors: they have divided the student movement and weakened it as a consequence. For example, whereas the first democratic university elections under Pinochet in 1984 and 1985 centered around alignments with the government or the opposition, in 1986 the opposition split. Electoral lists represented the diverse national political blocs. Tactics as well as party loyalties divide students. The non-politicized mass of students oppose disruptive activity, and many academic faculty and researchers oppose disruption of their work. Thus in

creating the sense that the university is ungovernable, student activists may alienate the faculty and researchers, whose support is necessary for any substantial university change.

Women, too, have emerged as a distinctive social force in the opposition movement, and they have mobilized differently from the other social and economic groups (see Kirkwood 1986; Meza 1986). They have become active participants in "popular" organizations and the Protests, although surveys show many of them still to be conservative in their visions and opinions. The failure of the "Chicago" economic model has also strengthened the presence of women in the "popular" sectors. As men have lost their jobs or experienced a decline in their earning power, many women have been forced to take on informal sector jobs. Women's mobilization strategy has been particularly effective. They have mobilized more independently of political parties than have other social sectors. They have stressed unity over partisan fragmentation. A good example is the Mujeres por la Vida (Women for Life Movement). This group involved women of different socioeconomic classes and diverse opposition parties and convoked the most unified massive protest against the regime in December 1983. Whether women's demands and participation will be marginalized in the future and whether they will be able to resist partisan ties remains, of course, to be seen.

In sum, different groups have mobilized for their own sets of concerns separately, and in the Protests collectively. Participation in the Protests has been impressive, but how widespread is support for the anti-regime activity? Public opinion surveys indicate that most Chileans support peaceful defiance which calls for negotiations to end the military regime. However, they tend to reject the violent and disruptive activity (see FLACSO 1986; Huneuus 1987). There is, in essence, widespread approval of strikes, petitioning of authorities, marches, and *caceroleos* (opposition shown by banging pots and pans at designated times). There is little support, by contrast, for bombings, blackouts, land seizures, and traffic blockages.

CONCLUSION

The military tried but failed to eliminate collective identities, collective organization, and collective action, although it has to some extent successfully undermined the collective capacities of groups. Civil society has reasserted itself to the point that it has "space" to organize and express itself. The recomposition of civil society constitutes what we have called the invisible transition to democracy. This invisible transition has largely involved groups that had been active and politicized prior to the coup. The principal new social forces to have emerged are women and youth, and social, cultural, and religious groups born in direct response to subsistence needs, and human rights violations and other government abuses.

To date the mobilizations have not put an end to the regime and they have not ushered in an effective transition to democracy. The government has restricted the impact of the Protests through use of force. However, the defiance has won limited concessions for many groups and some space for expression and organization.

The limits of the Protest movement notwithstanding, some important lessons can be extrapolated from the experience of the Chilean opposition movement. First, the structural and institutional transformations introduced by the military reduced, weakened, and atomized the organizational "space" of economic and social groups. Under the Brazilian military regime, by contrast, there was much more "space" for organization. The contraction of the formal sector, and rising unemployment in particular, undermined the capacity of previously organized groups to mobilize against the regime in Chile. The percentage of wage-earners in the economically active population declined from 53% in 1971 to 45% in 1980 and 38% in 1982 (Martínez and Tironi 1985), and the percentage of the economically active population which was either unemployed or employed in jobs paying less than the minimum wage and offering no stable employment or social security rose from 14% in 1971 to 25% in 1980 to 36% in 1982. The younger generation and women were especially hard-hit by the economic contraction. The economically active young population (15-24 years old) in the formal sector dropped from 80% in 1971 to 61% in 1980 to 49% in 1982, while the percentage of women in the formal sector dropped from 68% in 1971 to 60% in 1980 to 50% in 1982 (Martínez and Tironi 1985). Thus, the labor force has become more atomized, disarticulated, and "inorganic."

From the point of view of "popular" mobilizations, the economic dislocations have had some important consequences. First, the base for mobilization has shifted from the "classes" to the "masses": that is, from the more organized and formal sectors of society to the more amorphous or marginalized ones. Women and youth, for example, who have been so adversely affected by the military regime's economic policies, have become active in the opposition movement; however, they have mobilized through neighborhood and women's groups, not

through work-based groups which historically have been the loci of economic struggles in Chile. Second, because the society is so fragmented, each sector has assigned its own meaning to mobilizations and promoted its own forms of mobilizations, at times in conflict with other sectors. The call for a generic goal with broad appeal, such as "Democracy Now," represents an effort to overcome fragmentation. However, when the goal was not attained, the opposition movement was weakened. Third, the repressive environment has encouraged highly expressive and emotional mobilizations, not instrumental mobilizations designed to attain specific and negotiable demands.

Military rule has taken its toll on society. It has modified relations among the state, the political party system, and social movements (see Garretón 1983, 1986e). Even if the military regime was unable to create the political system it intended, it has disarticulated the previous system. The political forces which have surfaced under the military maintain some continuity with the past, but they have great difficulty in political negotiations. The new politicized "popular" sectors and emerging social forces are poorly represented. While some activists and militants have gained force, they remain isolated from both the more established party leadership and the social bases of the "popular" organizations. Moreover, ideological and organizational differences among the "political class" make it difficult to form a strong, unified opposition movement which transcends the particularistic concerns of the diverse social and economic groups.

Finally, the Chilean experience highlights both the strengths and the weaknesses of mobilization as a strategy for bringing about a transition from dictatorship to democracy. Social mobilization is undoubtedly indispensable for such a transition. However, in the absence of a consensual and coherent political strategy for change, ideological and expressive differences fragment groups similarly committed to democracy, and in so doing limit the impact of mobilization as *the* political strategy. Mobilization must be combined with other political processes, such as negotiation and regime decomposition, before redemocratization is likely. Social mobilizations by themselves help to reconstitute civil society and they help to transform military regimes. They can "deepen" the "invisible transition" and result in some political concessions. But in themselves they will not bring about the array of institutional changes necessary for the restoration of full democracy. Political direction and coordination is also essential.

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