RECYCLING DICTATORS: EX-AUTHORITARIANS IN NEW DEMOCRACIES

by

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To my parents, Linda Davis Kyle and J. Richard Kyle
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ABSTRACT

What explains the presence and performance of former regime leaders in elections for public office after a transition to democracy? This study develops the concept of recycled dictators as the phenomenon of those individuals associated with non-democratic government who enter electoral politics after a transition to democracy. It focuses on candidates associated with the military regimes that immediately preceded the third wave of democratization in 12 countries across Latin America, identifying 67 ex-authoritarian candidacies in presidential contests, with eight of those ending in victory for a former regime official. The study finds that recycled dictators are present at higher rates in cases of lower “democratic continuity”—conditions of less experience with democracy prior to military rule and military replacement of civilian politics with military parties competing under managed democracy. The project establishes the background conditions and causal pathways for recycled dictator presence based on level of democratic continuity and level of threat to former regime actors that structure the four types of recycled dictator competition: (1) Return of democratic representatives; (2) Protest candidacies; (3) Persistence of authoritarian competitors; and (4) Mixed competition. The study challenges the notion that Latin American voters are not committed to democracy, as most ex-regime officials finish with only single-digit vote share. Candidates who achieve +10% of the vote, however, share particular characteristics. The study offers a typology of these successful candidates with three categories: (1) Regime Heir – a candidate who assumes the mantle of the regime in which he served; (2) Rogue Officer – a candidate who led a military uprising with an anti-corruption message and who quickly parlays that message into a political career; and (3) Caudillo Democrat – a candidate who has built a more traditional path to the presidency by holding lower-level public office and constructing a party over time, yet who still runs promising
authoritarian solutions to national challenges. The study advances understanding of popular and elite commitment to democracy and contributes a predictive theory on recycled dictators’ electoral presence and the intensity of their appeal. The project proposes that the theory is generalizable to ongoing and future transitions across the globe.
Chapter 1

Introduction: Ex-Dictators and Elections in Latin America

The departure of a military regime and the inauguration of civilian democracy is an extraordinary moment. The prospect of rule by the people after military repression presents a nation with great promise. While political institutions are reformed and new freedoms are exercised, the repressor and repressed, victim, perpetrator and bystander, military and civilian all continue to be affected by their roles under the previous regime. When members of the former government run for elected office in the new democracy, and old dictators find their way back into politics, the stark question comes into view: did democratization change anything? Will ex-authoritarians’ presence in politics undermine democracy? Are they more dangerous inside or outside the system? These “recycled dictators” are a unique feature of the transitional political landscape. Present across Latin America in the wake of the third wave of democratization, understanding the role of these ex-regime candidates in new political processes is crucial to assessing the nature and strength of former regime elements in nascent democracies.

In November 2011, amid rising crime rates and increasing fears of nationwide chaos fueled by the drug trade, Guatemala elected former General Otto Pérez Molina of the Partido Patriota to the presidency on a platform promising la mano dura (the iron fist) in managing the nation’s affairs.¹ As an army officer during Guatemala’s long-running civil war, Gen. Otto Pérez had been associated with some of the most brutal campaigns of the conflict, including those labeled genocide by one Guatemalan truth commission.² But, he also played a role in removing General Efrain Rios Montt from power in 1983—the de facto military leader most responsible

¹ “Guatemaltecos eligen a Otto Pérez Molina como Presidente,” Prensa Libre, 6 November, 2011; Partido Patriota 2011.
for overseeing the scorched earth campaign against the indigenous population—and he served as the Guatemalan Army’s representative in the peace negotiations ending the civil war.\(^3\) Having a role on both sides of the military past—the brutal violence and the cause of peace and democratization—Pérez illustrates the complexity of ex-regime officials and their diverse character as candidates for public office in a new democracy. He accepted the rules of the democratic game in order to stand for election yet still draws appeal as a credible messenger for a heavy-handed approach to governance. Recycled dictators face distinct challenges and opportunities in their electoral campaigns and their presence in the new system poses an array of questions about the past, present, and future of politics in transitioning states.

The third wave of democratization brought an end to more than 60 authoritarian regimes throughout the world.\(^4\) Authoritarian government experienced wholesale decline as political liberalization took hold in one state after another. The international triumph of democratic ideals, however, is neither absolute nor unidirectional. New democracies face challenges from their former oppressors and risk slipping into quasi-democratic practices or experiencing outright


\(^{4}\) Huntington 1991.
authoritarian reversal. Post-transition governments face a two-fold democratic imperative that leaves the state vulnerable to the recycled dictator phenomenon. To maintain legitimacy in the eyes of the voting public and to break with the restrictions of the past, the new regime attempts to prove itself inclusive and representative by embracing political competition and voter participation. This democratic necessity leads the state to allow the participation of a wide spectrum of political actors in elections, including former authoritarian leaders. The newly established freedom to vote includes the freedom to vote for potentially anti-democratic candidates. Thus, these two essential elements of the liberal political system, when combined under transitional circumstances, have the potential to threaten the integrity of democracy. This study will allow a better understanding of the ways in which authoritarian legacies potentially endanger the durability of new democracies or whether their participation locks them into the new system and neutralizes their power as potential spoilers. By forming a detailed appreciation of former authoritarian leaders, the project focuses attention on how best to protect democracy and to use democracy in service of political reconciliation.

5 States in Latin America have experienced several rounds of democratization and military intervention in the 20th century. For example, Argentina established a democratic system in 1912 yet experienced military intervention essentially every decade from the 1930s to the 1980s. And, reformist factions of militaries in states such as Bolivia, Ecuador, and El Salvador periodically offered political openings only to see them reversed by hardliners within the institution. The long pattern of struggle between democratic and anti-democratic forces in the region underscores how fragile the third wave transitions are and the ongoing uncertainty of their outcomes.

6 Dahl 1971.

7 To avoid backsliding into authoritarianism under the label of democracy, some countries have explicitly barred from public service former perpetrators of state crimes through lustration laws and public vetting procedures. These measures most commonly have been used in former Soviet states of Eastern Europe, rather than in post-military-rule states in Latin America.
In the years following transitions to democracy in Latin America, citizens have expressed disenchantment with democracy and nostalgia toward authoritarian rule.\(^8\) Public polling has identified worrying trends, whereby 30% of the individuals surveyed in the region responded that they would “support a military government if the situation got very bad.”\(^9\) The presence of ex-authoritarian leaders in the new system may herald the beginning of a new era in which candidates of all ideological perspectives have accepted the rules of the democratic game; or, their continued influence in government may signify a renewal of authoritarian appeal. Despite the wealth of research on democratic consolidation and concern about new democracies backsliding into semi-authoritarianism, the role of ex-dictators in electoral politics has not been studied systematically. This project seeks to address the absence of this analysis and contributes to our understanding of popular and elite commitment to democracy by investigating the role of former regime candidates in competitive elections.

My dissertation explains the presence and performance of these recycled dictators in Latin America. Those who previously came to power through anti-democratic means and who once repressed political activity and committed human rights abuses are a puzzling choice for voters in a democratic election. Yet, across the region, former repressors have asserted themselves in democratic politics, meeting with varied levels of success. The recycled dictator phenomenon is not limited to Latin America. In many regions of the world, individuals associated with a former authoritarian regime have run for office. In 1996, Mathieu Kérékou was elected to the presidency in Benin, returning after giving up power in 1991 following 17 years of military rule. In 1999, former General Olesegun Obasanjo of Nigeria returned to the presidency via democratic elections long after he had given up the reins of power. And, in 2002, former

\(^8\) UNDP 2004.

\(^9\) Latinobarómetro 2005.
General Amadou Toumani Touré of Mali did the same. Similar developments have taken place in post-communist countries, with members of the former repressive state apparatus running for public office. Most notably, with Vladimir Putin, once a member of the Soviet KGB, rotating between the presidency and prime ministership in Russia in the early 2000s. And, in Iraq, former Ba’athist leaders have made their way back into government, despite the initial purge of these actors through the policy of de-ba’athification. These latter examples illustrate the broader recycled dictator phenomenon—the potential for non-democratic regime actors to persist in a variety of settings, from one-party states of the former Soviet Union to ongoing transitions in countries like Iraq and Egypt where militaries were crucial elements of the rule of personalistic, civilian dictatorships.

My dissertation addresses these issues by examining this phenomenon through a theoretical and grounded case-study approach. First, I define recycled dictators and outline important concepts in the study. A recycled dictator served in government or in the security services during a period of non-democratic rule and has re-entered political life by running for elected office after a democratic transition.

Second, I discuss the research design and methods employed in the project, from the compilation of electoral results for the presidency in 12 countries in post-transition Latin America and identification of recycled dictator candidates to process tracing of antecedent conditions and explanatory mechanisms at work in country cases.

Third, I provide a brief empirical overview of recycled dictators’ characteristics in the study. Despite the commonality of being part of the former authoritarian regime, ex-regime candidates vary in the position held during the dictatorship and role in the democratic era. In this study, I analyze members of military regimes—presidents, junta members, cabinet ministers and
officers of the armed forces—immediately preceding the third wave of democratization in Latin America who have run for president in the contemporary democratic era. The recycled dictator may have been military or civilian, or he may have been a member of the armed forces and not directly have served in a governing role. Thus, some may have held a post such as minister of finance and not carry a significant association with human rights abuses committed during military rule, while others may be directly accused of ordering or committing such atrocities. In the democratic era, the individual may have rehabilitated his image or made it worse. The former regime official may have adopted an ideology on the political left or right or taken a centrist position. These distinctions guide their profiles as candidates in important ways.

Next, I present the argument of the study. I answer the questions: Under what conditions do recycled dictators run for office? And, under what conditions do recycled dictators achieve greater levels of vote share in elections? Assessing these unique candidates is crucial to understanding their role in the new system and their effect on democratic politics and government.

Finally, I reflect on the implications of the study. By cataloguing recycled dictators in Latin America and by evaluating their presence and performance in presidential elections through comparative analysis, I present a new, comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon. This project contributes a predictive theory of the presence of ex-authoritarian regime candidates in presidential contests and a typology of their success in transitional democratic states. It contributes to our understanding of the role of ex-regime actors in consolidating democracy in Latin America and to our empirical understanding of the nature of these candidates, the extent of their presence, and the intensity of their appeal in the region’s politics. The project challenges the notion that voters in Latin America are not committed to
democracy or are nostalgic for military rule, while illuminating an important development of elite commitment to democracy from both majoritarian and countermajoritarian forces in the region. The theory developed on the Latin American cases of post-military rule can serve as a starting point to inform our understanding of authoritarian regime candidates in ongoing and future transitions in other regions of the world.

**What is a Recycled Dictator?**

Recycled dictators are former authoritarian regime officials who run for elected office under a new democracy. I conceptualize recycled dictators as the general phenomenon of those individuals associated with non-democratic government who enter democratic politics after a transition to democracy. Broadly understood, these may be figures emerging from one of many authoritarian contexts such as a one-party state, civilian-led dictatorship, or military regime. In this study, I focus solely on the military regimes that immediately preceded the third wave of democratization in Latin America.

By concentrating analysis of recycled dictators in this manner, I investigate these actors as a legacy of military rule in Latin America. I define military government as an active-duty member of the armed forces serving as head of state. An institution explicitly trained in the application of force and equipped to coerce, the unique position and power of a military sets it apart from other political actors. How members of the institution and those who served in a military government respond to the new paradigm of political competition demands specialized inquiry. In historical context, repeated military intervention in politics and the dominance of military rule in the region prior to the third wave of democratization underscores the importance

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10 Following the Military Intervention Score developed by Robert Putnam (1967) and extended by Robert Dix (1994) and Looney and Frederiksen (2000), I consider that “military rule signifies rule directly by the military, or by a person or group of military origin, or by a clear puppet thereof” (Dix 1994, 442).
of understanding the legacies of this particular form of authoritarian government. As the third wave of democratization began, more than two-thirds of the states in Latin America were under military rule. The Cold War environment, the rise of National Security Doctrine, and pressure and support from the United States, steered militaries across the region to seize control of government in their countries.\textsuperscript{11} Civilian-led authoritarian government is not unknown in Latin America, but the overwhelming experience in the region has been that of military rule. Lack of elite commitment to democracy in previous eras has meant a tendency for civilian rivals to call upon military allies when conflicts cannot be resolved through fledgling democratic institutions.\textsuperscript{12} Or, democratic politics have been supplanted by oligarchic fear of losing economic and political power to the populist impulses of democracy. Thus, understanding the presence of former regime actors in electoral competition is crucial to understanding political behavior in contemporary democratic Latin America.\textsuperscript{13}

I investigate recycled dictators who served in government or in the armed forces during military rule in Latin America and who have subsequently run for president in their respective countries. Focusing on candidates from former military regimes provides analytical clarity and broad comparability. Militaries historically have been key actors in determining the form and composition of government. Blocking ideological rivals from attaining power, ensuring their own corporate interests, or embarking on nationalist development schemes, have motivated military intervention in the political arena. Militaries have varied in their route to power and their

\textsuperscript{11} Joseph and Spenser 2007.

\textsuperscript{12} Rueschemeyer, Stephens and Stephens 1992, 195-197.

\textsuperscript{13} Smith 2005, 19-43. Peter Smith makes a compelling case for needing to comprehend the historical trajectory of previous attempts at democracy in the region in order to analyze the contemporary democratic period appropriately.
conduct in office, but their rule is necessarily exclusionary and anti-democratic. The armed forces as an institution fundamentally lacks legitimacy to govern; and the presence of active-duty military officers in government is visually and symbolically unmistakable. Only a handful of countries in the region—Colombia, Venezuela, Costa Rica, and Mexico—escaped the latter half of the 20th century without the state being ruled directly by the armed forces. Thus, the legacies of military rule and the political conduct of those associated with these regimes have considerable impact across Latin America. This point is underscored by the 12 countries included in this study, introduced in Table 1.1. These 12 countries endured long-term military rule and transitioned to the contemporary era of elected, civilian government in the third wave of democratization.

Recycled dictators are distinguished by concrete factors such as service in the military government (whether as an active duty member of the military or as a civilian) or service in the armed forces during military government. This two-fold definition captures more of those candidates associated with the power base of the former regime and allows for further analysis of the effects of particular profiles among candidates for public office. To use Guatemala as an example, the most acute manifestation of the recycled dictator phenomenon is that of a leader such as Gen. Efraín Ríos Montt, who ruled the country as a military dictator in 1982 and ran for president, unsuccessfully, in 2003, thereby attempting to serve in the same role in two very different types of government. The expansive definition that includes civilian members of these military governments allows for the analysis of an individual such as Mario Sandoval Alarcón, a civilian who served as Vice President in the military regime of Gen. Kjell Laugerud, and who ran unsuccessfully for president in 1985. Employing this approach ensures that the project analyzes former regime members and develops an understanding of their electoral fortunes in light of the

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14 Finer 1962.
disparate roles each individual held, rather than looking only at ex-military candidates. Thus, the variation in service allows distinctions to be drawn among candidates with different regime profiles.

Table 1.1. Recycled Dictator Country Cases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Last Period of Military Rule</th>
<th>Inauguration of Uninterrupted Contemporary Civilian Rule</th>
<th>Democratic Election Period, Number of Presidential Elections</th>
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<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>1973-1990</td>
<td>March 11, 1990</td>
<td>1989-2010; 5 elections</td>
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Note: See Appendix A for detailed consideration of periods of military rule and inauguration of uninterrupted contemporary civilian rule where disagreement exists among scholars and coding schemes.

Considering those individuals who were part of the armed forces during military rule but who were not, themselves, in a position of government, captures such figures as Gen. Otto Perez Molina. He commanded combat forces during the civil war and was elected to the presidency in 2011. Including all three categories—military personnel in government, civilian in government,

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15 I mark the transition as the date on which a new civilian head of state is inaugurated and the military formally leaves power.

16 I mark the democratic election period beginning with the start of direct elections for president. Thus, many “foundational elections” are included—those contests which took place while the military still held power—while some states handed power over to civilian authorities before holding direct elections for president. For example, direct elections did not take place in El Salvador until after the 1982 swearing in of a civilian cabinet.
and non-government military—of these individuals is important in our understanding of the phenomenon and the different perceptions and expectations they may elicit when they run for office. What variation exists in how the public receives the field commanders versus their government counterparts? Are candidates tainted by just having been part of the military institution? Or, do voters make a distinction between candidates who were part of combat forces during military rule and those who were more clearly part of government? How does the “hero status” of combat figures play a role in post-transition politics? Are civilian leaders more acceptable, or are they perceived as collaborators? Those who were part of the power base of the military regime, whether in government or in the armed forces qualify as recycled dictators.

Recycled dictators are defined by their entry into democratic politics. Ex-regime candidates may participate in the transitional elections themselves, but they are distinct from figures who attempt to remain in their current position through a transition. As a military

<table>
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<th>Member of the Armed Forces</th>
<th>Role in Government During Military Rule</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Government, Military</td>
<td>Gen. Efraín Ríos Montt</td>
<td>Non-government, Military</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ex: Gen. Otto Pérez Molina</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Government, Civilian</td>
<td>Mario Sandoval Alarcón</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Non-Recycled Dictator (Returned democratic actor, new politician)</td>
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Figure 1.1 Categories of Recycled Dictators
government is giving up power *en masse*, members of the regime or of the armed forces may step into a campaign for president, but in the Latin American cases, it is rare for a sitting military president to run in the transitional election. For example, rather than seeing Gen. Augusto Pinochet run for president in Chile in 1989, his Finance Minister, Hernán Bűchi Buc, (in part) picked up the mantle of the sitting government by promising a continuation of the economic success of the Pinochet regime under democratic auspices. Only Gen. Andres Rodriguez Pedotti, who unseated long-serving Gen. Alfredo Stroessner in Paraguay and began the transitional process, ran for president while serving in that role. From outside the region, examples of individual attempts at outlasting a transition in power include Pakistan’s Pervez Musharraf, Kenya’s Daniel arap Moi, and Zambia’s Kenneth Kaunda. Musharraf, for example, ruled Pakistan as an active-duty military officer from 1999 to 2007. When he became a civilian leader, he did not relinquish power. He stood for election while still wielding the power to suspend the constitution and declare states of emergency. These leaders already were in control of the reins of government when seeking election as democrats, which enabled them to shape the political environment and their respective contests as they saw fit. That level of control does not exist for the recycled dictator.

**Research Design and Methods**

This project grapples with the interrelated puzzles of political competition from those who once repressed political activity and the potential for citizens to exercise their right to vote in order to elect those who once stripped them of such rights. By investigating presidential elections in the contemporary post-transition era in Latin America, this project establishes the frequency of these candidates’ presence and the intensity of their appeal. The project analyzes
presidential campaigns and elections in 12 countries in Latin America from 1978 to 2011. I develop a theory of presidential competition from former regime members and construct a typology of their success. Through case studies of four countries—Chile, Argentina, Guatemala, and El Salvador—I elaborate divergent national experiences with recycled dictators and adjudicate between the causal mechanisms driving presence and performance under different conditions. The paired regional comparison of Chile and Argentina examines the return of dominant political parties that preceded military rule producing low recycled dictator presence yet diverging in form through “protest candidacies” in Argentina. Guatemala and El Salvador, the second pair, assesses conditions for high recycled dictator presence in both countries yet also demonstrates how a country with political circumstances favorable to former regime candidates can escape their influence in presidential politics.

Latin America is an instructive region of analysis given the time since transition and relative similarity of the experience with long-term military rule and subsequent democratization across countries. With more than two decades of post-transition elections, the trajectory of ex-authoritarian candidacies can be studied more effectively than in other regions with less time since transition. The length of time under democracy tracks the political lifespan of many of the former regime members and elicits a comprehensive understanding of the temporal pattern of the phenomenon in a way that studying only a transitional election would not. The timeline of democratic rule shows that recycled dictators’ presence naturally declines overall, yet it does persist in some countries. And, crises have served as inflection points to bring ex-regime leaders into competition where they previously had not been present.
Latin America’s historical cycles of democratization giving way to authoritarian rule demonstrates the potential fragility of the democratic system.\textsuperscript{17} Presidential elections merit particular attention, given that the presidency is the highest office in the land, the nation’s most visible representative to the international community, and an office imbued with executive authorities such as issuing decrees and commanding the armed forces. For Latin America, in particular, the traditional strength of executives manifest in hyper-presidentialism intensifies the need to understand the role of ex-regime actors as potential democratic presidents.\textsuperscript{18} The findings of this study apply beyond the region to other countries that have transitioned to democracy and now face the challenge of integrating ex-authoritarians into the nascent political system.\textsuperscript{19} Better understanding the problem of recycled dictators can greatly inform policymaking in new transitions to democracy. Fear of the persistence of the former authoritarian leadership led to “de-Baathification” in Iraq in 2003, but the policy was counterproductive because it excluded large sectors of society from buying into the new system. The policy was modified in 2004 and essentially was reversed in 2008.\textsuperscript{20} Better understanding the role of former authoritarians and the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{17} Peeler 2004; Smith 2005.
\item \textsuperscript{18} Mainwaring and Shugart 1997; Rose-Ackerman, Desierto, and Volosin 2011.
\item \textsuperscript{19} Factors of political behavior important in other regional contexts such as ethnic voting, religious identity, or the impact of a more recent colonial past may complicate generalizability, but the breadth of the theory provides a good basis for understanding the phenomenon across varied political environments. Indeed, under conditions of strong ethnic voting, for example, it may not be that my theories of recycled dictator presence and performance are “incorrect” but rather superceded by another explanation. That is, a recycled dictator, rather than being described by one of my types of success might capture support on the basis of citizens voting for co-ethnics as they would for any candidate. Under this circumstance, his former authoritarian status might not be germane to explaining his electoral career.
\end{itemize}
conditions under which they are likely to come to power could prevent repetition of the missteps seen in contemporary Iraq. Rather than ejecting them from politics, allowing competition from these actors within the new democracy and effectively tying their success to the success of the new system could have assisted in ensuring that competition for power took place inside the system through elections instead of outside of the system through violence. This study develops a new understanding of the challenges and opportunities in the re-emergence of old authoritarians that will inform policymaking in ongoing and future transitions to democracy.

I seek to answer questions about the influence and power of legacies of authoritarianism within new democratic institutions. Comparing the experiences in all 12 post-military rule countries in Latin America establishes the context of recycled dictators in a way that previous studies of single, high-profile ex-dictators in isolation have been unable to do. My approach offers new answers about the role of former authoritarians in post-transition politics by examining dynamic interaction among ex-military dictators, civilian political leadership, and the voting public.

I catalogued ex-authoritarian involvement in presidential elections in Latin America and identified patterns of the frequency of the phenomenon and the intensity of voter support for these candidates. I compiled candidate names, parties, votes, and vote share from cross-national databases of electoral information such as the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) Election Guide, the Georgetown University Political Database of the Americas (PDBA), and the Election Results Archive from the Center on Democratic Performance at Binghamton University. Where these databases are limited in their coverage (for many elections prior to the 1990s, for example), I have complemented these existing cross-national databases with the Latin
*American Political Yearbook* and with information available from each country's national electoral court or electoral commission.

A recycled dictator qualifies as a candidate only if he is on the ballot and thereby reported in the results of the election by the national electoral tribunal, court, or commission. An ex-military leader turned politician who does not see the campaign through to the election does not enter into the analysis. For example, former Argentine Army Captain Héctor Vérez, who ran the La Perla torture center in Córdoba province, entered into a mayoral race but attracted so much negative attention due to his violent past and unapologetic nature, that he withdrew from the campaign well before the election.21 Similarly, in Paraguay, General Lino Oviedo first campaigned for the presidency in the 1998 elections, but his running mate, Raúl Cubas Grau, was eventually the one on the ballot, because Oviedo was charged for a 1996 coup attempt when he had refused to resign as Minister of Defense under President Juan Carlos Wasmosy.22 He ran again in 2008, appeared on the ballot, winning 22% of the vote, and is included for that year, but not for 1998.

A transition from authoritarian rule to democracy can be marked in a number of different ways—the date of a first election, the date a new constitution is adopted, or the date that constitution is enacted, among others. I mark the transition date for each country on the date that the military formally ceded power to an uninterrupted civilian administration. I also include “transitional” elections in the analysis that took place under military rule, beginning with the first direct presidential elections held.

Additionally, I distinguish between candidates and candidacies. The numbers listed below for civilians, military personnel, and military personnel in government reflect the


individuals who have run in a presidential election. Many of these recycled dictators have run in more than one contest. Therefore, while there have been 51 recycled dictator candidates among the 12 countries, there have been 67 candidacies.

In order to code for recycled dictators, I investigated the potential military regime background of all 692 candidates for the presidency in the 12 countries in the study and the candidates’ parties by cross-referencing the candidates in each presidential race with the presidents, junta members, and cabinet ministers under each military regime and with biographical information from sources such as the Centro de Estudios y Documentación Internacionales de Barcelona (CIDOB) and candidate profiles from domestic and international newspapers. I also have used individual candidate websites, party websites, and a wealth of secondary academic sources. In addition, I have cross-referenced presidential candidate lists with the School of the Americas attendance database to examine and code for members of the armed forces who trained at the SOA, which is known to have instructed its students in practices antithetical to respect for human rights in the region. I elaborate the 67 recycled dictator candidacies from 1980 to 2011 through news digests, such as Keesing’s Contemporary Archives, Keesing’s Record of World Events, the Latin American Weekly Report, and international and domestic newspapers covering the elections in which recycled dictators have run.

I identify a typology of authoritarian candidates by investigating the behavior of ex-authoritarian candidates when they run for office and their public reception. Analysis of the campaigns illuminates the practical experience of the political phenomenon. Hypothetically,

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23 Data compiled by the author from Keesing’s Contemporary Archives, Keesing’s Record of World Events, and The International Year Book and Statesmen’s Who’s Who.

24 School of the Americas Watch 2009.

25 Collier, LaPorte and Seawright 2012; George and Bennett 2005.
when an ex-dictator runs for office, the public presentation could fall into one of three distinct patterns. First, the ex-dictator’s past might not be an issue at all. The candidate might never speak of his past, and if his opposition never made an issue of it either, his status as a recycled dictator could go largely unnoticed. Second, the ex-dictator might run specifically on his record, defending his past actions under the dictatorship as necessary or even heroic. Third, the ex-dictator might acknowledge his past and apologize for it in an attempt to neutralize the issue by demonstrating regret for his participation in the dictatorship. Each of these scenarios would have significantly different implications. For example, in the first scenario, voters may be less aware of the candidate’s past; therefore, they may be less likely to vote in response to that factor. In the third scenario, owning up to the past may convince voters that the candidate has changed and is now a safe choice for office. The project distinguishes between these different empirical patterns and determines what effect they have on electoral outcomes. The dynamic interaction between the candidate, the opposition, the media, and the public makes scrutinizing the campaigns of importance in understanding this phenomenon.

**Who are the Recycled Dictators?**

There is variation among ex-regime candidates at the presidential level. Of the candidates who served in government roles during military rule, 22 were civilian and 11 were uniformed military. A further 18 recycled dictator candidates were members of the armed forces in non-governing roles in the period of military rule, as shown in Figure 1.2.

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26 Brady and Collier 2004; Pierson 2004.

27 All of the numbers provided in this section reflect the data for candidates, rather than candidacies. Many recycled dictators run in more than one presidential election. In this count, however, they are considered only once.
These recycled dictators and the roles they played are not evenly distributed across the region. As Table 1.2 illustrates, each country has a different experience with their former regime candidates. Guatemala stands out as having a particularly high number of recycled dictators in their political system, while Panama and Uruguay have had only one member of a former military regime run for president. Similarly, the civilian versus military breakdown varies. Only civilian members of military governments have run in Chile and Honduras, while Ecuador is unique in the fact that all three of its recycled dictators were officers in the armed forces who did not directly serve in government during their country’s military regime.

**Figure 1.2 Presidential Candidates by Category of Role during Military Government**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role in Government During Military Rule</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, Member of the Armed Forces</td>
<td>Government, Military (11)</td>
<td>Non-government, Military (18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, Member of the Armed Forces</td>
<td>Government, Civilian (22)</td>
<td>Non-Recycled Dictator (600+)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The military personnel who enter political life by running for president in the democratic era tend to be high-ranking officers, whether they were formally part of the military government or if they were a commander in the field. Table 1.3 shows that the largest number of recycled dictators by far are at the pinnacle of the military command, as Generals in the Army or Air
Force or Admirals in the Navy. Many of these officers, from General down the chain of command, attended the United States military’s School of the Americas at one point in their careers. The training ground for Cold War era cooperation among overseas military officers has long been the subject of criticism for its association with tactics and personnel that run counter to respect for human rights. Thus, it is important to note this characteristic for those who served under the military government and subsequently mounted a campaign for president.

Table 1.2. Recycled Dictator Candidates by Country and Role during Military Government

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Government, Civilian</th>
<th>Government, Military</th>
<th>Non-government, Military</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bolivia</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andean Region</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honduras</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panama</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central America</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraguay</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uruguay</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Cone</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Latin America Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>22</strong></td>
<td><strong>11</strong></td>
<td><strong>18</strong></td>
<td><strong>51</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1.3 also draws attention to an important comparative point regarding the recycled dictator phenomenon. These military officers served in high-ranking leadership positions within their institution. Perhaps it is not surprising at all that they would make the personal transition from the armed forces to government. Indeed, history is replete with examples of former military
men making their way into politics. Field Marshall Arthur Wellesley (the Duke of Wellington), famous for his victory against Napoleon at Waterloo in 1815, became Prime Minister of the United Kingdom 13 years later. The United States has elected numerous former Generals to the presidency—from George Washington to Dwight Eisenhower. Yet, the nature of these individuals’ military past and the impact it had on their electoral positions is clearly quite different from that of a recycled dictator—they were not fighting against their own people nor were they serving in an anti-democratic government before deciding to run for office. Victorious in wars against foreign adversaries, these figures did not face the potential consequences of having transitional justice measures leveled against them. Nevertheless, in comparative perspective, the experience of these military leaders highlights the fact that the presence of former military officials in politics is not unique to recycled dictators. Their presence is even more understandable in those countries with weak national civilian institutions, where the military has been more likely to produce the country’s leadership prior to democratization and routinely decided the form and composition of government through limited intervention or has held power directly. The longstanding recognition that militaries in Latin America have served a tutelary role in national politics, determining the limits of competition or deciding on government personnel reinforces this explanation for their presence. Where there has been less opportunity for civilian political competition, recycled dictators are more likely to be major contenders in the new system, rather than being only marginal candidates, supplanted by the civilian leaders returning to power.

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28 Nordlinger 1977; Stepan 1986.
Table 1.3. Characteristics of Recycled Dictator Military Personnel

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Government</th>
<th>Non-government</th>
<th>School of Americas Attendees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General, Admiral</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colonel/Lt. Colonel</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Captain</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
<td><strong>18</strong></td>
<td><strong>11</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recycled Dictator Competition

The level of democratic continuity available to a country and the level of threat posed to the interests of those associated with the former military government explain the presence of recycled dictators in contemporary post-military rule presidential elections across Latin America. In effect, countries with higher levels of democratic experience prior to the last round of military rule see lower rates of recycled dictators compete in presidential elections than those countries with little democratic history. The existence of traditional parties that pre-date military rule occupy the political space and command the vast majority of the vote, crowding out minor competitors, such as former regime officials. Greater numbers of recycled dictators are present in a state like Guatemala, which had limited time under democratic government in its modern history, while states with more prior democratic experience, such as Chile and Uruguay, have seen fewer ex-regime candidates in their elections. The more politically developed states have a civilian leadership that is ready to step into power in the wake of the transition in a way that states making their first foray into democracy do not. Civilian politicians with experience that pre-dates military rule returning to electoral contests, and the re-forming of parties, channels competition and ensures that former regime members face credible rivals in elections. As a consequence, recycled dictators are seen in greater numbers the less prior experience with democracy. Second, the level of threat to the interests of members of the former regime explains
divergence among states with less democratic history and the “protest candidacies” in Argentina. In cases where ex-dictators’ feel under threat from ongoing armed conflict, drastic changes to the institution, or from transitional justice efforts, these individuals have added incentive to enter politics to have their voices heard. Temporally, recycled dictators are present in greater numbers closer to the point of transition. Failures of incumbent democratic governments—primarily economic crises, security challenges, and corruption—help to explain recycled dictators’ presence in elections further from the transition. Nevertheless, over time, the number of candidates associated with the prior regime diminishes as these individuals leave politics for other pursuits, retire, or begin to die out.

**Recycled Dictator Support**

At the structural level, democratic continuity explains support. Recycled dictators most commonly secure their highest levels of vote share in countries with less prior democratic experience. In these cases, recycled dictators can be major candidates in elections and they have the opportunity to garner significant vote share (though it is not guaranteed), rather than being relegated to fringe status as most recycled dictators are in states with established political parties ready to compete for power in the new democratic era.

Under these conditions, contingent drivers—dynamic conditions under which each election takes place—interact with the ex-dictator’s own characteristics, presenting a political opportunity for ex-regime candidates. I present these successful candidates through three types—the Regime Heir, the Rogue Officer, and the Caudillo Democrat. Candidate character and changing conditions, however, are not sufficient to propel an ex-authoritarian candidate toward
success in a country with high levels of prior democratic experience, but the contingent drivers
do have an impact in countries with weaker democratic histories.

**Impact of the Study**

Studying recycled dictators in cross-national, comparative perspective provides a
crucially more complete understanding of the phenomenon of the return of former dictators to
politics than we have seen previously. Existing studies have tended to focus on individual, high-
profile winners of elections such as Efrain Rios Montt or Hugo Banzer or to draw the most
attention from activists. The selective focus on winners, however, does not fully capture the
issue of recycled dictators and their role in nascent democracies. The vast majority of recycled
dictator candidates lose the elections in which they run, with many achieving vote share no
greater than single digits.

I find that recycled dictators have made up roughly 10 percent of the nearly 700
candidates for president in post-transition elections in the dozen countries under investigation.
They are more prevalent in the years closer to the transition, but their presence persists for
decades after, albeit in fewer numbers. Despite this temporal trend, there is no notable pattern of
higher or lower support based on the time since transition. Time alone does not explain voters’
willingsness to support a candidate associated with the former regime. Instead, the political,
economic, and social conditions in the country, at the time of the ex-authoritarian’s candidacy,
play an important role in his appeal.

Public polling from organizations such as the World Values Survey, Latinobarómetro,
and the United Nations Development Program have suggested that significant percentages of
citizens in the region are not necessarily committed to democracy in the wake of political,

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29 Canache 2002; Crenzel 2001; Deegan-Krause 2006; Seligson and Tucker 2005.
economic, and security challenges. The experience of recycled dictator candidates in presidential elections, however, provides a real-world test of this assertion, revealing that voters are committed to voting for democrats and for empowering the democratic system more consistently and in much larger numbers than cross-national polling may suggest. Scholars have interpreted responses on questions of support for military government as an indication that voters desire a return to the past. But, when voters have been presented with the reality of a former military regime official returning to power, they largely have been rejected. Only 29 (of 67) recycled dictator candidacies have achieved over 10 percent vote share, while the remainder finished in the single digits. Of the 79 presidential elections held in the 12 countries in this study, eight have resulted in the election of a leader from the former authoritarian regime.

Involvement from former regime officials is a common element of post-transition electoral politics, yet it is understudied. The understanding of recycled dictator presence and performance built on cases from Latin America can provide insight into future transitions. The theory developed here can be tested on cases from other regions of the globe and further refined in order to improve our understanding of the challenges, opportunities, and potential threats posed by recycled dictators.

**Plan of the Study**

The study proceeds as follows. In Chapter Two, I develop a theory of recycled dictators’ presence in presidential elections. I argue that variation in the number of recycled dictator competitors in post-transition elections is explained by the level of democratic continuity and the level of threat posed to the interests of those associated with the former military government. States with little experience with democracy prior to the military regime are more vulnerable to
the return of former regime members in electoral contests. A country such as Guatemala, which experienced only a brief democratic revolution in the 1940s—one brought about by and still dominated by the military—has had far more ex-dictators participate in the contemporary democratic system than a country like Chile, which experienced uninterrupted civilian democracy from 1932 to 1973. I argue that the democratic continuity of civilian leaders returning to politics, parties being reformed, and the momentum from the democratization movement play a pivotal role in shaping the post-transition electoral environment. Under such conditions, ex-dictators are not the only ones returning to politics. Recycled dictators do not run in a vacuum. It matters who the opposition is and how prepared they are to step into the political arena. In states like Guatemala and El Salvador, where militaries dominated the political sphere and there was almost no experience with democracy prior to the third wave transition, and a great deal of the pressure for military withdrawal from government came from the United States, more of those military leaders continue to play a role in the country’s political life.

In Chapter Three, I build a typology of successful recycled dictators (those performing at a vote share of 10% or more) as individual candidates in order to theorize recycled dictator candidate performance. Candidates who run on major party tickets, as in Honduras for example, have met with this level of success. All other successful candidates fall into three broad categories: (1) Regime Heirs, (2) Rogue Officers, and (3) Caudillo Democrats. Regime Heirs are those candidates who uphold the mantle of the former regime and represent those interests in the early elections of the democratic era. Former Finance Minister in Chile, Hernan Buchi, best exemplifies this category as a candidate who would have provided the Pinochet regime without Gen. Pinochet.
Rogue officers are those who have staged uprisings while still in the armed forces and then enter politics. Thus, in addition to their status as recycled dictators, they carry another identity as rebel officers with a particular political message—generally one of institutional defense of the military. Several of the candidates who perform at the +10% level are in this category, but being a rebel leader is no guarantee of success. The ex-carapintada candidates in Argentina demonstrate this fact. Lt. Col. Aldo Rico, for example, formed the Movimiento por la Dignidad y la Independencia (MODIN) and ran with the same message he carried when leading the barracks revolts that brought him to fame. He and others like him in Argentina were relegated to minimal showings in the vote, given the presence of major democratic parties.

Finally, Caudillo Democrats are those candidates who demonstrate a convergence of ex-military identity coupled with the behavior of more traditional politicians. These individuals establish a political career by winning and serving in lower level offices first, building a constituency and party operations along the way, rather than running for president with no political experience under their belts. In this sense, Caudillo Democrats have more in common with traditional, major-party politicians in that they are not without political experience upon their run for the presidency. Nevertheless, their military lineage is also an important part of their identity, and they promise to employ authoritarian solutions from the executive branch in the wake of institutional failures to address social and economic problems effectively. Gen. Otto Perez Molina of Guatemala, as noted at the beginning of the chapter, pledged an iron fist in dealing with crime and conflict in the country. Thus, the Caudillo Democrat represents a potentially troubling development among ex-regime actors (and, perhaps other politicians and large numbers of voters) of acceptance of the rules of the electoral game, but not necessarily

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30 For discussion of “amateur candidates” in the context of U.S. politics and a typology of their candidacies—ambitious, policy, and hopeless amateurs, see: Canon 1990. These types pair with the caudillo democrat, rogue officer, and general recycled dictators, respectively.
acceptance of the rules of the broader democratic system. The typology approach broadens the discussion of recycled dictators and the variety of issues and conditions that explain their candidacies.

In Chapters Four through Seven, I present country case studies for Chile, Argentina, Guatemala, and El Salvador, with each teasing out causal mechanisms explaining different national experiences with recycled dictators. Chile, having experienced decades of uninterrupted democratic government prior to the Pinochet regime, exhibits the signs of re-democratization that ensure politically sophisticated competition from democratic forces and few former regime candidates. Argentina, with its repeated cycles of political liberalization and authoritarian reversals has a rockier history with democracy than Chile, yet the mechanisms of party competition and the democratization movement are similar. The Argentine armed forces left power in disarray and the ruling juntas were subsequently prosecuted for human rights abuses in high-profile trials, making Argentina a least-likely case for members of the former regime to re-enter the political arena and to gain support from the population. Apart from the protest candidacies of the carapintadas, this maxim has held true at the presidential level. Guatemala, having essentially no democratic history has seen many members of the former regime and of the armed forces stand for election in presidential contests. Meanwhile, El Salvador, also lacking democratic experience and making the transition to civilian rule under similar circumstances, saw recycled dictators leave the electoral arena more swiftly because of the nature of the competition between the ARENA party (representing conservative forces) and the FMLN—the guerrilla movement-turned-political-party. Together, these case studies develop a contextualized picture of the recycled dictator phenomenon as it played out in four distinct settings and the identity of these candidates in their second act in national politics.
In Chapter Eight, I conclude the study, reflect on the implications of its findings for recent and ongoing transitions to democracy, and discuss future directions for the study of democratic habituation and integration after authoritarian government.
Chapter 2: Theory of Recycled Dictator Presidential Candidacy

In the late 1980s, Argentina was rocked by a series of crises. The military government had left the country in economic ruin six years earlier, and the administration of Raúl Alfonsín had struggled mightily to right Argentina’s economic ship, in part through government spending. This spending contradicted International Monetary Fund orthodoxy and led the organization to block further loans to the country.\textsuperscript{31} After a run on the Argentine currency and the collapse of Alfonsín’s economic coalition, inflation rose dramatically in the final years of his tenure in office, reaching rates over 3000\% for 1989.\textsuperscript{32} In the same time period, elements of the armed forces staged a series of rebellions against government prosecution of military officials for human rights violations during the 1976-83 dictatorship. The combined challenge of economic crisis and military agitation brought back the familiar specter of military intervention in government in a country that had experienced multiple democratic transitions in the 20\textsuperscript{th} century, only to see another reversion to non-democracy. Civilian government survived, despite these challenges.

The carapintadas, or Parallel Army, led by Lieutenant Colonel Aldo Rico did not intend to overthrow the government.\textsuperscript{33} The rebellious officers “likened [the uprising] to a general strike,” themselves noting that they were not attempting to oust Alfonsín.\textsuperscript{34} David Pion-Berlin and Ernesto Lopez argue that the rebellion “reflected and intensified” an existing, significant

\textsuperscript{31} Smith 1992, 27.
\textsuperscript{32} Smith argues that this amounted to a “golpe de mercado,” an alteration of the term golpe de estado (coup d’état), given that President Alfonsín then chose to hand the reins of government over to Carlos Menem, the winner of the 1989 presidential election, on July 8, 1989, five months earlier than constitutionally scheduled.
\textsuperscript{33} Norden 1996; Pion-Berlin and López 1992, 74.
\textsuperscript{34} Brysk 1994, 99.
division within the officer corps but that the dispute was essentially an internal one, given that Rico and his forces seemed to have as many demands against their superiors in uniform as they did against the civilian leadership.35 Rico wanted independence from what he saw as a discredited leadership whom he felt had betrayed him and his fellow service members in the Falklands War. Even if those involved in the rebellion did not intend to overthrow the government, they did seek to change government policy, and they did so through the use of force. These army officers had not given up on using their role and the military tools at their disposal to affect change. Beyond the internal disputes of the officer corps, the carapintadas were reacting to the intensified legal proceedings against the military. The initial rebellion won an amnesty law known as the Obediencia Debida, which prevented prosecution of members of the armed forces for human rights abuses during the military regime on the grounds that they were carrying out orders and therefore could not be held liable for alleged crimes.

This policy shift would not likely have come without the uprising. In the late 1980s, engaging in politics from outside of the democratic system still worked for the Argentine military. By the time of the 1995 general election, however, Aldo Rico would have transformed himself into a presidential candidate competing for power via the ballot box.

Across Latin America, as military dictatorship gave way to civilian democracy, armies made a return to the barracks. This sea change ushered in decades of democratic rule, but those individuals associated with the old regimes did not simply go away. Former dictators were not executed, forced to flee their countries, nor sent into exile. Military officers and civilian personnel who participated in the dictatorships returned to their lives in the post-transition period. Largely escaping initial punishment, many re-entered political life by running for public

office, with a notable few making their way back to the highest office in the land via the democratic system.

Since the third wave of democratization, many states in the region have attempted to reckon with their authoritarian pasts through transitional justice mechanisms. While some nations have done little to address the lingering effects of military rule, others have pursued transitional justice in earnest—seeking and publicizing the truth, condemning human rights violations, and punishing those responsible. Nevertheless, even such robust attempts at social change cannot ensure that authoritarians become democrats. Individuals associated with the former dictatorial regime may avoid punishment, maintain anti-democratic views, and re-enter the political arena.

The phenomenon of recycled dictators involves two distinct but related puzzles. First, while the return to politics of those individuals associated with the former regime happens in significant numbers, at many levels of government, and in varying regions across the world, not all former members of an authoritarian regime run for public office, nor are those who have chosen to run involved in every election. The question arises: *What explains varied rates of competition from ex-regime candidates?*

This chapter proceeds as follows: First, I outline the principal questions to be answered regarding recycled dictators. Second, I address the phenomenon in terms of its importance in understanding elite acceptance of democracy. Third, I develop new theory of the intensity of recycled dictator presence in presidential elections.
Recycled Dictators and Post-Transition Politics

Recycled dictators occupy a unique place in the post-transition political landscape. By running for public office, they have bought into the rules of the new democratic game, but they have not necessarily become democrats. Aldo Rico, himself, despite moving into a traditional political role as a candidate for the presidency in Argentina in 1995, had only a few years earlier been making comments that suggested he had not fully accepted the value of democratic society. Even though he had been cashiered from the army and so could no longer wield the power of his military position, he reminded the country that “it was only a matter of time before his comrades still in the service took over the high command.”

Nascent democracies must be vigilant to protect themselves against the potential dangers of old authoritarian leaders and their influence, yet these governments also must prove themselves inclusive and representative to maintain their legitimacy in the eyes of the citizenry and to break with the restrictions of the past. The openness of the new system allows potentially anti-democratic voices to gain power through democracy.

Since the third wave of democratization took hold in Latin America, displacing military regimes, scholarship has focused on issues related to the recycled dictator phenomenon such as transitions from authoritarianism, democratic consolidation, and the role of the military in democratic Latin America, but none has addressed systematically the presence of former regime members in the new electoral system.

Transitions from authoritarianism have received attention in the literature as scholars have sought to identify the causes of a regime’s exit from power, the form the transition takes, and the consequences of these events for the successor regime. Military government, in particular, has been shown to face institutional and structural challenges that ensure its eventual


downfall. The institution is not inherently better equipped than a civilian regime to manage economic or social problems, and the unity of the armed forces is eroded when it engages in long-term governance.\textsuperscript{38} The military chain of command leaves little room for debate, and when military officials become responsible for making policy decisions, disagreement among members of the ruling junta or military cabinet is not resolved easily. Additionally, due to the lack of popular legitimacy, the regime is vulnerable to the dictator’s dilemma—an inability to distinguish between genuine support and support born of fear—and faces difficulty in managing public expectations.\textsuperscript{39} Militaries are not suited to governance in terms of benefiting either the general public or serving their own primary mission of being capable war fighters. Nevertheless, such authoritarian regimes exhibit wide variation in not only how they rule but also how long they rule.

Samuel Huntington identified historical waves of democratization and initially speculated that the third wave would be followed by a reverse wave, just as the first two were.\textsuperscript{40} This prediction seemed not to be the case in the years after these transitions, as procedural democracies spread and gained stability; nevertheless, deeper, liberal democracy proved more elusive.\textsuperscript{41} The distinction between existence of democracy and the quality of democracy has fueled the study of democratic consolidation and has demonstrated that building a democracy beyond the minimal standard of holding competitive elections is a great challenge.\textsuperscript{42} Scholars

\textsuperscript{38} Clapham and Philip 1985; Desch 1999; Maniruzzaman 1987.

\textsuperscript{39} Wintrobe 2000. For more on popular support for authoritarian regimes, see: Geddes and Zaller 1989.

\textsuperscript{40} Huntington 1991.

\textsuperscript{41} Diamond 1996.

\textsuperscript{42} Schumpeter 1942: Schumpeter’s minimalist definition of democracy centered on the simple “competitive struggle for the people’s vote.”
and practitioners have grappled with the reality of systems that take a democratic form in some ways yet not in others. In seeking a definition of democracy, scholars have been careful not to equate democracy with the mere holding of elections, because many more procedures and principles must be respected in order for a country to be considered democratic.\textsuperscript{43} For example, Guillermo O’Donnell identified the problem of “delegative democracy” in which administrations may be held \textit{vertically} accountable to the people via elections, yet may not be \textit{horizontally} accountable to other branches of government.\textsuperscript{44} Under these conditions, democratic governance is diminished as the executive ignores or overrides the legislature through decrees, rather than working with congress to pass legislation, for example. Variation in the quality of democracy has meant debate over the definition and arguments in favor of focusing on procedures, yet simultaneously understanding the need to specify conditions of effective exercise of power.\textsuperscript{45} Different strands of scholarship share common ground in acknowledging the persistence of these systems, even though they do not meet traditional definitions of democracy, leading scholars to call for greater understanding of why unconsolidated democracies survive.\textsuperscript{46} Robert Dahl sought to escape the need to describe wide-ranging empirical cases as democracies, reserving the term for the ideal-type full participation and full toleration of opposition and instead introducing “polyarchy” to characterize the imperfect systems of mass participation and opposition we observe in the real world.\textsuperscript{47} Thus, there is disagreement and evolution in scholarly understandings of democracy, with attempts to abstract the general principles and procedures of democracy

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{43} Schmitter and Karl 1991.
\item \textsuperscript{44} O’Donnell 1994.
\item \textsuperscript{45} Collier and Levitsky 1997.
\item \textsuperscript{46} Montero 1998.
\item \textsuperscript{47} Dahl 1971.
\end{itemize}
while also better characterizing terminology in the study of democracy to distinguish more accurately between processes of democratization, consolidation, and persistence, for example.\(^{48}\)

For the purposes of understanding recycled dictators, these debates shed useful light on the different conditions under which ex-regime candidates run for office. In effect, states that are re-democratizing after a period of authoritarian rule—such as Chile and Uruguay in the Latin American cases—are less vulnerable to the recycled dictator phenomenon than states that are democratizing for the first time—such as Guatemala and El Salvador. Re-democratizing states are more capable of fulfilling the characteristics of democratic practice by channeling competition through party vehicles in elections as they did prior to military rule. A state democratizing for the first time, however, has not had such organizations; or, in numerous cases in Central America and the Andean countries, the military held such a dominant role in national politics that the parties allowed to exist under military rule did not operate independent of the armed forces. New political actors not only are unaccustomed to civilian democracy but also military officers are the most experienced political operatives. In addition, these are the conditions under which ex-authoritarian candidates can be most problematic. Without the horizontal accountability of checks and balances within government and strong civil society to confirm and maintain democratic practices among all elected officials, ex-dictators may be able to get elected to office and undermine democratic values. Concerns about legacies of authoritarianism in new democracies have rightly drawn attention, focusing on the continuing influence that the military or authoritarian forces have over institutions in the new democracy. Ex-regime actors also have the potential to gain political support and affect the new system using its own rules. Scholars and practitioners have warned against “authoritarian enclaves” and

\(^{48}\) Morlino 1998. In particular, see Morlino’s discussion of distinctions between “consolidation, persistence, maintenance, reconsolidation, and breakdown” of democracy (1998, 18-22).
“reserved domains” in which the outgoing regime establishes control over important military prerogatives such as budgeting or mission control.\(^{49}\) In the case of Chile, this practice took the form of enabling Augusto Pinochet to continue in his role as Commander-in-Chief and establishing a number of former regime members as “senators for life.”\(^{50}\) Funding for the armed forces in Chile also has been a point of contention, with part of its budget coming from the Chilean Copper Law, which has guaranteed 10 percent of profits from copper mining in the country to the military.\(^{51}\) In Brazil, the military initially maintained active-duty members of the armed forces in cabinet level positions.\(^{52}\) And, in Guatemala, civilian control of the military remained minimal after the transition, while the army continued to dominate the country politically.\(^{53}\) All of these issues address the persistence of the old regime itself and its potential to undermine democratic consolidation. Likewise, these varied conditions help to explain the presence of ex-regime candidates’ presence in presidential competition.

Alternatively, scholarship has focused on the military as an outside authoritarian threat that still may encroach on the new civilian democracy. Given the historical patterns of civil-military relations in Latin America, this concentration is important; but it neglects the changing nature of the interaction between civilian and military elites in modern democracies. The region has a long history of military involvement in government in a tutelary role as well as through direct rule. The traditional tutelary role grows out of a unique characteristic of Latin American

\(^{49}\) Garretón 1994; Wright 2007.

\(^{50}\) Article 45 of the 1989 Chilean Constitution established senatorial positions for former presidents, as well as ex-ministers of the Supreme Court and former commanders of each branch of the armed forces.

\(^{51}\) Baldez and Carey 1999; RESDAL 2008.

\(^{52}\) Hunter 1997a.

\(^{53}\) Schirmer 1998.
militaries—the belief in an ultimate responsibility to *la patria*—that results in acting as an inward-looking constabulary force charged with the task of maintaining domestic stability, not just securing national borders.\(^{54}\) This position has led militaries across the region to exercise their power over decision-making and seize control of their respective governments many times. The military has seen uncertainty in the polity and characteristic elite backing as unconditional support for their actions in fighting “subversion” and upholding the interests of the state—particularly with institutional acceptance of the National Security Doctrine during the Cold War era.\(^{55}\)

Scholars have argued that while challenges remain, the role of the military under democratic governments in the post-Cold War world is changing for the better.\(^{56}\) Such research has focused on the military institution and its potential to repeat the behavior of the past, with the assumption that the threat of authoritarian reversal comes from military takeovers from the outside. The literature has given primacy to the tug-of-war between the military and its new civilian leadership. Prerogatives and power of the armed forces *vis-à-vis* the civilian government are seen as flashpoints for conflict.\(^{57}\) Scholars have tracked victories and setbacks for civilian control of the military on issues such as military budgets and direct military involvement in government.\(^{58}\) Scholarship in this field has considered the continued influence of militaries that leave power in a position of strength and attempt to carve out a role for themselves in the new government. These challenges are largely understood as issues of institutional preferences that

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\(^{55}\) Fitch 1998; Lowenthal and Fitch 1986.  


\(^{57}\) Zagorski 1992.  

\(^{58}\) Stepan 1988.
define the relationship with civilian authority. In the case of Chile, for example, Arturo Valenzuela and Lucia Dammert argue that the concertación wanted to abolish the “undemocratic features of the 1980 constitution” but would not be able to until 15 years after Pinochet’s departure due, in part, to the need for consensus in governing among the democratic actors, which delayed taking on controversial issues such as military reform. Pinochet had built in safeguards against change to military prerogatives, and public support for the military was high enough that civilian policymakers “had to take military interests seriously.” Civilian government is thought to lack “regime capacity”—that is, knowledge and expertise—on security affairs, which allows the armed forces to remain a threat as it wields disproportionate influence in making national decisions, particularly in times of crisis. In this view, militaries in the region remain untouched by civilian authority and empowered to pursue their institutional interests while both disrespecting democracy and neglecting traditional defense. Recent scholarship has analyzed when and why militaries have abstained from stepping into the political arena in the post-Cold War era, even when they previously might have been expected to in times of crisis.

These veins of research have focused on the relationship between the military and civilian leadership on the grounds that the military is by nature an authoritarian actor, while the post-transition civilian leadership is assumed to be democratic. The appearance of members of a former authoritarian regime in the new democracy complicates this picture. The election of former authoritarian leaders to democratic office demonstrates the need to ask new questions

59 Valenzuela and Dammert 2006.

60 Weeks 2003, 57.


62 Cruz and Diamint 1998.

63 Clark 2006; Perez-Liñan 2007.
about the role of military actors in young democracies. Understanding ex-regime candidates’ participation in democratic politics contributes to scholarship exploring the nature of democratization that acknowledges that it is not an individual event that happens on a single date but rather a complex process that “might entail crossing more than one threshold.”

Recognizing the potential consequences—both good and bad—of the participation of individuals associated with a former authoritarian regime in a new democracy sheds light on crucial issues of democratic habituation and integration after periods of exclusionary rule. Literature on civil-military relations in post-transition politics tends to focus on the threat of authoritarian reversal in the form of military coups d’etat or from a continued tutelary role for the armed forces. By maintaining the power of a veto player that delimits the options of civilian government or spoils the transition, itself, authoritarian actors are clearly a potential threat. This focus, though, does not sufficiently explore the potential danger of authoritarianism in the form of democratically elected officials who could subvert good government from within or the potential rewards to the democratic system from ex-military regime officials who have bought into the new rules of the game. Ex-regime officials’ electoral participation, itself, may be understood as an indicator that democracy has become “the only game in town.”

Transitional justice has considered more closely specific issues of how to deal with members of a former authoritarian regime, how to punish their past actions, and what to allow in their future. The focus of transitional justice—in scholarship and in practice—often centers on high-profile, contentious events rising out of the struggle between social movements, opposition forces, and the new civilian leadership. Competing actors’ interests come into conflict and produce varied decisions on the use of transitional justice mechanisms such as trials, truth

64 Collier 1999; Linz and Stepan 1996. For the quote, see: Munck 2001, 125.

commissions, and amnesties. The widespread abuses committed by authoritarian regimes across the globe produced challenges for new civilian democracies. New administrations have been faced with the prospect of holding former authoritarian leaders accountable for their actions and assigning responsibility through the use of these transitional justice mechanisms.\textsuperscript{66}

The persistence of ex-regime officials in political life indicates there has not been a clear break with the past. Seeing former leaders compete in elections and potentially return to government complicates the transition away from a military-dominated system. This situation even may presage another round of abuse of power and systemic collapse. Indeed, as argued prior to the last era of military dictatorship in the region, Latin America failed to “eliminate some power contenders from the political system,” and consequently, the region faced the persistence of many incongruent actors—including particularly disruptive authoritarian actors such as the military.\textsuperscript{67} It is not only the armed forces as a corporatist institution pushing for its own interests or inserting itself into the national political arena that is at issue with recycled dictators. Even under circumstances in which the military has been trained effectively to stay in the barracks or has met an unpleasant end in its last adventure in government prompting a change in “role beliefs,” individual members of the former military regime pose a new challenge.\textsuperscript{68}

In consolidating their power, institutionalizing norms and practices, gaining the confidence of the population, and seeking solutions to economic problems, new democratic governments face a range of issues crucial to their survival and future success. Scholars have

\textsuperscript{66} Cesarini 2004.


\textsuperscript{68} For changing role beliefs in military officer corps, see: Fitch 1998, 65.
argued that transitional justice can be used in part to achieve these goals. While political considerations have at times limited a government’s options for fear of aggravating the military, there also have been opportunities to “fix responsibility for past disasters on former elites.” Scholarship has focused on the duty to prosecute human rights abuses weighed against the concern of antagonizing the armed forces and provoking a new round of military intervention in politics. Studies have found that the use of non-punitive mechanisms, such as truth commissions and amnesties, have been the result of lingering power from the armed forces. Work on public vetting has shed light on measures that new democracies can take to shield themselves from the influence of former regime leaders when they are elected. For instance, countries such as Argentina have seen the use of constitutional measures whereby Congress rules on the fitness of its members to serve in order to bar former repressors from taking office even once elected. A civilian government’s condemnation of past leaders serves as a check against individuals accused of human rights abuses, for example, potentially returning to government.

While many states have seen continuity between those who formerly ruled the country and those competing for power now, overt attempts by militaries or politically conservative actors to forcibly overthrow current democratic governments in Latin America have been few.

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73 Barbuto 2007.
Instead, these forces have tended to withdraw from the system, to ignore the rules (as in the case of continued operation of right-wing death squads), or to obstruct reform efforts in government.\textsuperscript{74}

The phenomenon of recycled dictators is integral to transitions, democratic consolidation, civil-military relations, and transitional justice. Analyzing the role that ex-regime actors play in electoral politics can better inform our understanding of the challenges and opportunities that they present to the new regime and how best to manage their participation or exclusion in the new system.

**The Changing Context of Elite and Military Support for Authoritarianism**

Recognizing the role of ex-regime candidates within the new democratic system elucidates an important prospective outcome: Their participation in politics is a positive development. A nation that allows its former dictators and anti-democratic rulers to compete for power among other candidates of all political stripes in a free marketplace of ideas and votes them down will deliver the strongest, most definitive repudiation of authoritarianism possible. This rejection is not the only outcome, as some of these leaders have gained enough support to make their way back into positions of power. At the very least, their participation demonstrates that they have accepted the rules of the electoral game. If even those politicians with the most anti-democratic records have bought into the democratic system, this process represents a step in democratic integration of unparalleled importance. Political inclusion has been an important prerequisite historically to democracy in the region. When popular actors have been excluded, as with many communist parties throughout the 20\textsuperscript{th} century, they have turned to violent

\textsuperscript{74} Cruz and Diamint 1998. For an example of obstruction: in Guatemala, former military officials in the \textit{GANA} party and Otto Perez’s \textit{Partido Patriota} have worked in the legislature to undermine civilian control of the military by codifying the military’s ability to use its own court system for investigations of military personnel, thereby perpetuating a culture of impunity and avoiding accountability for human rights violations, past and present.
insurrection.\textsuperscript{75} When elite actors have been excluded or have found that they could not compete within the democratic system, they have turned to the military to resolve institutional disputes.\textsuperscript{76} For those leaders, who literally have fought against political liberalism, to choose an electoral contest as their pathway to power suggests the transformative nature of a strong, open democracy in the wake of a political transition.

Elite failure to commit to the rules of the game has diminished the potential for survival of civilian government in other democratic periods in Latin America.\textsuperscript{77} Despite the view of militaries intervening in politics and making decisions on the form and leadership of government, civilian elites often have been the ones to urge a military reset of the political system when they have felt their position being threatened by the populist nature of democracy.\textsuperscript{78} This pattern has been evident in reactions to political liberalization in the early 20\textsuperscript{th} century in the countries of the Southern Cone. For example, the coups d’état from Gen. José Uriburu in Argentina (1930), Getulio Vargas in Brazil (1930), and Arturo Puga in Chile (1932) all enjoyed the support of civilian elites, rather than actions being undertaken solely by or purely for the benefit of military institutions. Notably, these events also coincided with the collapse of the global economy and the beginning of the Great Depression, which placed further burdens on the stability of the political and economic arrangements in these countries. The overthrow of Juan Perón in Argentina in 1955 is another stark example of the potential result of civilian elites feeling threatened by the their institutional rivals, in this case labor unions, gaining greater

\textsuperscript{75} Goodwin 2001.

\textsuperscript{76} Rueschemeyer, Stephens and Stephens 1992.

\textsuperscript{77} Peeler 2004.

\textsuperscript{78} On the issue of military concern for its own survival, see: Lieuwen 1964. On the issue of civilian-military cooperation in the staging of a coup d’état, see: Needler 1966. In Needler’s words, “a military coup is not made by the military alone” (1966, 618).
strength through democracy. The same rationale produced rightist civilian coalitions that backed the junta led by Gen. Juan Carlos Onganía in 1966 and opposed redemocratization because the political right could not successfully compete electorally.\textsuperscript{79} Long-term military takeovers of government in the 1960s and 70s famously involved alliances between the military, capital interests, and civilian technocrats all pursuing a course of rule that would push through the “bottlenecks” resulting from import substitution industrialization (ISI)-based economic development.\textsuperscript{80} General Castelo Branco, the first president of the 1964-85 military regime in Brazil, ruled with the endorsement of conservative political elites, who even supported the reorganization of the party system because it strengthened their position by reviving “defunct conservative parties.”\textsuperscript{81} Traditionally, military involvement in politics has not been an affair in which the institution is solely pursuing its own self-interest or in which the armed forces are cleanly arrayed against a unified civilian opposition. Civilian elites, rather, have used military power against one another or against the masses when they stand to lose from democratic competition for power. Or, civilian elite rivals may attempt to “convince the extreme elements of a divided military to join them” instead of their opponents, eroding the potential for unfettered civilian democratic government to survive.\textsuperscript{82}

Seymour Lipset and Aldo Solari define elites as “those positions in society, which are at the summits of key social structures, i.e. the higher positions in the economy, government,
military, politics, religion, mass organizations, education, and the professions.”\textsuperscript{83} Civilian elites, particularly those on the political Right—“including, among others, holders of traditional wealth in land and minerals, anti-populist businessmen and economists, the conservative wing of the established church, anti-Communist international elites, and, in most countries, much of the military”—have not committed to the democratic game in earlier periods.\textsuperscript{84} The inclusion of former authoritarian leaders, and their willing participation in the new system, indicates a crucial strengthening of democratic practice among previously ambivalent elite actors. This result is in part a consequence of the rupture between the military and supportive civilian elites born of the last round of military governments, themselves. Militaries demonstrated autonomy from the wishes of civilian elites in the long-term military regimes of the 1970s and 80s, which has made the military a less attractive political ally in the post-transition period.\textsuperscript{85} Civilian elites could not rely on inclusion in the policymaking process during these regimes, outcomes were unpredictable, and policies did not necessarily reflect the original efforts of the coalition that brought the military to power.\textsuperscript{86} For example, leaders of the Christian Democratic Party (PDC) in the Chilean Congress called on the military to intervene against President Allende in 1973, believing the armed forces would break the institutional deadlock between the president and congress, restore order, and hand the reins of government over to the PDC—instead they too found themselves locked out of power for the next 17 years.\textsuperscript{87}

\textsuperscript{83} Lipset and Solari 1967, vii.

\textsuperscript{84} Chalmers, Campello de Souza and Boron 1992, 2.

\textsuperscript{85} Gibson 1992, 13-42.

\textsuperscript{86} O’Donnell 1992, 43-7.

\textsuperscript{87} Loveman 1988.
The poor performance of many dictatorial regimes also weakened militaries and made them less useful as a political ally.\textsuperscript{88} The civilian Right is also now more accepting of democracy because there are no significant political threats against capitalism.\textsuperscript{89} The Right succeeded in the ideological and practical battle of making capitalism the only acceptable economic system in use, which limits the potential changes that can be made to the socio-economic structure of a country, even when the Left wins power through elections. These commitments have made civilian elites less prone to seek military support in settling rivalries and has strengthened democratic practice overall.

Former military regime officials’ commitment similarly represents part of this shift toward “consensus of political values and expectations” deemed necessary for successful democratization.\textsuperscript{90} Their participation in the immediate transition period demonstrates this even more strongly. Holdouts may recognize that they must use democratic means to compete for power because “the more the game goes on, and the more actors practice it, the more costly it seems not to play it.”\textsuperscript{91} The immediate presence of former dictators in the new system may seem to be a troubling continuance of authoritarian domination of politics, but as Giuseppe Di Palma argues, “genuine democrats need not precede democracy.”\textsuperscript{92} The most crucial arrangement in the post-transition environment is agreement on the arena in which political rivalries will be fought, and former regime leaders’ acceptance of the new system further validates the primacy of democratic institutions for handling political competition. Even if ideological support for

\textsuperscript{88} Boron 1992, 68-95.

\textsuperscript{89} Boron 1992, 68-95; O’Donnell 1992, 43-7.

\textsuperscript{90} Scott 1967, 117-145.

\textsuperscript{91} Di Palma 1990, 113.

\textsuperscript{92} Ibid., 30.
democracy is not strong among recycled dictators initially, participation increases their stake in the system, making them hesitant to challenge the system or to defect from it.\textsuperscript{93} From this perspective, democracy can be viewed as an “efficient way of defusing and regulating serious inherited conflict,” and without the buy-in of all political actors, there is no guarantee that competition will take place within democratic institutions that allow for “coexistence in diversity.”\textsuperscript{94} Political pluralization without institutionalization of democracy has been the pattern of political openings and contractions the region has experienced in the past.\textsuperscript{95} The dual shift from civilian elites reducing their reliance on the military as a political arbiter and former authoritarian figures buying into the new system demonstrates a significant change in Latin America’s elite support for democracy. Concerns over popular support for democracy must be considered in context with this elite transformation.

**Theory of Recycled Dictator Presidential Candidacy**

After having turned power over to a new, democratic administration, members of the former authoritarian regime exit government. Years of military rule often leave new civilian leaders with a hollow civil society, a factionalized and unwieldy armed forces, and a variety of other challenges to democratic consolidation, such as minimal respect for the rule of law and declining economic performance. The lingering issue of what to do with former rulers may be even more daunting. The country is faced with the questions of whether and how to hold former regime members accountable for past actions and how to manage their participation in the new system.

\textsuperscript{93} Cesarini and Hite 2004, 11.

\textsuperscript{94} Ibid., 29.

\textsuperscript{95} O’Donnell 1979.
The open system of democracy in which there are few barriers to participation ultimately presents a problem. Allowing all citizens to vote, stand for elections, and hold public office will maintain the theoretical obligation of upholding an equitable system, but this freedom will, in fact, permit the participation of anti-democratic actors. Conversely, prohibiting participation from suspect actors dissolves the commitment to democratic principle under the guise of protecting it. The question, then, of what to do with those who have violated the law, defied the constitution, and consistently shown their disdain for civilian authority becomes important for a country’s future. For the most part, post-military government states in Latin America have not formally restricted the ability of individuals associated with the old regime to run for elected office. The notable exception to this rule was the constitutional provision in Guatemala that barred General Efraín Ríos Montt from running for president on the grounds that no individual who previously had participated in the overthrow of the government should be allowed to serve as chief executive again. Nevertheless, this rule did not bar him from running for congress; and he served as the president of that body from 1994 to 2004. During this time, he also consistently challenged the electoral court to allow him to run for president, and they eventually did allow him to run in the 2003 election.

Public vetting procedures have been used in Argentina to bar ex-regime officials from taking office after being elected, but they have not been prevented from standing for election. For example, former General Antonio Bussi was elected to the Argentine Congress in 1999, but he was not allowed to serve his term because his fellow Federal Deputies voted him unfit for office based on his role in the Dirty War. Luis Patti, a member of the police force during the 96 Article 186 of the 1985 Guatemalan Constitution specifies that the leader of a coup d’état or member of a military junta cannot serve as President or Vice President of the country.

military regime, was elected to the Argentine Senate in 2005. He too was refused his seat by the other members of the legislature. The question of continued public service from those associated with the former regime weighed heavily on Eastern European states as they transitioned away from Soviet rule at the end of the Cold War. Many states opted for lustration—a new form of non-criminal sanction in which individuals who held government positions in the old regime were not allowed to continue in that capacity under the new government. Most of the Latin American transitions pre-dated the development of this policy, so it has not been a common issue in the region. Moreover, these procedures addressed the status of members of the state bureaucracy rather than the status of potential candidates for elected office. Institutionally, then, there have been few barriers to entry into electoral politics for individuals associated with the former regimes in Latin America. They typically face only minimal restrictions that apply to all candidates. Thus, recycled dictators have been a possibility in all 12 post-military rule countries in Central and South America, and no country has completely escaped competition from its former rulers. Ex-regime candidates have been present in at least one presidential election in each country. But, there is variation in the intensity of recycled dictators’ presence across countries, with some states facing very few contenders and others seeing many more.

Country-level variation in the presence of recycled dictators in presidential elections is guided by the level of democratic continuity and the level of threat to former regime actors. Military rule produces potential recycled dictators. Eric Nordlinger’s sentiment that “the most common aftermath of military government is military government” has evolved in the wake of

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98 Barbuto 2007.


100 Massicotte, Blais and Yoshinaka 2004. These restrictions usually center on factors such as age, citizenship, residence, potential incompatibility with the office if they hold another position already, and a potential procedural requirement such as paying a fee to stand for election.
the global move toward electoral democracy, but it maintains relevance for understanding competition from ex-regime actors. Military government lays the foundation from which members of that regime will enter competitive elections, determining their potential strength as presidential contenders. On the other side, democratic experience prior to authoritarian rule plays a crucial role in the return or the initial steps of democratic actors in the new electoral arena. Just as former military regime officials may weather the transition and participate in politics, so too have civilian politicians who served in government prior to the military regime returned to electoral competition. Recycled dictators step into a presidential campaign competing for power on even ground for the first time. Their opposition matters.

Simultaneously, ex-regime actors face varying levels of threat to their interests, guiding their entry into presidential contests. While some regimes achieved their goals and secured their institutional and political prerogatives, others did not. The interaction of these two conditions of the national political environment—democratic continuity and threat to former regime actors—determine between-country variation in the presence of recycled dictators at the presidential level. As presented in Figure 2.1, high democratic continuity and low threat militates toward the return of democratic actors who pre-date and outlast authoritarian rule and give potential recycled dictators little reason to enter the electoral game, making these conditions most favorable for the resumption of democracy with few ex-regime competitors. Conversely, low democratic continuity and high threat deliver both motivated recycled dictators and weak democratic opponents, conditioning the country for high levels of former regime competition. A state with high democratic continuity and high threat or with low democratic continuity and low threat, has mixed conditions for competition. Democratic continuity is decisive in the overall

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level of recycled dictator involvement, leading candidacies to take a particular form in the high
democratic-high threat category, discussed at greater length below.

**Figure 2.1 Predicted Presence of Recycled Dictator Candidates**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Threat to Former Regime Actors</th>
<th>Level of Democratic Continuity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
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<td>Protest Candidity High Democracy ( - ) High Threat ( + )</td>
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<td>Persistent Ex-regime Competition Low Democracy ( + ) High Threat ( + )</td>
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<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Return of Democratic Party Representatives High Democracy ( - ) Low Threat ( - )</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mixed Competition Low Democracy ( + ) Low Threat ( - )</td>
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**Democratic Experience**

Conceptually, democratic continuity is a product of a country’s democratic experience
preceding military rule and of military rule itself. The parallel, yet divergent, forces of historical
democratic and military experience outlined and presented below are documented with empirical
data and categorized for each of the 12 Latin American country cases in Table 2.1. Historical
democratic practice at both the elite and popular levels impact contemporary democracy.\(^{102}\) Time under democracy necessarily involves electoral competition, and its duration exerts stabilizing
effects on political rivalry.\(^{103}\) Democratic legacies are an important determinant of contemporary

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\(^{102}\) Pérez-Liñán and Mainwaring 2010.

\(^{103}\) Lupu and Stokes 2010.
party interaction.\textsuperscript{104} Thus, the first component of democratic experience is the length of time under democracy since the country’s first transition—generally from de facto or constitutional oligarchy in Latin America, but broadly conceived, the first transition might be from hereditary rule, sultanistic rule, the rule of a one-party state, or another form of civilian autocracy. The second component of democratic experience rests with the quality of democracy in the era preceding military rule. As discussed above, the many competing definitions of the word “democracy,” and the perpetual questions regarding the meaningfulness of the label, attests to the need for this consideration. Third, democratic experience presents the opportunity for the establishment and growth of political parties to serve as effective electoral vehicles in the age in which they are founded and possibly after a period of military rule, if they are able to survive. Competitive political parties and civilian politicians independent of the outgoing regime are critical to the process of picking up where the military leaves off in governing the country and in providing a viable alternative to continued military control of politics.

\textbf{Military Experience}

The manner in which a country experiences authoritarian rule either reinforces or diminishes the long-term ability of these former regime actors to continue in presidential politics. First, on par with democratic experience, the first component of military experience is the duration of military rule prior to the contemporary democratic transition. Because not all military rule seeks the same goal, the second component is the nature of the regime’s political mission. Punctuated military intervention in the political arena generally sees a military exercising its tutelary role, removing a president from power and installing someone else in his or her place,

\textsuperscript{104} Coppedge 2007; Kitschelt et al. 2010.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Democratic Experience</th>
<th>Military Experience</th>
<th>Recycled Dictator Presidential Candidate Presence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Years of Democracy²</td>
<td>Quality of Democracy³</td>
<td>Democratic Party Development⁴</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uruguay</td>
<td>61 High</td>
<td>5 High</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>45 High</td>
<td>3 Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>33 High</td>
<td>6⁸ High</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>20 Medium</td>
<td>5 High</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>19 Medium</td>
<td>5 High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Recycled dictator candidates per 1000 potential candidates as calculated by cataloging all cabinet ministers, junta members, presidents under military rule, and estimating the officer corps of the country as 10% of total armed forces personnel. This is discussed at greater length in Chapter One.

² The total number of democratic years (whether restricted or full) since the country’s first 20th century transition to democracy, based on the timelines and characterizations from Rueschemeyer, Dietrich, Evelyne Huber Stephens and John D. Stephens. 1992. Capitalist Development & Democracy. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Timelines and characterizations extended to Central American cases by the author.

³ Polity IV composition score for the democratic era immediately preceding the final round of military rule.

⁴ Author’s characterization of political party development in the democratic era providing the basis from which to rebuild after military rule. See Appendix for full descriptions.

⁵ The length of military rule immediately preceding the Third Wave democratic transition, based on timelines and characterizations from Rueschemeyer et al 1992 and Military Intervention scores from Putnam 1967; Dix 1994; Looney & Frederiksen 2000.

⁶ Author’s characterization of the political mission of military rule.

⁷ Author’s characterization of political party development in the military era providing the basis for continued military competition in politics. See Appendix for full descriptions.

⁸ Earlier periods of non-military rule in Argentina were not so highly rated by Polity IV. The average Polity score for all years of preceding democratic eras (1926-30, 1932-43, 1946-55, 1958-66, 1973-76) is -1, primarily because Polity characterizes the first presidency of Juan Perón as highly autocratic.
<table>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ecuador</td>
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<td>Low</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Restructure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bolivia</td>
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<td>-3</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>18</td>
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<td>Substitute</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Substitute</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Substitute</td>
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<td>Low</td>
<td>1.8</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>-1</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Substitute</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>3.2</td>
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<td>n/a</td>
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<td>49</td>
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<td>Substitute</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraguay</td>
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<td>Low</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Substitute</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>0.6</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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1 Ecuador experienced constitutional, democratic government from 1948 to 1961, as identified by Reuschemeyer, Stephens and Stephens (1992). For this period, the Polity IV rating is 2, as noted in Table 2.1. Beginning with the 1961 military coup against President José María Velasco Ibarra, the country experienced a decade of governing crises and short-lived appointed governments (1961-63, 1966-68) and direct military rule (1963-66), with only one elected administration—the return of President Velasco (1968-70)—that devolved into dictatorship after he staged an autogolpe, dissolving congress and the supreme court. He was removed from office yet again via military coup in 1972. This decade of crisis accounts for the gap between the democratic era (1948-61) and the era of military rule (1972-79) considered here. An alternate accounting to Reuschemeyer, Stephens and Stephens could consider the final elected government of President Velasco (1968-70) to be the preceding democratic regime, which Polity rates much higher (5) than the more widely recognized 1948-61 democratic era.
potentially even the president’s constitutional successor. Military governance, however, seeks a longer-term political goal, conceptualized here as one of three potential missions: Policide, Restructuring the political system, or Substituting for civilian politics. Steve Stern’s concept of “policide”—the destruction of politics—involves the attempt to dismantle existing political institutions, particularly political parties. Under these circumstances, the military fails to provide a replacement for channeling competition, seeking instead to deny the practice or very existence of politics. Through harsh repression, the military may succeed in this mission while in power, yet it undermines their potential to control politics after a transition, thereby having a negative impact on the presence of recycled dictators. Substitution, on the other hand, involves autocratic forces directly confronting political pressures by seeking to stand in for competitive democracy. Through mixtures of repression against independent political organizing and the simultaneous construction of state parties (or the capture of existing parties), the authoritarian regime does not fully deny the existence of politics, rather it establishes a system of “managed democracy” and manipulates politics under a veneer of competition. Under these circumstances, military regime officials are accustomed to playing a (phony) democratic game, making elections in the new democratic era not an entirely unfamiliar route to power, increasing

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105 Nordlinger 1977; This pattern has been seen numerous times in the history of the region and as recently as the 2009 coup against President Manuel Zelaya in Honduras after which Roberto Micheletti, the leader of Congress, became de facto president, with the military maintaining it had acted out of constitutional duty: Ginger Thompson, “On TV, Honduran General Explain Their Role in Coup,” New York Times, 4 August, 2009; Marc Lacey, “Leader’s Ouster Not a Coup, Says the Honduran Military,” New York Times, 1 July, 2009.

106 Each of these goals bears relationship to the democratic government that came before it, but a particular path is not an inevitability, making the nature of authoritarian rule an important theoretical component of a country’s experience with autocracy.

107 Stern 2010.

108 The long-standing military governments in Guatemala (1960-85) and El Salvador (1931-80), discussed at length in Chapters Six and Seven, respectively, best illustrate this pattern of rule.
the prospect of recycled dictators in presidential contests. Finally, authoritarian government may seek alternate arrangements for addressing the needs of the citizenry while holding power, as when a military government attempts reform through corporatist institutions. Restructuring in this manner enables channeling mobilization while maintaining exclusionary governing practices, which can provide stable authoritarian control, but as with outright attempts to deny politics altogether, the lack of competitive institutions lowers the impact on the presence of recycled dictators.

Therefore, the third component of the experience of military rule considers the development of parties under the military regime, not just the military regime’s treatment of existing parties. Institutionalization of a governing party under authoritarianism “is less likely to enhance the level of post-transition democracy.” It also provides a ready-made electoral vehicle likely to carry a member of the founding regime as its candidate. Alternatively, the barriers between existing parties and de facto rulers may be so thin in the pre-authoritarian period that authoritarian actors successfully use existing civilian institutions and leaders while in power, thereby turning large sectors of the political class into recycled dictators. Honduras most notably exemplifies this pattern.

Figure 2.2 presents the causal pathways for the relationship between democratic experience, military experience, and the presence of recycled dictator competition upon democratization. States with high democratic experience have seen militaries seize power in order to deny the practice of politics—the military having identified intransigent parties or populist democratic success as the problem to be eradicated by military rule. The effort at “policide,” however, fails in the sense of not being able to destroy fully the pre-existing parties,


110 Pérez-Liñán and Mainwaring 2010, 5.
ensuring that eventually they return to compete, and the anti-party mentality of this form of military rule does not prepare these forces to have their own electoral vehicles upon democratization, leading to low presence of recycled dictators. States with low democratic experience have seen military seizure of power to replace democratic politics with military politics. When military control has been high during civilian government as well, military rule represents a continuation of heavy military influence over national policymaking. Militaries consciously play a “democratic” game, substituting their own electoral vehicles for former democratic parties and manipulate elections to their own ends. Military-dominated politics
continues in the democratic era with high recycled dictator presence. Finally, with either high or low democratic experience as a background, militaries have pursued restructuring the system away from electoral politics entirely. This effort, while allowing the military to exercise its power or continued control over the country, fails to establish a basis from which recycled dictators can operate in the new system. Their presence will be low, with the potential return to democratic competition and attendant military institutional influence over the new system.

Threat to Former Regime Actors

While democratic continuity structures the relationship between recycled dictators and their opposition in the electoral arena, ex-regime actors also face uncertainty by leaving power. Authoritarian government exercises control over the political environment. It is possible for an outgoing regime to secure its interests through institutional controls, such as appointed members of government, amnesty for human rights abuses, continued command over the armed forces, and management of economic prerogatives such as the military budget, among others. An authoritarian regime’s exit from government in a position of strength that allows it to implement measures that lock in its power in the new democratic era, can circumvent the need for high levels of electoral competition from recycled dictators. Ex-regime actors need not compete for public office, because their interests are secure already. The threat of accountability for past crimes, victory from ideological rivals, or even the potential dismantling of the armed forces,

111 Authoritarian governments commonly issue self-amnesties. This practice is nearly ubiquitous in the Latin American cases. Chile and Brazil were most successful with maintaining influence in government through institutional means—cabinet portfolios reserved for members of the armed forces, appointed senators, and Pinochet remaining as commander-in-chief in Chile until 1998, for example. And, the ongoing transition in Burma illustrates the potential for post-regime strength of a military as well, with the 2008 constitution mandating that 25% of seats in parliament be held by active duty military officers and the military successfully retaining control over large amounts of land it appropriated during its rule: Aung Zaw, “Putting a New Face on Myanmar’s Military,” The Irrawaddy, 12 July 2013; Zarni Mann, “Only Fraction of Land Seized by Military Will Be Returned: Minister,” The Irrawaddy, 18 July 2013.
however, presents former regime actors with considerable uncertainty. The level of threat is determined by armed conflict, the condition under which the authoritarian regime leaves power, and the prospect for transitional justice. While a post-transition political environment that is ripe for transitional justice is also an environment not likely to look favorably upon ex-dictators running for office, the specter of punitive measures or anything that threatens the legacy of military rule can prompt former regime officials to re-enter politics. The threat of punishment can give them an acute reason to be involved in the new system. To rein in militaries in the democratic era, new governments have made efforts to reform the mission, doctrine, training, command structures, budgets, size, and other elements of military power. At times, these responses have taken the form of high-level officers speaking out against the civilian leadership, threats against civilian authorities, or even outright military rebellion and attempted coups d’état.

Channeling competition into elections can mean the expression of long-standing conflicts between reformers and hardliners (often as a reflection of intra-military ruptures) among candidates in the new system. Under a transition from authoritarianism to democracy, key players of the former government have agreed to cede power, but this arrangement is not always universally held. Individuals or factions of the preceding regime can spoil the transition, as in Bolivia, where the initial 1979 attempt at democratic transition instead produced more than three years of coups, short-lived dictatorships, and appointed presidents. Transition through collapse, or the abrupt end to a regime through coup d’état from a reformist wing of the armed forces can heighten competition from recycled dictators.

The four cases in Latin America where these issues present a high level of threat are outlined in Table 2.2. The war context of defeat by a foreign adversary prior to transition (Argentina, Panama) or ongoing armed conflict that plays a role in pressuring a military to exit
government (El Salvador, Guatemala) leaves the institution vulnerable to changes in its traditionally dominant role. Relatedly, the type of transition a country experiences can raise or reduce the threat. Transition through collapse or overthrow means ex-regime actors are in a weak position to secure their prerogatives on the way back to the barracks. Finally, implementation of punitive transitional justice measures, most notably in the Argentine case, raises the stakes for ex-regime actors and gives them more reason to attempt to influence the new government in any way they can, including by running for office.\textsuperscript{112}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Armed Conflict</th>
<th>Transition Type\textsuperscript{113}</th>
<th>Transitional Justice\textsuperscript{114}</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Note: The other eight states under consideration experienced low threat on the basis of no armed conflict, a negotiated-regime-led transition, and minimal transitional justice measures.

\textsuperscript{112} Argentina and the role of transitional justice in recycled dictator presence is discussed at greater length in Chapter Five.

\textsuperscript{113} Classification from Reiter 2009.

\textsuperscript{114} Data from Olsen, Payne and Reiter 2010.

\textsuperscript{115} Though the transitions in El Salvador and Guatemala can be understood as negotiated processes, the uncertain outcome of the war, particularly in El Salvador where losing the war was a very real possibility, pushed the militaries toward exit as part of a politico-military counterinsurgency strategy whereby the institutions were by definition making concessions. The armed forces in these countries feared repetition of the communist victories in Cuba and Nicaragua which resulted in the dismantling of the former security apparatus of the Batista and Somoza regimes, respectively.
In summary, democratic experience and military experience together determine the level of democratic continuity. Interacting with this factor is the threat or assurance that the outgoing administration has secured for itself. As determined by the components outlined above and presented empirically for the Latin American cases in Tables 2.1 and 2.2, these two factors broadly define the recycled dictator experience. High democratic continuity and low threat produce the fewest ex-regime candidates, while the inverse—low democratic continuity and high threat—produce the highest number. Where the factors are on balance, either both high or both low, competition will be mixed, yet take different forms. These theoretical predictions are born out precisely in the aggregate as presented in Figure 2.2.

**Figure 2.3 Aggregate Presence of Recycled Dictator Candidates**

| Level of Threat                  | Level of Democratic Continuity |  
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|---|
| to Former Regime Actors          | High                           | Low                          |
| High                             | Protest Candidacy (0.3)         | Persistent Ex-regime Competition (3.4) |
| Low                              | Return of Democratic Party Representatives (0.2) | Mixed Competition (2.0) |

Note: Numbers in parentheses are recycled dictator candidates per 1000 potential candidates as calculated by cataloging all cabinet ministers, junta members, presidents under military rule, and estimating the officer corps of the country as 10% of total armed forces personnel. This is discussed at greater length in Chapter One.
Figure 2.3 separates each of the 12 post-military rule countries in the study and places them in their respective quadrants based on level of democratic continuity and level of threat to former regime actors. Each combination of factors produces a different outcome—Return of Democratic Party Representatives, Persistent Ex-Regime Competition, Protest Candidacy, and Mixed Competition. I discuss the different levels and nature of recycled dictator presence in turn.

**Figure 2.4 Presence of Recycled Dictator Candidates by Country**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Democratic Continuity</th>
<th>Level of Threat to Former Regime Actors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Protest Candidacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Argentina, 4 (0.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Persistent Ex-regime Competition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Panama, 1 (1.8)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>El Salvador, 6 (3.5)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Guatemala, 12 (3.6)</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Return of Democratic Party Representatives</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Brazil, 4 (0.1)</td>
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<td>Chile, 2 (0.2)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Uruguay, 1 (0.3)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Peru, 3 (0.4)</td>
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<td>Ecuador, 3 (0.9)</td>
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<td>Paraguay, 2 (1.2)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Honduras, 4 (3.2)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bolivia, 9 (3.2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Numbers in parentheses are recycled dictator candidates per 1000 potential candidates as calculated by cataloging all cabinet ministers, junta members, presidents under military rule, and estimating the officer corps of the country as 10% of total armed forces personnel. Integers after the country name are the number of actual candidates who stood for election, thereby distinguished from the number of candidacies which counts the same individual’s campaigns separately. For example, General Hugo Bánzer of Bolivia is one candidate but because he ran for president four times, he is counted four times in the number of recycled dictator candidacies.

**Return of Democratic Party Representatives**

The pattern of Return of Democratic Party Representatives can be seen in Chile, for example, where Hernán Büchi, a Finance Minister in General Pinochet’s government, was the
standard-bearer for the outgoing military regime. Meanwhile, the *concertación* (the alliance of democratic parties) put forward Patricio Aylwin. The two principle candidates for president in the 1989 transitional election directly reflected the two preceding political epochs. Aylwin had been the long-time president of the Christian Democratic Party, a party founded in 1957, that held the presidency (1964-70) and served in opposition to the administration of President Allende (1970-73). Threat to former regime actors was very low, because of the position of strength the Pinochet government held when it left power. Gen. Pinochet secured prerogatives and continued military influence from guaranteed budget levels to senatorial appointments and his own retention of the position of commander-in-chief. Similarly, in Uruguay, the primary contenders for the presidency in the 1984 transitional election came from the National Party and the Colorado Party, both of which were long-standing features of the political landscape in the country and both of which regularly held power prior to the 1973-85 military regime. The military secured an amnesty in 1986 and successfully defended it against repeal over subsequent years. In both cases, democratic leadership was prepared to step into the role vacated by the armed forces and members of the former regime were under minimal threat, keeping the presence of ex-dictators in presidential contests low.

**Persistent Ex-Regime Competition**

In countries with significant political parties that pre-date the final round of military rule, civilian leadership, individually and institutionally, is more capable of competing for and

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116 The Chilean case is discussed at length in Chapter Four. For more on the Christian Democratic Party in Chile see: Fleet 1985.

117 The amnesty was effectively revoked with the Uruguayan Congress’s passage of a new law in October 2011: “Uruguay: Congress adopts landmark law to tackle impunity,” Amnesty International, 27 October 2011.
exercising power than in those states where the third wave of democratization represents the first meaningful attempt at democracy. Conditions of low democratic continuity and high level of threat predict persistent competition from ex-regime candidates. In a case such as Guatemala, the country lacked a political system independent of the armed forces. Civilian institutions were marginal or had been captured by the ruling military factions for their own use. The military produced the national leadership.\textsuperscript{118} Meanwhile, the military left under the strain of flagging long-term rule that had factionalized the institution and with the long-running civil war far from settled. The uncertainty of these conditions presented a threat to military interests. Guatemala has seen high levels of competition from ex-authoritarian actors. With well-established parties, there are natural successors to the former regime, and fewer recycled dictators enter the new system. In this regard, democracy is merely the structure through which political competition will take place; and where the armed forces have produced every modern president, they have a larger presence in the new system.

\textbf{Protest Candidacy}

The Protest Candidacy occurs under conditions of high democratic continuity and high threat. The return of democratic actors marginalizes presidential candidates who are not running on a major party ticket, yet former regime candidates can enter the competition less with the expectation of winning the election than in defending regime interests, or in the case of former military rule, directly defending military prerogatives in the new era. Argentina exemplifies this model. Prior to the 1976-83 military regime, the country had many years of democratic practice and long-standing, electorally successful parties such as the \textit{Unión Cívica Radical} (UCR) and the \textit{Partido Justicialista} (PJ), or Peronists, which predicts minimal involvement from former regime\textsuperscript{118} Schirmer 1998.
contenders. The new civilian government’s attempt to hold members of the military government accountable for human rights abuses put the armed forces under pressure. The same issues of prosecutions and a feeling of betrayal at the hands of their superiors that drove the carapintadas under Lt. Col. Aldo Rico to rebel are the same issues that led him and others in his movement to enter the political arena. All five candidacies in Argentina were from former carapintadas. As members of the armed forces, they used the form of agitation familiar to them and available to them—barracks revolts. When this mode of action was no longer available to them after their final rebellion was crushed in 1990 and many of the leaders were arrested and cashiered from the armed forces, they turned to politics to make their voices heard. Aldo Rico’s run for president in 1995 on the ticket of the minor party he founded, Movimiento por la Dignidad y la Independencia (MODIN), was not solely an effort to win office. The party was a vehicle for him to continue the defense of his version of the past that he began with the uprisings years earlier. He sought to convey his view of Argentina’s historical development, the military government, and the Malvinas War.119

With a Protest Candidacy, conditions may be against the political aspirant; and the strength of their opposition may leave little room for their efforts to have great electoral success, but in the Argentine case, a dictatorship that is remembered for its failings, a transition through collapse, and intense efforts in transitional justice turned some military officials into politicians because they had more to fight for in the new system. In effect, recycled dictator campaigns for office can be the result of these flashpoint conflicts that also bring other types of spoiler activity from the military, such as attempted coups d’etat, insubordination against the new civilian

leadership, and denials of past human rights abuses. Electoral contests are another arena in which those associated with the former regime can attempt to defend their legacy, give voice to their version of history, and press for their interests. In this regard, recycled dictators may behave more in line with single-issue candidates, seeking to draw attention to their own particular cause in order to influence the agenda of the election without a strong expectation of winning the race. As specialized candidates, they campaign for the sake of campaigning, rather than campaigning to win.

Mixed Competition

Finally, conditions of both low democratic continuity and low threat produce mixed competition. With weak democratic forces, the new system is open to competition and influence from recycled dictators. With low threat to their interests, the pressure or reward to enter is lower. As a consequence, the cases of Ecuador and Paraguay merit further consideration. Based on the democratic and threat predictors, Ecuador has the potential for higher recycled dictator presence. The country had a low level of democratic experience, with many interruptions via military intervention during the 20th century. This pattern, however, helps to explain the relatively low presence of ex-regime candidates in presidential elections. The Ecuadorian military held a traditionally tutelary role in the nation’s politics, intervening on many occasions to oust an elected president. In contrast to the many historical interventions in Argentina, however, the military typically did not take the reins of power. These interventions instead

\footnote{Zagorski 1992.}

\footnote{For more on single-issue parties in competitive context see: Meguid 2005; Mudde 2007; Usherwood 2008.}
resulted in the installation of a new civilian leader.\textsuperscript{122} Military rule immediately preceding the third wave democratic transition involved long-term governing (although at seven years, it was among the shortest-lived military regimes in the region), yet as a reformist administration, the armed forces sought to implement policy changes that its civilian predecessors also had agreed to and simply had failed to enact successfully.\textsuperscript{123} As such, the governing military faction was working toward particular policy outcomes, rather than ruling with the intent to destroy political opposition. Simultaneously, the lack of strong democratic institutions—both historically and in the contemporary era—has meant the military has not given up its tutelary role. Therefore, it continues to channel its participation in government through traditional behaviors such as rebellions and coups d’etat. In the years since the third wave transition to democracy, the country has seen continued military use of force to influence politics. In March 1986, Gen. Frank Vargas Pazos led a barracks revolt at the Manta Air Base and called for the ouster of President Leon Febres Cordero after the president had dismissed him from his post as Chief of Staff of the armed forces.\textsuperscript{124} The rebellion eventually ended with the arrest of Gen. Vargas, but the conflict was not over.\textsuperscript{125} In January 1987, fellow Air Force officers kidnapped President Cordero, held him hostage, demanded that he resign and that Gen. Vargas go free.\textsuperscript{126} The president did not resign but was released and issued an amnesty for the rebellious officer.

\textsuperscript{122} Fitch 1977.

\textsuperscript{123} Fitch 1998; Hanratty 1991.


\textsuperscript{126} “Ecuador-Kidnapping of President-Other internal developments-Foreign relations,” \textit{Keesing’s Record of World Events}, December 1987, 35564.
In November 1999, as the country was going through a severe economic crisis, the chief of the joint staffs of the armed forces “expressed his concern over the current political problems of the government of President Jamil Mahuad” for its inability to address the crisis and growing protests against the administration.\(^{127}\) By January 2000, a faction of the army under Col. Lucio Gutierrez, along with indigenous leader Antonio Vargas, and a former Supreme Court justice, Carlos Solórzano, deposed President Mahuad. Constitutionalist elements of the armed forces intervened in a countercoup to prevent Col. Gutierrez from taking power and to install the constitutionally mandated successor, Vice President Gustavo Noboa, instead.\(^{128}\) And, in September 2010, police forces protested against austerity measures, shutting down the country and attacking President Rafael Correa. Some reports indicated that soldiers and airmen were part of the protests as well, but the military high command expressed its support for the president and worked to bring a peaceful end to the uprising.\(^{129}\) Where the conduct of the armed forces maintains a traditional tutelary role, using either force or the threat of force to influence government, members of the institution or preceding military regime have less call to enter electoral politics. Another instrument of power is available to them, and until it is no longer an option, they continue to use it. Notably, both Gen. Vargas and Col. Gutierrez, once dismissed from the armed forces, did enter presidential politics just as Lt. Col. Aldo Rico and his fellow officers did in Argentina after having been cashiered. Gen. Vargas and Col. Gutierrez each ran twice, accounting for four of the five recycled dictator candidacies in Ecuador.


\(^{128}\) Dammert 2007, 14.

Paraguay had one of the longest stretches of military rule in the region and no democratic era preceding it. Threats have been low. The authoritarian government of Gen. Alfredo Stroessner ruled through both coercion and the use of “democratic” institutions, holding elections every five years like clockwork from 1954—the year he took power in a coup (and subsequent election)—onward until he was overthrown in 1989. In this time period, he was elected to the presidency eight times as the candidate of the Colorado Party. The results of these elections were always a foregone conclusion, with opposition candidates either being barred from participation or facing such restrictions that they chose to boycott the contest.\footnote{Gen. Stroessner essentially ran unopposed in the 1954, 1958, and 1963 elections: “Deposition of President Chaves - Señor Romero Perira installed as Provisional President,” Keesing’s Contemporary Archives, 5-12 June, 1954, 13610; “Re-election of President Stroessner,” Keesing’s Contemporary Archives, Feb. 22-March 1, 1958, 16038; “Re-election of President Stroessner - Other Political Developments,” Keesing’s Contemporary Archives, 9-16 March, 1963, 19290. In 1968 and 1973, opposition candidates were allowed from non-leftist parties, but centrist parties such as the Christian Democrats still chose to boycott: “Presidential and Congressional Elections - Re-election of President Stroessner - New Constitution,” Keesing’s Contemporary Archives, March 30-Apr 6, 1968, 22620; “Re-election of President Stroessner. Anti-Government Plots, 1964-70 - Confrontation between State and Church,” Keesing’s Contemporary Archives. 12-18 March, 1973, 25780. More restrictions were placed on the 1978 and 1983 contests.} The 1988 election was widely considered a complete fraud: “Voter abstention exceeded 50% in some areas and yet the government claimed 92.6% turnout.”\footnote{“Elections - Internal political, security, and economic situation - Relations with Argentina and USA,” Keesing’s Record of World Events, May 1988, 35887.} The rallies and protests surrounding the election led Gen. Andres Rodriguez Pedotti to remove Gen. Stroessner from power and to call for new elections. Ultimately, they did not look dramatically different from the elections of the Stroessner era, with Gen. Andres Rodriguez Pedotti, a military incumbent of the Colorado Party running against only one opposition candidate, Domingo Laino of the Liberal Party. Paraguay essentially maintained the party system that existed from the pre-20th century oligarchic era, with both the Asociación Nacional Republicana Partido Colorado (ANR, the Colorado Party) and the...
Partido Liberal Radical Auténtico (PLRA, the Liberal Party) having been founded in 1887. The National-Liberal party structure was common throughout the region in this epoch, but in most countries, party systems evolved as modernization and industrialization took hold and gave rise to new political actors. Paraguay, instead, witnessed the ongoing strength of these two parties with the Colorados being captured by Stroessner as a vehicle for his personalistic dictatorship. Paraguay’s hegemonic party survived the transition. Not until the 1993 presidential election, would the country see an open contest among a broad field of candidates, and not until 2008, would Paraguay have a president who did not ride to power on the Colorado label. The embedded relationship between the military, the state, and the Colorado Party meant the persistence of military power in the democratic era, even as individual leaders began to change. Juan Carlos Wasmosy, Colorado candidate for president in 1993, had been Minister of Integration under Gen. Rodriguez Pedotti. In 1998, the Colorado candidate was originally a former army officer, Gen. Lino Oviedo, until he was sentenced to 10 years in prison for staging a rebellion against President Wasmosy in 1996. His running mate, Raúl Cubas Grau, took his spot at the top of the ticket and focused his campaign on the message “Cubas al Gobierno, Oviedo al poder” (Cubas to government, Oviedo to power). This proved accurate, as Cubas gave a majority of cabinet posts to Oviedo’s supporters and gave amnesty to the general shortly

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132 PDBA 2011.
133 Mainwaring and Scully 1995.
134 CIDOB 2011a.
136 CIDOB 2011b.
after taking office, releasing him from prison. The ruling Colorado Party, in charge from 1948 onward, persisted through the transition, as did the Liberal Party and its perennial candidate, Domingo Laino, a long-time opposition leader. He was a contender before the transition and carried Liberal presidential hopes for the first three elections of the democratic era but never won. The Colorado Party maintained its hegemony. Thus, while the political system opened, not a great deal changed in the power relations in the country for many more years. Candidates for the Colorado Party in 1989 (Gen. Andres Rodriguez Pedotti) and 1998 (Raúl Cubas Grau) may not have met the precise definition of recycled dictator—Gen. Pedotti because he was a military incumbent when he ran and Raúl Cubas because he was not part of the former regime but wound up as something of a stand-in for Gen. Lino Oviedo—but their reflection of the military-Colorado Party system of Gen. Stroessner is clear.

**Temporal Distribution of Recycled Dictator Presidential Candidates**

Having established theoretical expectations and the empirical results for cross-national variation in the presence of former regime candidates, I turn now to consideration of when they run. More recycled dictators enter presidential elections in the years immediately following the transition, and with time, fewer candidates enter. As Figure 2.4 illustrates for the Latin American cases, 25 of the 67 recycled dictator candidacies take place within four years of the respective country’s transition to democracy. In absolute terms, and as a percentage of all candidates in presidential elections, the number declines with time. The phenomenon has been remarkably

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137 Lino Oviedo ran in his own right in 2008, though not on a major party ticket, losing to Fernando Lugo of the newly formed Alianza Patriatica para el Cambio. Running for office again in 2013, he was killed in a helicopter crash traveling from one campaign stop to another: Simon Romero, “Candidate for President of Paraguay Dies in Helicopter Crash,” *The New York Times*, 3 February, 2013.

persistent in the region, though, with some countries seeing the presence of those associated with the military regime run for office decades after the transition. As with presence in general, the timing of candidacies is not distributed evenly across countries. States in the high democracy-low threat category see off their recycled dictators within one (Uruguay) or two (Peru, Chile) election cycles. Among protest candidates, the timing corresponds to the rise of the threat to regime interests, because it motivates entry. States with low democratic continuity see continued involvement from ex-regime candidates, even to present-day elections.

Nevertheless, presence does decline over time, as shown in Figure 2.4. In the wake of the transition, the former authoritarian government produces a standard-bearer to serve as an heir to the regime in an attempt to continue their administration under democratic auspices. Over time, however, the potential to carry on the work of the authoritarian government fades. Any influence former regime institutions, these individuals, or their parties are to have on the post-transition system have greater effects the earlier they enter—as norms of conduct and institutional rules are being formulated. The more quickly these candidates return to the political arena, the greater chance they have of undermining the transition or successfully pursuing their demands before an environment antithetical to their interests crystallizes and shuts them out. Additionally, understanding that a political transition is inherently uncertain, the early entry point may reflect the recycled dictator’s belief that, all else equal, the best chance for success comes at a time when voters remain unsure about turning government over to the opposition.

139 The regime heir and other candidate types are discussed at greater length in Chapter Three.
Figure 2.5 Normalized Distribution of Recycled Dictator Presidential Candidacies by Year of Election in Twelve Latin American Countries (1979-2011)
Variation in Recycled Dictator Presence by Candidate Profile

Having considered where ex-dictator candidates are present and when they are present, I turn to accounting for presence by their role in the former regime. No pattern emerges in the Latin American cases of systematically varying levels of presence of candidates with different profiles based on the type of democratic continuity and threat in a country, nor timing of the candidacy. That is, there is no indication that civilian cabinet ministers only run in highly democratic states or immediately after the transition, for example. Nevertheless, taking candidate profiles into consideration provides a useful starting point for understanding potential differences in the rates at which different kinds of candidates run, relative to each other. First, military officers in the armed forces run at the lowest rates. Separated from military personnel who run in government and normalized by the candidate pool of all officers, the number is almost negligible. Thus, it is more instructive to focus on variation in the presence of members of government under military rule. Simply delineating between military and civilian members of government reveals that civilians run at the highest rates. Further disaggregated, as in Figure 2.5, an important pattern is evident.

The high rate at which military presidents have attempted to return to their former posts via democratic means obscures somewhat the lower level of participation from other officers. Former military presidents run at the highest rates (4.2), followed by civilian cabinet ministers (1.8), and finally military personnel who served as members of a junta or cabinet ministers (0.8).

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140 Per 50 potential candidates, the numbers are: Military (1.1), Civilian (1.8).
Figure 2.6 Recycled Dictator Presence among Members of Military Government

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member of the Armed Forces</th>
<th>Role in Government During Military Rule</th>
<th>President</th>
<th>Junta/Cabinet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Military President(^{141}) ((4.2))</td>
<td>Military Junta Member, Cabinet Minister ((0.8))</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>Civilian President(^{142}) ((0))</td>
<td>Civilian Cabinet Minister ((1.8))</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Numbers in parentheses are recycled dictator candidates per 50 potential candidates as calculated by cataloging all cabinet ministers, junta members, presidents under military rule. Therefore, this number should not be directly compared to the numbers given in Figures 2.1-2.4, as they are per 1000 potential candidates, because they include military field officers, which substantially increases the size of the pool of potential candidates.

Conclusion

In summary, cross-national variation in level of democratic continuity and level of threat to former regime actors predicts the presence of recycled dictators in presidential elections. Democratic continuity is determined by a country’s democratic experience—time under democracy, the quality of that democracy, the presence of political parties in that era—and by

\(^{141}\) The three ex-military presidents to run for office in the Latin American cases have been Gen. Hugo Bánzer Suárez (Bolivia), Gen. Efraín Ríos Montt (Guatemala), Gen. Juan Morales Bermúdez (Peru).

\(^{142}\) Empirically, there are no cases of civilians who held the presidency under military rule returning to a presidential campaign, but the potential did exist. As discussed in Chapter One, though I define military rule as an active duty member of the armed forces serving as head of state, there are instances where the military has placed or allowed a civilian technically to hold this position while maintaining control of government. Thus, in the potential candidates for this category would be figures such as Juan María Bordaberry (Uruguay), Julio Cesar Mendez Montenegro (Guatemala), and a variety of civilian presidents of Panama during the rule of Omar Torrijos and Manuel Noriega.
military experience—time under military rule, how the armed forces treat existing parties, and what alternative they provide. Threat is determined by armed conflict, transition type, and pursuit of transitional justice mechanisms.

States with high democratic continuity and low threat see the lowest rates of authoritarian return to competition, while those with low democratic continuity and high threat see the highest presence of recycled dictators. States with balance in democratic continuity and threat see mixed results but different forms of presence, particularly protest candidates. A return to praetorian military conduct may curb the presence of ex-authoritarians in presidential contests, but it does not bode well for democratic consolidation. Conversely, military capture of pre-existing parties obscures the separations between regime types and transitions, particularly shown in the cases of Paraguay and Honduras. Overall, competition from ex-regime contenders demonstrates a positive commitment among elite actors to electoral processes. Given the general lack of success from these candidates at the ballot box, it also demonstrates a popular preference for alternatives.
Chapter 3: Theory of Recycled Dictator Presidential Electoral Performance

Former General Hugo Banzer Suárez was elected to the presidency in Bolivia in 1997. He held the same role two decades earlier as an active-duty officer, a quintessential military strongman in a country that had seen little else in government. Bolivia famously experienced frequent changes in government via coup d’etat throughout the 20th century. The military seized power in 1936 in the wake of the disastrous Chaco War and the subsequent decades were defined by the revolving door of military officers taking over only to be ousted by their comrades a short time later.\(^{143}\) Hugo Banzer’s rule (1971-78) was much longer and more stable than that of his predecessors. Nevertheless, he too was eventually deposed in a coup. As the country transitioned toward democracy in the following years, Gen. Banzer ran for president in every contest from 1985 onward. His persistence paid off, and he won the presidency in 1997.

Returning an ex-dictator to power via free election is a strange fate for a democratizing country. Fighting to throw off the yoke of repressive dictatorship only to restore the same leader to government seems a contradictory path. It is; so, countries do not generally take it. Hugo Banzer was uncommonly successful in returning to the presidency. Having catalogued all ex-military regime candidates for president in the region and their electoral fate, the overwhelming experience of these competitors is one of a minor showing at the ballot box.\(^{144}\) Gen. Banzer is one of eight recycled dictator candidates to win the presidency, a fraction of the total 67 attempts by members of the former regime. Recycled dictators’ success at the polls varies, guided by the conditions that determined their presence in the competition, as well. States with high democratic

\(^{143}\) Military rule was interrupted only by the revolutionary government of the \textit{Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario} (MNR), which also first seized power via force in 1952 and relied on military support for its continued existence, particularly toward the end of its rule. The MNR president, Paz Estenssoro was overthrown in 1964.

\(^{144}\) See Chapter One for full discussion of the definitions of military governments, their members, and the candidates emerging from them.
continuity see consistently low performance from ex-regime candidates. Overall, recycled dictators also perform poorly in states with low democratic continuity, yet in this context many also secure considerably higher vote share, with a handful going on to occupy the highest office in their country. All recycled dictator presidential candidacies end in single-digit vote share unless the candidate runs as (1) the standard-bearer of a pre-military rule party, (2) an immediate successor to the authoritarian regime, (3) a rebel officer turned politician, or (4) one who has followed a more traditional political path of working his way up from lower-level offices.

This chapter proceeds as follows: First, I place recycled dictator electoral performance in the context of understanding popular support for democracy in transitional political environments. Second, I outline the broad patterns of ex-regime candidate performance in presidential elections across Latin America, underscoring the division between states with high and low democratic continuity as a predictor of success. Third, I discuss successful former regime candidates—those who achieved +10% vote share—developing a typology of success with three distinct types: (1) Regime Heir, (2) Rogue Officer, and (2) Caudillo Democrat. I conclude by reflecting on the nature of these different types of recycled dictators and their role in democratic competition.

Recycled Dictators and Popular Support for Democracy

Notable studies of the vote for anti-democratic candidates have sought to understand whether this support represents traditional voter dissatisfaction with short-term performance or opposition to the democratic system itself. Amber Seligson and Joshua Tucker find that harboring economic concerns and “a preference for more authoritarian forms of government”
made Bolivians more likely to vote for Hugo Banzer in the 1997 presidential election.\textsuperscript{145} Damarys Canache similarly finds that Hugo Chavez’s post-coup entry into politics, and eventual success at the polls, was made possible in large part by Venezuelans who were ambivalent toward democracy.\textsuperscript{146} But Chavez could not have won without the support of Venezuelans who valued democracy, as well. According to Canache, “what these voters shared was disdain for the status quo.”\textsuperscript{147} In cases of democratic transition, ambivalence toward the new system prevents consolidation of the new political regime because democracy is dependent on popular consent for its legitimacy. Where this popular support does not exist, democracy may falter.\textsuperscript{148}

Public opinion polls in Latin America and elsewhere that demonstrate voter dissatisfaction with democracy have been interpreted in terms of support for one system versus another.\textsuperscript{149} This interpretation is particularly salient for Latin America. As William Prillaman argues, “Latin Americans generally hold a more statist view of democracy than do citizens in consolidated democracies,” which is why issues such as high crime, poor police and judicial performance, and economic failures potentially undermine the perception of democracy overall.\textsuperscript{150} Voters are upset that democracy has not fulfilled their expectations. These frustrations can be understood as grievances against the state for its failure to deliver on an array of issues. This results-oriented understanding of democracy means that the system is viewed in instrumentalist terms—if the state is providing, then democracy is working. People have a

\textsuperscript{145} Seligson and Tucker 2005.

\textsuperscript{146} Canache 2002.

\textsuperscript{147} Ibid., 83.

\textsuperscript{148} Chang, Chu and Park 2008.

\textsuperscript{149} Rose 2001; Rose and Shin 2001; UNDP 2004.

\textsuperscript{150} Prillaman 2003, 9.
variety of needs that must be met, and the democratic state has not necessarily lived up to expectations. In the transitional context, these shortcomings from the state are considered failings of the new system, rather than being viewed simply as policy outcomes, as the same conditions might be viewed in a North American or European democracy. Marta Lagos’s finding that survey respondents’ feelings toward the economy matches up with their support for democracy reinforces this idea: “The more positively they assess the current situation, the more likely they are to support democracy.”

The experience of recycled dictators in Latin America is instructive in understanding the link between government shortcomings and support for democracy. Discontentment with particular conditions finds a voice as dissatisfaction with democracy in public opinion polls that propose hypothetical support for a return to anti-democratic government. But, when voters have been presented with the very real opportunity to vote for a candidate who was part of an authoritarian regime, these individuals are largely rejected at the polls.

The vote share obtained by recycled dictators varies, but most of them do not perform especially well. Of the 67 former regime candidates in presidential races in the Latin American cases, 38 have finished in the single digits in national vote share. Nevertheless, the remaining 29 have been more competitive with eight of these winning their respective elections and gaining power.

**Democratic Continuity and Recycled Dictator Performance**

As with the predictors that explain recycled dictator presence in presidential elections, a country’s democratic continuity has a profound impact on the candidate’s performance. In states with formerly established parties that are ready to return to the political arena at the point of

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transition from authoritarian rule, the voting public has a few major party candidates that channel
the principal political competition, and the remaining candidates, whether associated with the
former military regime or not, are traditionally relegated to secondary status, receiving only a
small share of the vote. Political parties aggregate interests and provide a label for candidates,
which voters use as a shortcut for the policy judgments they would otherwise have to make on
their own.\textsuperscript{152} The presence of a small number of established parties edge out smaller competitors
as voters gravitate toward major party cues. Where the armed forces have served as the national
leadership, producing every one of the country’s modern presidents, the shift from military rule
to civilian democracy is a change in the process of selecting personnel—while not necessarily a
change in the personnel competing for power. More former regime candidates perform at higher
rates in states with low democratic continuity, as illustrated in Figure 3.1.

Where parties’ cues are weak, there are considerable short-term changes in voter
preferences, and the presence of electoral volatility, which means that minor-ticket recycled
dictators are not at an inherent disadvantage.\textsuperscript{153} Under these circumstances, voters are less
committed to a party already, and allow more opportunity for ex-authoritarians to capture
votes.\textsuperscript{154} More recycled dictators find greater success at the polls in those states with lower levels
of democratic experience and lack major, established parties to compete for power.

Figure 3.1 demonstrates the breakdown in performance across the democratic continuity
divide. Among competitors in an environment of low democratic continuity, 28 of 51 (55\%) of
them break out of the single-digit result, whereas only one of 15 (6\%) manages this feat in a state
returning to its democratic roots. The results among these candidates are shown in Table 3.1.

\textsuperscript{152} Campbell et al. 1960.
\textsuperscript{153} Baker, Ames and Renno 2006.
\textsuperscript{154} Siavelis and Morgenstern 2008.
The candidate who breaks the mold is Hernán Büchi, Finance Minister in Chile under Gen. Pinochet, who secured almost 30 percent of the vote in his 1989 run for the presidency. As the heir to a military government that was seen as producing order and economic success out of the chaotic period preceding it, Büchi’s candidacy deviates from the pattern of low performance.\textsuperscript{156}

**Recycled Dictators on Major Party Tickets**

In rare circumstances, ex-regime candidates do run on major party tickets, which accounts for higher performance. For example, in Honduras at least one of the National Party

\textsuperscript{155} Hernán Büchi in Chile is the one candidate in this category who secured over 10% of the vote.

\textsuperscript{156} Büchi’s candidacy is discussed at length in Chapter Four on Chile.
and the Liberal Party candidates in the 1981, 1985, and 1989 presidential elections had been a member of the former military government. The armed forces had ruled through co-optation and pacts with the two long-standing dominant parties, as evidenced by Honduras having one of the highest ratios in the region of civilians in cabinet positions under military rule. The continuity in personnel from the pre-military era through military rule meant ongoing continuity as the country democratized in the 1980s. As a result, numerous presidential candidates in Honduras

Table 3.1 Recycled Dictator Candidates in States of High Democratic Continuity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Election Year</th>
<th>Candidate Name</th>
<th>Political Party</th>
<th>Vote Share (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Aldo Rico</td>
<td>MODIN</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Ricardo Terán</td>
<td>MODIN</td>
<td>0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Enrique Venturino</td>
<td>Conf. Para Que Se Vayan Todos</td>
<td>0.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>2003, 2007</td>
<td>Gustavo Breide Obeid</td>
<td>Partido Popular de la Reconstrucción</td>
<td>0.22, 0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Aureliano Chaves</td>
<td>Partido da Frente Liberal</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Paulo Maluf</td>
<td>Partido Democrático Social</td>
<td>8.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Hernani Goulart</td>
<td>Partido Social Cristão</td>
<td>0.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Ivan Moacyr</td>
<td>Partido da Mobilización Nacional</td>
<td>0.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Hernán Büchi</td>
<td>Renovación Nacional</td>
<td>29.4157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>José Piñera Echeñique</td>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>6.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>1980</td>
<td>Javier Tantalean Vanini</td>
<td>Organización Política de la Revolución</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>1980</td>
<td>Rodríguez Figueroa</td>
<td>Izquierda Unida</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>1985</td>
<td>Francisco Morales Bermudez</td>
<td>Frente Democrático de Unidad Nacional</td>
<td>0.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uruguay</td>
<td>1984</td>
<td>Nestor Bolentini</td>
<td>Partido Unión Patriótica</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

157 Hernán Büchi in Chile is an exception to the rule here. Unique among candidates in states of high democratic continuity, he fits the mode of a Regime Heir, explaining his success at the polls. Büchi’s candidacy is discussed at length in Chapter Four on Chile.

158 Seventy of 90 cabinet members (78%) from 1963 to 1980 were civilian.

159 Honduras had a highly entrenched party system that essentially shared power with the military. This was especially evident with the pacted “election” of 1971 in which the two parties and the armed forces agreed on the distribution of congressional seats and ministerial portfolios before the vote even took
were recycled dictators. For the 1981-90 period, two-thirds of presidential candidates had been part of the previous regime. In the three presidential elections in this time frame, the National Party had a former regime candidate in each cycle and the Liberal Party once. Honduras demonstrates the potential for ex-regime candidates to perform well on the basis of running on a major party ticket that is virtually guaranteed a strong showing at the polls given its historical place in national politics. And for Honduras itself, the first-past-the-post electoral system at the presidential level reinforces the electoral strength of the two major parties.

In 1981, Ricardo Zuñiga, who had been Secretary for the Presidency in 1964 and National Party boss under the Col. Osvaldo López Arellano regime, ran for president. A lawyer and former judge who “traditionally identified with the army,” Zuñiga was thought of as a supporter of the armed forces and the “closest political ally of Honduras’s successive military regimes.” His Liberal Party rival, Roberto Suazo Córdova, had not been part of the military government, but each candidate portrayed himself as a caudillo strongman who could fix the country’s problems. The two parties had convergent platforms that sought support from the place. “Congressional and Presidential Elections won by Ruling National Party,” *Keesing's Contemporary Archives*, Apr 24-May 1, 1971, 24562.

Mahoney 2001.

IDEA 2013.

Pragnell 1967, 259.


United States and maintained the military’s privileged position in the country. The possibility of return to military rule was high regardless of the winner. At the time of the election, many military officials, civilian politicians, and foreign ambassadors and observers believed that another military coup was likely if the civilian government could not bring stability and economic success to Honduras. Between them, the National and Liberal parties captured 93% of the vote.

The 1985 election is instructive in understanding the impact of the major party label for a recycled dictator. In this contest, all four candidates had held a role in the previous government. The Liberal and National Party candidates, however, dominated the field. The two traditional parties again took 93% of the vote, leaving the other two with less than 2% of the vote each. Challenges to Jose Azcona’s (Liberal Party) citizenship and allegations of corruption against Rafael Leonardo Callejas (National Party) led the Honduran electoral court to consider disqualifying them both in advance of the election. The uncertainty contributed to factionalization of the major parties and created problems for the electoral system itself—it was unclear whether the candidate who received the most votes would win or whether the party (because competing factions were running their own candidates) with the most votes would

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168 McDonald and Ruhl 1985.

win. On election day, the National Electoral Tribunal finally settled the question by declaring that the candidate who would win the most votes within the party that receives the most votes would be the winner. Thus, being part of one of the two traditional parties ensured that either of the ex-regime candidates on these tickets would perform much better than they would without them or than their counterparts who were running on newly formed (or newly legalized) parties.

The 1989 campaign took much the same form with the major parties capturing 94% of the vote edging out other competitors and seeing Rafael Callejas win the presidency. The existence of such dominant parties, most often the case in states of high democratic continuity, has the effect of relegating other contenders, regardless of background, to minor showings at the polls. Rather than join an existing party, recycled dictators tend to create their own political groups when running for office. By the same token, however, in the event that a former regime candidate is the nominee of such a party, he is virtually guaranteed a high rate of success as has been the case in Honduras. Therefore, the dynamic of major party competition guides the performance of recycled dictators where they are either crowded out by the return of dominant parties or where they manage to run with one. As shown in Figure 3.1, the overwhelming experience of ex-regime candidates in states of high democratic continuity is that of single-digit performance. On the other hand, among states of low democratic continuity, recycled dictators

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173 This is not unique to recycled dictators, but rather a common feature of Latin American politics.
are still often only fringe candidates competing on the margins, but many of them (55%) escape this status, earning double-digit vote share. Examining these candidates—those who earn greater than 10% of the vote—reveals that successful recycled dictators share important characteristics that shed light on their ability to perform at higher rates than others.

**Typology of Successful Recycled Dictator Candidates**

Successful recycled dictators take three distinct forms—regime heir, rogue officer, and caudillo democrat. A regime heir serves as the standard-bearer for the old power in the new system, running on the official party of the outgoing military government or through an electoral vehicle formed by the regime and its allies for the purpose of competing in transitional elections. A regime heir performs well because of the party structure and resources of regime supporters behind him. A rogue officer is a member of the armed forces who stages a military rebellion, barracks revolt, or attempted coup d’état against the democratic government with a specific message of discontent with the new system that he quickly carries into the electoral arena. The rebellion ends his military career, but it launches his political one and establishes the credibility of his anti-system platform. A caudillo democrat, on the other hand, resembles a more traditional politician. While regime heirs and rebel leaders run for president without prior experience in elected office, the caudillo democrat works his way up from lower level elected positions such as mayor, congressional deputy, or senator. The caudillo democrat, therefore, has built a party and a constituency over time, working in the democratic system in a way that most unsuccessful recycled dictators do not. Charging in to presidential politics as an ex-general with no political experience does not produce a strong performance at the ballot box. Building a political career on the back of a military one, however, has been a strategy for success.

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174 Norden 1996.
The Regime Heir

Hernán Büchi, the one successful recycled dictator in a state with high democratic continuity, exemplifies the regime heir. After the success of the No vote in the 1988 plebiscite in Chile assured that Gen. Pinochet would not automatically continue to occupy the presidency, the country was to hold the first presidential election in almost 20 years. The movement that defeated Gen. Pinochet’s effort to remain in power was made up of the parties and leaders who had been part of the democratic system prior to the 1973 coup d’etat. The democratic forces were returning to compete. The military itself was exiting government in the transition, but they did not have to give up power. The regime would no longer be able to remain in office via force, but they too could seek the presidency through election. As a consequence, regime leaders and allies on the political Right formed the Unión Democrática Independiente (UDI) as a successor party and selected the man serving as Minister of Finance at the end of the regime, Hernán Büchi, to run carrying the promise of continuing the order and economic success of the military government under democratic auspices. The regime’s success in the economic realm and Büchi’s association with it gave him a strong platform from which to campaign and to win nearly 30% of the vote share, considerably higher than most of his recycled dictator colleagues.175

In Paraguay, Juan Carlos Wasmosy ran for the presidency in 1993 as the candidate for the Colorado Party, which had been in power for the preceding 45 years. It had been the political basis for the long-running Stroessner dictatorship and the government of Gen. Rodriguez Pedotti in which Juan Carlos Wasmosy served as Minister of Integration.176 Wasmosy was so preferred

175 The Büchi campaign is discussed at greater length in Chapter Four on Chile.

176 CIDOB 2011a.
as the candidate of the Colorado Party by the outgoing Gen. Rodriguez that he overturned the results of the party primary in order to have his hand-selected successor carry on to the general election.\textsuperscript{177} The candidate from whom the nomination had been stolen, far from being a new democratic actor, would have been a fellow recycled dictator, Gen. Stroessner’s former President of the Supreme Tribunal of Justice and his preferred candidate.\textsuperscript{178} Wasmosy won with 40% of the vote. Election day was marked by numerous irregularities and instances of fraud, but it was deemed not to have had enough of an impact as to alter the result.\textsuperscript{179} Wasmosy succeeded Gen. Rodriguez and carried on decades of unbroken Colorado Party rule.

Similarly, in El Salvador, Jose Francisco Guerrero stood for the presidency in the 1984 transitional election on the Partido Conciliación Nacional (PCN) ticket, the incumbent party that had ruled the country since 1961.\textsuperscript{180} Through the party, military officers exercised control over government and politics. Elections in the decade prior to the transition were consistently fraudulent, and even in the preceding period of relatively free contests, political organizing was restricted, particularly in the countryside. As the regime heir, Guerrero had the PCN behind him and performed better than recycled dictators without such institutional support, securing 19% of the vote.\textsuperscript{181}


\textsuperscript{180} The PCN effectively took over from the previous attempt at having an official party, the Partido Revolucionario de Unificación (PRUD), which was formed in 1948. They were two distinct parties, rather than simply being a name change, but they did involve many of the same people and occupy the same ideological space.

\textsuperscript{181} Jose Francisco Guerrero’s candidacy is discussed at length in Chapter Seven on El Salvador.
In Panama, Ernesto Pérez Balladares met with success as a regime heir. He had served as Minister of Economy and Finances under Gen. Omar Torrijos, the military strongman, from 1975 until the end of his rule in 1981. Pérez emphasized his association with Torrijos, because Torrijos remained popular long after his death, and because it served to pull attention away from his association with another more recent and far less popular dictator, Gen. Manuel Noriega.182 Pérez helped to found the Partido Revolucionario Democrático (PRD) in 1979 and ran on the ticket in the 1994 transitional election. The PRD functioned as the military party, and the brand had been harmed by Noriega’s rule. Pérez Balladares’ opponents used these associations against him in the campaign, seeking to convince voters that Pérez had been close to Noriega and that he would rule in a militaristic style if elected. Opponents used pictures and video of Pérez with Noriega in campaign advertisements to highlight his involvement with the deposed leader.183 The candidate bluntly dismissed these charges and the comparison to the former leader of the National Guard, however, calling Noriega a disgrace and seeking to build an image of association with Torrijos instead.184 Pérez promised there “would be no return of the military or militarism.”185 Thus, as in the case of Hernán Büchi in Chile, a regime heir may find himself relying on the electorally beneficial legacies of military rule while strategically taking


185 “Panama: Presidential and congressional elections,” Keesing's Record of World Events, May 1994, 40003.
opportunities to distance himself from the negatives of the outgoing regime. Pérez Balladares won the presidency with 32% of the vote.\textsuperscript{186}

The final regime heir is Hugo Banzer Suárez in Bolivia.\textsuperscript{187} General Banzer had been the military president of Bolivia from 1971 to 1978. His regime was reportedly responsible for carrying out over 14,000 political arrests, sending another 4,000 into exile, and torturing or killing hundreds.\textsuperscript{188} After the country transitioned to democracy in 1982, he became a perennial candidate for the presidency—running in each election through 1997, when he finally won the office.\textsuperscript{189} His party, Acción Democrática Nacional (ADN), won the third-largest number of seats in the national congress in the 1980 elections, and in the early stages of the 1985 presidential campaign, Banzer was polling well. His ratings began to slip as the election neared, in part due to his selection of a running mate “whose Fascist sympathies had been widely condemned” and as

\textsuperscript{186} “Panama: Presidential and congressional elections,” \textit{Keesing's Record of World Events}, May 1994, 40003.

\textsuperscript{187} Banzer was first a regime heir in the July 1979 presidential elections, just one year after he had been overthrown, and again in 1980, but not until 1985 were the results of a presidential election in the country respected and the elected officials able to take office without military disruptions. Banzer ran for president four times in the post-transition era, but I concentrate here on just two moments in his democratic career that illustrate his status as a regime heir: the 1985 election in which he obtained his highest vote share and the 1997 election in which he won the presidency and returned to power.


\textsuperscript{189} Banzer’s presence in democratic politics is unique in the sense that he was more persistent than any other candidate. The nature of the Bolivian transition complicates his status as a regime heir. While still in power in 1978, he was the one to call for elections. He selected Gen. Juan Pereda Asbún as his preferred candidate—which made Pereda the regime heir of the time. The election was marred by fraud, however, and the results anulled, leading Gen. Pereda to seize power by force, deposing Banzer. Elections were once again held in 1980, with Banzer as a candidate. Several more forcible transfers of power would take place until the government elected in 1980 was allowed to take office two years later. The 1985 election then was the first contest of the uninterrupted democratic period and represented the first chance for the general to pick up where he left off in 1979, making him an heir to his own regime despite the gap in time; Hudson and Hanratty 1991; Nohlen 2005.
the human rights abuses of his previous regime caught up with him. In the midst of the campaign, the Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales (CELS) in Argentina accused Banzer; his Interior Minister, Gen. Juan Pereda; and Guido Benavidez, chief of the political police, of collaborating with Argentine security officials during the “Dirty War” in that country. The prospect of Banzer’s return to rule provoked challenges from unions, including strikes and a declaration—before the election was held—from the country’s largest labor coalition, the Workers Central, that they would not accept the results. Indeed, leftist groups were so distressed at the thought of a Banzer victory that Bolivia’s largest labor coalition, the Workers Central, declared immediately prior to the election that they would not accept the results. Banzer declared victory in the contest and in an ironic twist, stated his hope that others would respect the victory, suddenly becoming the staunchest democrat around. He had earned the highest percentage of the vote, but because no candidate won a majority, the decision moved to the Bolivian Congress, where Victor Paz Estenssoro was selected to take office.

In each subsequent election, Hugo Banzer was again the frontrunner. His party grew in strength over time. But, questions about his time as a military leader did not go away. He promised to respect democracy, the free market, and the rule of law, but the former dictator’s

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efforts to transform his image could not undo the conduct of his regime.\(^{194}\) In the closing weeks of the 1997 campaign, small protests took place in La Paz over torture and disappearances under his rule.\(^{195}\) As ever, Banzer’s response to questions of his regime’s behavior was defensive and unapologetic. He emphasized the chaos the country was in when he took power in 1971 and claimed the accusations were politically motivated.\(^{196}\) His running mate, Jorge Quiroga, while using the tried-and-true political assertion that elections are about the future, not the past, simultaneously took opportunities to defend the ADN leader. Quiroga became his most vocal defender, downplaying the negative connotations of Banzer’s route to power the first time, at one point stating: “It’s not as if Banzer toppled a duly elected government. He toppled a violent, Marxist government that had toppled a government that had toppled a government,” thus emphasizing that Banzer was not doing anything out of the ordinary at the time.\(^{197}\) Hugo Banzer finally won the presidency via democratic election in 1997. In his inaugural speech, he claimed to be a man of “genuine conciliation” who would unite the country.\(^{198}\) The 73-year-old leader fell ill while in office and resigned in 2001, handing power over to his vice president, Jorge Quiroga.

The regime heir is the most direct manifestation of potential continuity in a country’s military experience. They represent the explicit attempt to continue the authoritarian regime

\(^{194}\) Banzer utilized the explosion of television stations in the late 1980s to run advertisements aimed at rehabilitating his image, including one in which he was “praised by peasant farmers and then lovingly embraced by a little girl” Merrill Collett, “Bolivians Campaign – US-Style,” Christian Science Monitor, 5 May, 1989.


under democratic auspices. Competing for power via open elections rather than maintaining a stranglehold on political life through manipulation or extending their rule through coercion is a positive development. Their representation of the former regime gives them the resources and label of a political party entering the campaign, which sets them apart from so many recycled dictators who are running as little more than themselves and which enables them to pull in larger numbers of votes. Table 3.2 lists the regime heirs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Election Year</th>
<th>Candidate Name</th>
<th>Political Party</th>
<th>Vote Share (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chile</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Hernán Büchi</td>
<td>Renovación Nacional</td>
<td>29.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paraguay</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Juan Carlos Wasmosy</td>
<td>Partido Colorado</td>
<td>39.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>1984</td>
<td>José Francisco Guerrero</td>
<td>Partido de Conciliación Nacional</td>
<td>19.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panama</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Ernesto Perez Balladares</td>
<td>Partido Revolucionario Democratico</td>
<td>32.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Rogue Officers**

The second identifiable type of successful recycled dictator is the rogue officer. These individuals were members of the armed forces, not in a governing role, who continued their service through the transition and led a military uprising against the new democratic government, such as a rebellion, mutiny, barracks revolt, or attempted coup d’etat. As a consequence, these leaders have demonstrated a troubling lack of commitment to democracy through their disruptive action; yet as with all recycled dictators, they eventually accept the rules of the democratic game by running for office shortly after staging their insurrection. The uprising ends the rogue officer’s military career—because they are dismissed from the armed forces for insubordination or other illegal acts—but it launches his political one. The rebel leader has a stated mission for
which he is fighting, and he carries this same message into his presidential campaign. For all of the rogue officers, that message is anti-corruption. They position themselves when conducting their respective coups d’etat as attempting to liberate their people from corruption. Their words, genuine or not, resonate with a desperate public, allowing them to gain support as democratic logic would predict. In contrast to a regime heir or a major party candidate, these individuals consciously run as outsider, anti-system candidates, opposed to the chaos brought on by politicians’ failures. The message of contempt for traditional politicians is the familiar refrain from military leaders who forcibly took power in the past.¹⁹⁹ Now, though, they enter the new democratic system with the intent of being an alternative to traditional politicians.

Ecuador has seen two of these rebel leaders enter democratic politics, Lt. Gen. Frank Vargas Pazos and Lt. Col. Lucio Gutierrez. Vargas Pazos was an officer in the Ecuadoran Air Force during the military regime (1972-1979), and under the new democracy, he became chief of staff of the armed forces. After accusing the defense minister of corruption and calling on him to resign, President Leon Febres Cordero dismissed Gen. Vargas from his post.²⁰⁰ The general disobeyed, and instead led a barracks revolt in March 1986. The rebellion was put down with force, and Gen. Vargas was retired from the military and spent the next several months in prison.²⁰¹ He was released in January 1987 after paratroopers loyal to him kidnapped President Cordero and demanded that he uphold the amnesty that the congress had granted.²⁰² Vargas

¹⁹⁹ Desch 1999, 14.


²⁰² Mac Margolis, “Debt threatens the fragile democracies of South America,” The Times, 6 December, 1988; Jaime Galarza Zavala, “Borja must tread delicate path in Ecuador’s new-fledged democracy,”
entered politics by founding the Ecuadoran Revolutionary Popular Action (APRE) party and running for president in the 1988 contest, less than two years after his revolt. In early 1987, the government instituted a number of unpopular austerity measures, including price freezes on basic foods and an increase in the cost of public transportation, which prompted protests and clashes with police. Vargas Pazos carried his anti-corruption message into his presidential ambitions, winning support among the poor and a number of Marxist groups. Vargas Pazos finished in fourth place with 12.6% of the vote in 1988.

Ecuador’s second experience with a rebel leader-turned-politician came in the 2000s with Col. Lucio Gutiérrez. In 2000, amid economic crisis and political upheaval, he and 50 other junior officers joined an indigenous uprising in taking over the congress and declaring a new government of “national salvation.” Gutiérrez was jailed briefly and discharged from the military, but following in the footsteps of Gen. Vargas and of Venezuela’s Hugo Chavez, he started a new political party—the 21 January Patriotic Society Movement—and quickly set about an effort to reach the presidency via electoral means. Given his role in the 2000 uprising, Gutiérrez secured the support of major indigenous groups and left-wing political parties.

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“Ecuador-Kidnapping of President-Other internal developments-Foreign relations,” Keesing’s Contemporary Archives, December 1987, 35566.


Gen. Vargas ran again in 1992 and 1996, but his support declined to 6.6% and 4.2% of the vote in those contests, respectively: ERA 1992; PDBA 1996.

In 2002, he won the most votes of any of the 11 candidates in the first round election, winning just over 20% of the vote. Another unconventional candidate, wealthy businessman Alvaro Noboa, came in second with 17.4% of the vote, forcing them into a run-off one month later. Gutiérrez himself noted that their performance showed how citizens were fed up with traditional politicians. In the second round of campaigning, Noboa tried to pull voters away from Gutiérrez, criticizing him for his support among leftist groups and in particular a communist party. Gutiérrez rejected these charges, claiming that as a military man he had no ideology, only a commitment to the country. Early in his candidacy, Gutiérrez owned his military character in very vivid ways as well, such as campaigning in “army fatigues and combat boots,” which led observers and opponents to draw more parallels with Hugo Chavez, a comparison which Gutiérrez also largely rejected. During the second round of campaigning, Gutiérrez stopped wearing his military uniform in favor of civilian clothes and struck a tone of promising consensus in his government if elected. Gutiérrez stuck with his anti-corruption message, arguing that he would “bring order, bring discipline” to the country. For those voters who were most concerned about corruption, Gutiérrez’s reputation—earned in the 2000 coup against Jamil Mahuad—resonated, giving him a solid base of support; and, his populist message of bringing new social groups into the political process helped him win the election with almost


55% of the vote.\textsuperscript{212} The volatility of Ecuador’s politics in the democratic period—experiencing several events of military rebellion, mass indigenous uprisings, and seeing multiple presidents removed from office prematurely—provided opportunity for Lucio Gutiérrez to capitalize on his background and outsider status in his first presidential campaign.

In Paraguay, General Lino Oviedo was an army officer during the Stroessner regime and served as an aide to Gen. Andres Rodriguez. He became Chief of the Army in 1993 under Juan Carlos Wasmosy’s democratically elected civilian government. When he was asked to step down three years later, however, he refused and staged a rebellion. He was relieved of his command, and as with Gen. Vargas and Col. Gutierrez, quickly set his eyes on the presidency, maintaining his opposition to Wasmosy and touting Paraguayan nationalism and the need to root out corruption.\textsuperscript{213} Oviedo won the Colorado Party nomination, but during the general election campaign he was sentenced to 10 years in prison for his insubordination in 1996. He fled the country and his running mate, Raúl Cubas Grau, took over the race.\textsuperscript{214}

His campaign, up to the point where he was arrested and put on trial that year, “concentrated on the battle against ‘corruption’ in the government of Juan Carlos Wasmosy.”\textsuperscript{215}

\textsuperscript{212} Despite his success in reaching the presidency, Gutiérrez did not have a smooth ride in office. In 2005, he was impeached after a constitutional battle with the judiciary and a popular uprising against him. He ran for president again in 2009 on the populist platform that brought him success in 2002, but his previous failure in office proved too much to overcome. Gutiérrez won 28% of the vote, but President Rafael Correa was re-elected with 52% support, avoiding a second round run-off.


\textsuperscript{214} Because Gen. Oviedo was not on the ballot in 1998, his candidacy in this year is not included in the numerical accounting in the project. But for the purposes of understanding the nature of his participation in presidential politics, I consider his abortive campaign here.

\textsuperscript{215} Emanuiloff-Max 1999, 26-27.
Corruption scandals had rocked Wasmosy’s presidency on numerous occasions.²¹⁶ Oviedo consciously cultivated the image of a populist caudillo. He delivered his speeches in Guaraní, the indigenous language of the country, and frequently spoke in support of agrarian reform, in opposition to neoliberalism, and always focused on the battle against corruption. The emblem of his faction of the Colorado Party, Union Nacional de Ciudadanos Éticos (UNACE), conveyed the image he wanted to present for himself—“showing Oviedo astride a horse at full gallop and enveloped in a red (Colorado) poncho.”²¹⁷ The general presented his message through his black and white division of “the corrupt and the ethical.”²¹⁸ Oviedo joined the ranks of other rogue officers in 2008, gaining followers with his “militaristic bravado and populist appeal” and winning 22% of the vote.²¹⁹

Finally, the ex-carapintada candidates in Argentina also fit the type of those who rebelled against a new democratic government and then sought to enter it through presidential competition. The uprisings came in response to the threat of potential trials against field commanders and junior officers, and as a political movement took on a broader mantle of dissatisfaction with the new democratic system in the wake of the economic challenges, particularly after the 1999-2001 financial crisis, which prompted such blunt candidacies as Enrique Venturino’s 2003 Conferencia para que se vayan todos (they all must go), a common


²¹⁷ Emanuiloff-Max 1999, 27.

²¹⁸ Ibid., 27.

²¹⁹ Jack Chang, “Court lets Paraguayan ex-army chief run for president,” Knight Ridder News Service, 31 October 2007; Gen. Oviedo fled the country after Cubas Grau was impeached in 1999 in the wake of Vice President Luis María Argaña’s murder. Oviedo and Grau were suspected of involvement. Oviedo returned to the country in 2004. He was arrested and put on trial for the 1996 coup charges. He began campaigning again the day he was released from prison in September 2007; Pedro Servin, “Convicted coup-leader freed early, vows to govern Paraguay,” Associated Press, 6 September, 2007.
refrain from street protests during the crisis that represented the feeling that the entire political class should be thrown out of office. The striking contrast between the *carapintada* candidacies and those of the other rogue officers is in their performance. As shown in Table 3.3, none of the *carapintadas* won more than 1.7% of the vote. The reason for this divergent outcome, as outlined above, is in the presence of dominant political parties—the Peronists and UCR—that captured the vast majority of the national vote and relegated the rest of the crowded field to minor showings.\footnote{The *carapintada* cases are discussed at length in Chapter Five on Argentina.}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Election Year</th>
<th>Candidate Name</th>
<th>Political Party</th>
<th>Vote Share (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>1988</td>
<td>Gen. Frank Vargas Pazos</td>
<td>Acción Popular Revolucionaria Ecuatoriana</td>
<td>12.6</td>
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<td>Argentina</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Lt. Col. Aldo Rico</td>
<td>MODIN</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Ricardo Terán</td>
<td>MODIN</td>
<td>0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Enrique Venturino</td>
<td>Conf. Para Que Se Vayan Todos</td>
<td>0.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>2003, 2007</td>
<td>Capt. Gustavo Breide Obeid</td>
<td>Partido Popular de la Reconstruccion</td>
<td>0.22, 0.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Caudillo Democrat**

The final type of successful recycled dictator is the caudillo democrat. These leaders, while having an association with a former authoritarian regime, follow the career trajectory of a more traditional politician. As noted above, the Latin American experience with recycled dictators is one in which they generally have created their own political parties, rather than seeking the nomination from an established party. These organizations took the form of a
personalistic electoral vehicle for a one-time attempt at gate crashing the presidential contest. Barely having put away his uniform, an army officer stood for president. Having no political experience, not running on a major party, not serving as a regime heir, and without the benefit of making a stand against a corrupt administration, the recycled dictator found little support and left the system behind. The candidate was not rejected for his association with the former regime but because he was standing as an amateur in a crowded field of candidates where voters had more traditional options where their vote would matter more. There is another path, however. The recycled dictator, under conditions of low democratic continuity, where historical parties did not return to dominate the field, a party founded by a recycled dictator had the potential to become a major party. Caudillo democrats established a political party, stood for election successfully at lower levels of government, and then made a run for the presidency.

Guatemalan leaders exemplify the caudillo democrat with both Gen. Efraín Ríos Montt and Gen. Otto Pérez Molina. Gen. Ríos Montt had been the de facto head of the country (1982-83), having taken power in a coup d’état. As a consequence, he was constitutionally barred from standing for the presidency after the transition, but this did not keep him from being able to participate in politics in other ways. He founded the Frente Republicano Guatemalteco (FRG) in 1988. The new party was formally registered in 1990, the same year Ríos Montt ran for congress and won a seat in the legislature along with 11 others on the FRG label. By 1994, the FRG won the largest number of seats, and the former general became president of the congress.221 The FRG dominated the legislature for the next decade. As each presidential election approached, Ríos Montt tried to have the ban on his participation lifted, and he finally succeeded in 2003. He secured 19% of the vote. Gen. Otto Pérez Molina similarly founded his own party and started

221 Nohlen 2005.
with a career in national politics by successfully winning a seat in the legislature. He retired from active service in 2000, founded the *Partido Patriota* in 2001, and first won congressional office in 2003. Thus, by the time he ran for president in 2007, and again in 2011, he was well positioned as both a military leader and an experienced politician. He was a credible messenger for *la mano dura* not only as a former general, but a former general who had built a party and a constituency in national politics.\(^{222}\)

In El Salvador, Roberto d’Aubuisson illustrates the caudillo democrat model. His association with human rights abuses in the pre-democratic era, including the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero, and his contempt for political liberalization did not bode well for his participation in the new democratic system. His *Alianza Republicana Nacional* (ARENA) was built on the organizational structure of the right-wing death squads he had commanded for years, and he agitated for the forcible overthrow of the transitional junta in order to halt the democratization process.\(^{223}\) Nevertheless, he saw electoral politics as another route to power, and after being cashiered from the army in 1979 set about securing his place in the new system. In 1982, ARENA and its allies won a majority of the seats in the Constituent Assembly, making d’Aubuisson president of the body.\(^{224}\) By the time of the 1984 presidential election, he was an experienced politician and campaigner.

The final caudillo democrat, former Bolivian Army Captain Manfred Reyes Villa, held the mayorship of Cochabamba for a decade before running for president. Poverty and the

\(^{222}\) Both Efraín Ríos Montt and Otto Pérez Molina are discussed in greater detail in Chapter Six on Guatemala.

\(^{223}\) Baloyra 1982; Stanley 1996.

\(^{224}\) “El Salvador--Internal political and security developments-Relations with United States,” *Keesing’s Record of World Events*, October 1983, 32423; Roberto d’Aubuisson is discussed at length in Chapter Seven on El Salvador.
negative consequences of neoliberal reforms were the focus of the 2002 campaign, just as they had been in the 1997 election, when former General Hugo Banzer won. Reyes Villa criticized privatization and advocated for the establishment of a national development bank to support small business loans.\textsuperscript{225} The former army officer’s populist message resonated with voters who were facing a long-term recession, as well as the persistent problems of poverty and poor government services. Former president Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada was again in the race, and supporters of Reyes Villa marked a clear distinction between their candidate and the oligarchic Sanchez de Lozada, a millionaire businessman who had sold stakes in Bolivian state enterprises and resources to foreign investors. Manfred Reyes Villa was also a millionaire, but his humble background seemed to supersede the image of his wealth until the Sanchez de Lozada campaign successfully raised questions about how Reyes Villa obtained his wealth during the 10 years since his departure from the military and his tenure as mayor of Cochabamba.\textsuperscript{226} As a result of these charges of corruption, Reyes Villa’s poll numbers slid, and he came in a very close second with 21% of the vote.\textsuperscript{227} Reyes Villa ran for president again in 2009 and faced a far more popular opponent, incumbent President Evo Morales. The turn toward indigenous-dominated politics in Bolivia proved difficult for Reyes Villa to compete with, and he won just 26% of the vote compared with 62% for President Morales.

Acknowledging the potential for recycled dictators to enter the new political system in a variety of ways is crucial to comprehending their varied experiences and the nature of their


\textsuperscript{226} The Sanchez de Lozada’s campaign’s attack strategy is well documented in Rachel Boynton’s 2005 film, \textit{Our Brand Is Crisis}.

success. Caudillo democrats are an important consideration because they build a career that looks familiar to voters and observers; yet they still advocate authoritarian responses to the problems of their countries. Entering electoral politics did not soften Roberto d’Aubuisson’s attitude toward political opposition. The law and order candidacies of individuals like Gen. Otto Pérez Molina in Guatemala are a response to climbing crime rates, ineffective police forces, and corruption in the judiciary. Where newly created democratic institutions have failed to achieve significant progress on these issues of vital importance to citizens, they seek to short-circuit these ineffective institutions by electing ex-dictators who provide an authoritarian solution from the executive branch.²²⁸

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Candidate Name</th>
<th>End of Military Service</th>
<th>Political Party</th>
<th>Founding Year</th>
<th>Political Office Held Prior to Presidential Candidacy</th>
<th>Presidential Contest Year</th>
<th>Vote Share (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>Maj. Roberto d’Aubuisson</td>
<td>1979</td>
<td>Alianza Republicana Nacionalista</td>
<td>1981</td>
<td>President of Constituent Assembly</td>
<td>1984</td>
<td>29.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Conclusion**

Recycled dictators have a unique place in post-transition politics. While public polling data has led to concerns about the strength of democratic consolidation and voters’ commitment

²²⁸ Prillaman 2003.
to democracy in Latin America and other regions of the world, these candidates provide a real-world test of voter interest in returning those associated with military regimes to power, the results of which suggest democracy is not universally under threat from such ideas. Voters reject recycled dictators in presidential elections far more often than they vote them into power. The presence of these individuals in the new democracy represents a positive shift toward elite acceptance across the ideological spectrum of democracy as the only means to compete for power. Recycled dictators further legitimize the democratic system.

Recycled dictators do not generally perform very well at the polls, particularly in the context of states with high democratic continuity. There are instances of success in states of low democratic continuity, however. By looking at cases in which these candidates finish with greater than 10% vote share, I identify a typology of their success. There are four ways for a recycled dictator to succeed: (1) Run on a major party ticket, (2) Be the heir to a successful regime, (3) Parlay an anti-corruption revolt into a political career, or (4) Build a more traditional party, running for office at lower levels and working up to the presidency. Empirically, the order of these pathways corresponds to the level of success they have brought their followers. Perhaps fortunately for democracy, these paths also are inversely related to how challenging they are for a recycled dictator to pursue.
Chapter 4

Chile: Re-Democratization and the Regime Heir

In 1989, as Chile transitioned out of military authoritarianism, Hernán Büchi Buc, a civilian Finance Minister under General Pinochet, picked up the mantle of economic success enjoyed during the latter stages of the 1973-90 military regime and ran for president promising continued prosperity. The country could have the Pinochet regime without Pinochet. Büchi had been part of the structural shift away from a state-dominated economy, making him a natural heir to the regime and a standard-bearer for the invigorated libertarian interests of the political right. Büchi represented the potential for continuity in government across the outgoing military administration and the new electoral regime. And, as someone closely associated with successful economic policy of the late period of the Pinochet government, rather than with the severe repression of the regime, he represented an attempt to run on an economically grounded message. Nevertheless, his role in the military regime and the promise of continuity infused his candidacy with the unresolved tensions of the right’s relationship to Pinochet and his government. The potential continuity between old and new underscores the fear of setting back.

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229 Hernán Buchi Buc served as Finance Minister from 1985 to 1989, when he resigned to run for president. “Continued protests against military government - Cabinet changes - Easter Island deal with United States,” Keesing’s Record of World Events, September 1985, 33843; “Cabinet resignations--Constitutional reform proposals,” Keesing’s Record of World Events, April 1989, 36584.

230 Given Pinochet’s failure to extend his rule for another 8 years in the 1988 plebiscite, the 1989 presidential election represented an opportunity for the regime to try again with a civilian candidate as some regime insiders had preferred the first time around (Huneeus 2007). In effect, the plebiscite followed by the 1989 presidential election gave the regime two chances at victory. They failed both times.

231 The most viable alternative to Büchi was Sergio Onofre Jarpa, who had also served in the Pinochet regime but who had considerably stronger democratic credentials—he had been president of the Partido Nacional prior to the regime, negotiated with the opposition as Minister of Interior during the 1983 apertura (and was pushed out of the regime after those failed), and sought to distance himself and his new party Renovación Nacional from the Pinochet regime during the 1989 campaign. He was pushed out of the race by hard-liners financing the campaign when the RN and Unión Demócrata Institucional (UDI) formed the Democracia y Progreso alliance and Büchi was named the presidential candidate.
democratization by electing a recycled dictator. Is the country moving forward or not? What is transitional about continuity?

Continuity in Chile, however, was not limited to the elements of the old regime. The country had long-standing political parties and individual politicians accustomed to electoral competition and democratic governance who pre-dated and outlived the military government. Chile managed free democratic elections with a gradually expanding franchise, politically sophisticated coalition building in government, and the consistently peaceful transfer of power from one administration to another from 1932 to 1973. Democratic expectations were ingrained in Chilean political society. The presence of robust non-military political forces and experienced politicians to serve as credible candidates is crucial in shaping the post-transition landscape. In effect, for states with pre-existing credible parties, recycled dictators are not the only former governing officials returning to politics. Politicians who competed and served in the previous democratic era and who struggled to bring democracy back to the country were ready to battle again in the electoral realm. Patricio Aylwin, the candidate of the 17-party Concertación alliance had been a fixture in Chilean politics for decades, served as president of the Senate prior to the military overthrow of Salvador Allende’s Unidad Popular (UP) government, and was a leading voice in the re-democratization movement as the head of the Partido Demócrata Cristiano (PDC). Such figures were less available in states such as Honduras where potential democratic actors were co-opted by the military government or in states such as Guatemala and El Salvador where party activity was repressed to the extent that they could have only a limited role in pressing for democratization. In those contexts, pressure for military withdrawal from government came from revolutionary movements and from the United States more so than from pre-existing democratic sources. The democratization movement in Chile, rather, was the
beginning of ongoing competition between regime and non-regime forces that would continue in the electoral era. In short, high democratic continuity in Chile meant that when popular protests flared in 1983 and parties were re-legalized in 1987, there were people ready to reconstitute the old parties, join forces, and not only press for the regime’s downfall but prepare their place in democratic competition.232

This chapter proceeds as follows: First, I demonstrate in broad terms how my theory of the presence of recycled dictator competitors in presidential elections applies to the Chilean case and outline the argument of democratic continuity: where high democratic experience—long-standing democracy, high quality democracy, and the presence of electorally dominant parties prior to military rule—and military government taking the form of policide rather than military capture and use of the political system, the country has potential for high democratic continuity.233 Second, I discuss the modern development of Chilean political parties, establishing their importance in Chilean political society in the 20th century prior to the 1973-90 military regime. Third, I present the role of democratic parties under military government, how they persisted, and how the struggles of re-democratization enabled them to emerge from the era ready to compete for power effectively against an heir to a regime leaving government in a position of strength. Finally, I detail the 1989 presidential campaign among Patricio Aylwin, Hernán Büchi, and Francisco Jávier Errázuriz. I conclude with a discussion of the post-transition trajectory of recycled dictators in Chile and reflect on the impact of the return of former political leaders in the contemporary democratic era.

232 For full discussion of the concept of democratic continuity and the rating of all 12 countries, see Chapter Two.
233 From 1958 onward, the major political parties—Socialists, Christian Democrats, Conservative-Liberal—won over 80% of presidential vote share, edging out other potential competitors (Scully 1992).
Chile and the Recycled Dictator

The level of democratic continuity available to a country and the level of threat posed to the interests of those associated with the former military government explain the presence of recycled dictators in contemporary post-military rule presidential elections across Latin America. Countries with higher levels of democratic continuity will see a lower rate of recycled dictator competition in presidential elections than those countries with low democratic continuity. And where the military and its allies stand to lose more by not being in power, ex-regime candidates will present themselves for office at higher rates. Figure 4.1 categorizes the 12 countries in the study, placing Chile in the quadrant of high democratic continuity and low threat to military regime prerogatives.

For much of its history, Chile has experienced uninterrupted civilian government. From 1831 to 1925, the country’s elites maintained a civilian political arena, even weathering episodes of institutional crises and political violence in 1851, 1859, and the 1891 civil war.\(^{234}\) The combination of mounting social and economic problems and political gridlock between parliament and the president prompted military intervention in September 1924.\(^{235}\) Democracy was restored in 1932, and the country began on a long path of routine elections, coalition governments, and peaceful transfers of power between presidents of different ideological stripes. This democratic era was not without its political challenges, but the growth and maturation of parties over a lengthy timespan developed strong democratic expectations among political elites.

\(^{234}\) For more on these conflicts, see: Moreno 1969, 119-120. For the 1891 civil war, see: San Francisco 2007.

\(^{235}\) On the changes and challenges facing Chile in this period, the parliamentary inaction and resultant 1924 military takeover, see: Stevenson 1942, 29-37. For detail on the 1924 intervention, see: Nunn 1976, 136.
Figure 4.1 Presence of Recycled Dictator Candidates by Country

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Threat to Former Regime Actors</th>
<th>Level of Democratic Continuity</th>
<th>Level of Threat to Former Regime Actors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Protest Candidacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Argentina, 4 (0.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Return of Democratic Party Representatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Brazil, 4 (0.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Chile, 2 (0.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Uruguay, 1 (0.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Peru, 3 (0.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Persistent Ex-regime Competition</td>
<td>Panama, 1 (1.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>El Salvador, 6 (3.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Guatemala, 12 (3.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mixed Competition</td>
<td>Ecuador, 3 (0.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Paraguay, 2 (1.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Honduras, 4 (3.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bolivia, 9 (3.2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Numbers in parentheses are recycled dictator candidates per 1000 potential candidates as calculated by cataloging all cabinet ministers, junta members, presidents under military rule, and estimating the officer corps of the country as 10% of total armed forces personnel. This is discussed at greater length in Chapter One. Integers after the country name are the number of actual candidates who stood for election, thereby distinguished from the number of candidacies which counts the same individual’s campaigns separately. For example, General Hugo Bánzer of Bolivia is one candidate but because he ran for president four times, he is counted four times in the number of recycled dictator candidacies.

Parties had deep roots in society, acting as the conduit to press demands on the state, serving as intermediary between civil society and government and dominating political life from the national to municipal level. The 1973-90 military dictatorship put politics in “recess” and clamped down on parties through severe repression. Nevertheless, the military project of depoliticizing the country failed, parties survived, and they pressed for re-democratization. The combination of pre-existing political parties and military exclusion of these actors from government meant civilian leaders unaffiliated with the military regime agitated for democratization and carried the movement forward into the electoral era. The parties provided pressure for re-democratization. In contexts where parties were less developed or where they

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Angell 1993, 28; Lechner, Brunner and Flisfisch 1985, 28.
were captured by military actors, pressure for democratization comes from other sources, such as factionalization of the armed forces, military failure to accomplish its governing agenda, the threat of revolutionary victory in war, international pressure, or a combination of these factors, all of which point to the same outcome of military withdrawal from government, but none of which guarantees a civilian opposition prepared to dominate elections and edge out recycled dictators the way a country returning to democracy has. Chile’s prior democratic experience ensured that credible non-regime parties and candidates were able to occupy the electoral space in a way that would not have been possible without long-standing democratic institutions.

Meanwhile, the military ceded control over the presidency in 1990 in a position of such strength that it had little fear of potential prosecutions for human rights violations such as the ones held in Argentina only a few years prior. Nor did the military have existential fears from its ideological rivals, as militaries facing sustained communist insurgencies in Central America experienced. And with the Organic Law of the Armed Forces passed in the waning days of the Pinochet regime, the military established institutional assurances of its authority within the new system through such measures as guaranteed revenue streams, reserved seats in the Senate, and Pinochet’s own continued role as Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces.237 The transitional process was laid out in the military’s own 1980 constitution. To that end, “democratic parties never agreed to specific terms with the authoritarian regime” and wanted to reverse these prerogatives, in principle, but would not be able to chip away at them for quite some time.238

237 Weeks 2003, 50-52; for Chile, Organic Laws are constitutional measures, setting out the basic rules governing an institution or area of government. They cannot be superceded by other laws or government action, but rather require constitutional reform in order to change them. Not until 2005 would the civilian authorities successfully reform the Constitutional Organic Law of the Armed Forces: Couso et al. 2013.

238 Valenzuela and Dammert 2006, 69; On post-transition governments’ efforts, successes, and difficulties in confronting the legacies of military rule, see: Hunter 1997b; Weeks 2003.
Additionally, the libertarian forces of the Pinochet government won the ideological battle on the role of the state in the economy as “the opposition parties accepted the regime’s neoliberal economic policies as a precondition to democratization.”239 Indeed, by the time Pinochet left his army post in 1998, he roundly declared “misión cumplida” (mission accomplished) of his stewardship of the country.240

Thus, Chile demonstrates how the theory of recycled dictators’ presence in presidential elections operates under conditions of high democratic continuity and low threat to the interests of ex-regime actors. The existence of well-articulated parties prior to military rule and their survival during that era meant the availability of experienced civilian leaders to return to politics with the *apertura* in 1983, press for re-democratization, and campaign for public office with credible candidates that could control the electoral landscape. With the transition made, the competitive dynamic of center-left success forced the major parties of the right to put forth candidates with the greatest potential to win in the new political environment. And, with few threats to the interests of the military or the identity of the old regime, recycled dictators are not prompted to run to defend the institution or the memory of their role during the dictatorship as the *carapintadas* did in Argentina.241 The Chilean experience with ex-regime presidential candidates is limited to Hernán Büchi in 1989 and José Piñera Echinique in 1993.

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241 Discussed at length in Chapter Five on Argentina.
Chilean Political Parties and Institutions Developed over the 19th and 20th Centuries

Conflict between the legislative and executive would be a guiding theme of Chilean politics over the 19th and 20th centuries. The Chilean civil war in 1891 and ensuing congressional dominance—and inaction in the face of social challenges—gave rise to Chile’s first period of military rule; partisan and institutional gridlock in the 1960s and 70s would usher in the second. In contrast to its neighbors, Chile sorted out its post-independence conflicts remarkably quickly, but not without leaving unresolved challenges. After the 1891 civil war between Liberals and Conservatives, new political institutions weakened the formerly autocratic executive branch. Chile was left with a dysfunctional, anarchic system in which congress, because of the heterogeneity of party representation, could accomplish little and the president was at the mercy of competing factions in the legislature. Just as new industrial, labor, and urban forces gathered strength and social problems mounted, government institutions did little to address these new challenges. New waves of immigration, dangerous and exploitative labor conditions, economic shocks in the aftermath of World War I, and successful revolutions in Russia and Mexico combined to put the need for reform front and center on the national agenda. Arturo Alessandri of the Liberal Alliance (an electoral coalition made up of Radicals and Democrats) was elected to the presidency in 1920 on a reformist platform, but found himself unable either to

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242 The civil war brought conflict between the Liberals and Conservatives, with the respective Presidential-Congressional divide and thus the outcome had important institutional consequences. With the Liberal defeat at the Battle of Lircay in 1830, Conservatives became the dominant political and governing force for the next 30 years. For more, see: Moreno 1969, 96-97; San Francisco 2007.

243 For example, Congress controlled the president’s cabinet and it was not uncommon for presidents in this period (who served five-year terms) to experience cabinet reshuffles in the double digits: Scully 1992, 47.
address national problems or change the institutional system. Voters grew increasingly disillusioned and unrest intensified. Institutions did not respond, setting the stage for the Chilean military’s first foray into politics in the 20th century and setting in motion the country’s first experience with military rule and democratic return from a colonel named Carlos Ibáñez del Campo—that is, a mid-20th century recycled dictator. The tensions between the executive and legislature in this moment also laid bare public and military frustrations with intransigent political parties.

The Military First Intervened in Government in 1924

In addition to leaving the country in a state of “parliamentary anarchy,” the era of congressional dominance broke the military’s loyalty to the singular leadership of the executive, and professionalization of the officer corps in this era also meant commissions were no longer simply the purview of aristocrats. By the 1920s, command officers “felt little or no kinship with the oligarchs” exactly when economic and social challenges went unanswered by those in government. The military grew weary of government inaction on generally deteriorating conditions in the country and on particular events such as popular demonstrations. Meanwhile,

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244 The ideological similarity of the original three parties (Liberal-National-Conservative, all founded in 1857) meant they were open to a political challenge from the left, allowing the Radical Party to break away from the Liberals in 1861 and the for Democrat Party to further break away from the Radicals in 1887: Valenzuela 1988, 31.

245 Stevenson 1942, 36-37.

246 See Moreno 1969, 146 for the term “parliamentary anarchy” and Moreno 1969, 139 and Nunn 1976, 92 for discussion of the breakdown in military loyalty to the executive.

247 Nunn 1976, 93.

248 Moreno 1969, 151.
the military’s own interests were not being met—by 1924, “armed forces’ pay was six months in arrears” and there was a consistent lack of supplies for armies in the field.\textsuperscript{249} In the midst of such inaction, congress made the absurd decision to vote for “a yearly financial subsidy” for its members.\textsuperscript{250} Officers from the army and navy presented President Alessandri with a petition to protest the bill and to pass the long-delayed 1924 budget and social reform measures that had been part of Alessandri’s 1920 campaign.\textsuperscript{251} The \textit{Junta Militar y Naval} successfully forced congressional action as they passed Alessandri’s entire program of reform that had been languishing since 1921: “In one session, in one hour… each of the houses executed all the tasks which had not been realized in some years.”\textsuperscript{252} Having resolved the stalemate between congress and the president through force, the junta would not disband, leading Alessandri to resign in protest and leave the country.\textsuperscript{253}

Thus, the era of parliamentary anarchy came to an end. But so did unchallenged civilian control of government. Colonel Carlos Ibáñez del Campo staged a coup against the ruling junta in January 1925, briefly holding the reins of government. Alessandri resumed the presidency from March to October of 1925, with Col. Ibáñez becoming Minister of War. During this time, Chile ratified a new constitution by plebiscite that would modernize the political system, providing for the direct election of the president and increased power of the office vis-à-vis the

\textsuperscript{249} Blakemore 1993, 73.
\textsuperscript{250} Stevenson 1942, 37.
\textsuperscript{251} Nunn 1976, 136.
\textsuperscript{253} Carlos 1989, 105.
It also “established a system of proportional representation for parties putting candidates up for Congress,” which would solidify the role of parties and underscore the importance of their ability to compete for new votes as additional political actors were incorporated into the system.\(^{255}\) In contrast to the experience of neighboring Argentina, in which elites consistently fought to reverse liberalization, the existence of competitive parties in Chile prior to political expansions meant elites were more prepared to cope with new opposition. The 1925 constitution restored presidential authority but not oligarchic control. By expanding the franchise and giving the executive more control over its own administration, the potential to campaign for and govern with a popular mandate to address reform at the presidential level grew.

Col. Ibáñez seized power again in 1927 and ruled until 1931, when economic pressures from the Great Depression led to widespread protests and his resignation.\(^{256}\) Gridlock between the executive and legislature would be a consistent challenge in Chilean politics, and armed intervention to break the impasse in 1924 foreshadowed the 1973 military solution to conflict between President Salvador Allende and an opposition congress.

**Democracy Was Restored and Modern Parties Were Established**

Arturo Alessandri returned to the presidency through the 1932 elections that marked the beginning of democratically elected, civilian governments to stand until 1973, rivaled only by Uruguay for the period in South America. In these four decades, Chile saw changing dynamics

\(^{254}\) *Constitution of the Republic of Chile, 1925*. 1957. Washington, DC: Pan American Union, Legal Division, Dept. of International Law. The president would now appoint governors and cabinet ministers and “congressional votes of censure could no longer depose a cabinet” (Stevenson 1942: 39).

\(^{255}\) Hudson 1994.

\(^{256}\) Drake 1993, 94; Moreno 1969, 155-156.
among parties competing for the votes of labor. The diversity of political actors forced coalitions in government and produced conflict between branches of government that stymied successfully addressing the challenges facing the country, just as it did in the 1920s. While the military route would not be pursued until 1973, voters tired of party politicking elected former General Carlos Ibáñez to the presidency as an anti-party candidate in 1952, making him Chile’s first experience with a recycled dictator. And finally, party polarization of the 1958-73 era gave way to the military project of depoliticizing the country.

With Ibáñez’s downfall in 1931, parties returned to the center of political life, just as they would after Pinochet’s departure nearly 60 years later. “Even after five years in hibernation under Ibáñez, the traditional parties easily dominated” the 1932 election, with former President Arturo Alessandri returning to office.257 The parallel to the latter half of the 20th century once again being the persistence of political parties and their leadership through the years of military rule. Urbanization, industrial expansion, and the Great Depression combined with the renewed electoral pressures of democracy to give rise to leftist parties and to foster their strength in the post-military rule period.258 Leftist factions proliferated as the “social question”—that is, how to deal with the challenges posed by these changes in the country—was of central importance.259 The specter of leftist success drove the Conservative Party to ally with the centrist Liberals, just as the leftist reform-oriented parties of Socialists, Communists, and Radicals joined forces in 1936 under the banner of the Popular Front to compete more effectively in elections. While demonstrating successful strategic decision making from elites of all parties, these electoral

257 Drake 1993, 95.

258 Ibid., 87-89.

alliances were flawed as governing coalitions. The consistent tripartite split of voter support meant presidents had difficulty asserting a mandate and the heterogeneity of these alliances meant congress was never under the control of one party and was frequently in conflict with the president.\textsuperscript{260} The Radical Party held the presidency from 1938 to 1952, initially as part of the Popular Front alliance and then in less formal electoral coalitions.

Careful politicking was necessary to navigate conservative expectations in Congress, who formally ratified presidential victors. Institutional and ideological pressure affected governing in the same manner, as Radical administrations were careful not to pursue reforms in rural areas where powerful landowners would have resisted any changes.\textsuperscript{261} Thus, despite campaigning as leftists these administrations governed from a centrist position rather than pursuing their reformist electoral platforms. This disconnect between campaigning and governing eventually caught up with the dominant political forces of the day and put an end to leftist coalition politics in 1952. The Radicals lost credibility with leftists through their governing style, while the Socialists fell prey to ideological infighting, and the Communists faced repression through the 1948 Law for the Defense of Democracy, which outlawed the party.\textsuperscript{262} “The frustration felt by Chileans who saw presidents they thought unworthy of the office, led, in 1952, to the election of a man who claimed to be above politics.”\textsuperscript{263}

\textsuperscript{260}Angell 1993.

\textsuperscript{261}Stevenson 1942.

\textsuperscript{262}Moreno 1969, 163: The Communist party was formally outlawed in 1948 and “its cadres put in prison until the second half of 1949, when the party, although still legally banned, began to function as a political entity again.” The party remained illegal until 1958.

\textsuperscript{263}Ibid., 164.
Anti-party Sentiment and Party Polarization Brought Gen. Ibáñez Back to Power

While parties were central to the political system in the 1932-52 period and served an important function in mediating between the state and varied social interests, their proliferation in this era meant complete gridlock in government and the impression among citizens that they were little more than vehicles for the politics of spoils.264 The Radical party governments had not improved the lives of their constituents, and their coalition saw sequential defections of socialists and communists.265 These acute failures activated anti-party sentiment running through the Chilean electorate.266

Former General Carlos Ibáñez capitalized on the frustration with parties and ran a consciously anti-party campaign, brandishing a broom and promising to “sweep out the rascals.”267 His military background and caudillo image made him a credible messenger for an alternative model of politics that would rise above partisanship and put the national good above all else.268 The anti-party mentality had its costs, however, as it was difficult to form a cabinet, and his experience in office looked very similar to that of his Radical predecessors.269 While he campaigned with a reformist agenda and initially surrounded himself with leftist party allies, he governed “as a conservative surrounded by rightist groups.”270 The same economic challenges

264 Angell 1993, 28-29; Moreno 1969, 166: By 1953, “out of a total of thirty-six duly registered parties, twenty secured congressional representation.”

265 Teichman 2011, 303.


267 Drake 1993, 123.

268 Nunn 1976, 189; Stevenson 1942.

269 Scully 1992, 126-127.

270 Drake 1993.
that dogged his party compatriots also confronted his administration, and the import substitution strategy of development he pursued quickly showed its limitations. Such intense anti-party sentiment during the Ibáñez years and the re-legalization of the Chilean Communist Party in 1958, meant a re-ordering of party powers as the 1958 election approached.

Decades of governing challenges and the “non-political” rule of Carlos Ibáñez in the mid-1950s led to new strategies and to partisan realignment. On the right, the once rival Conservative and Liberal parties effectively merged into the United Conservative Party, ceding the centrist ground to the Radical Party and the newly founded Christian Democratic Party (PDC)—heir to the 1930s falange nacional—that joined elements of Christian reform movements and the old Democratic Party.271 Meanwhile, Socialists and the re-legalized Communists allied in the Popular Action Front. Figure 4.3 illustrates the party array and the candidates in the 1958 presidential election, with their respective vote share.

The 1958 election reflected the familiar left-center-right pattern of presidential competition in the country, yet it also demonstrated a leftward shift of the political spectrum and the growing strength of leftist forces. Salvador Allende ran for president in 1952 and won only 5.5% of the vote. This time around, he secured 28.9% and if not for the defection of Antonio Zamorano from the Popular Action Front—who ran independently, further to the left, and captured 3.3% of the vote—Allende would have been elected to the presidency 12 years earlier than he was.

Instead, the conservative candidate, Jorge Alessandri—son of the former president—was elected in 1958, followed by the centrist, Eduardo Frei of the Christian Democrats in 1964, and the leftist, Salvador Allende of the Popular Unity in 1970. Thus, between 1958 and 1973 each of the major political forces held the presidency. Narrowing the presidential field to the major

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271 For more on the early development of the Christian Democratic Party, see Fleet 1985.
Figure 4.2 Electoral Competition in Chilean Presidential Election, 1958

- Disparate Socialist groups
  - Chilean Communist Party (1958)
  - Socialist Party (1957)
  - National Falange (1938)
  - Social Christian Conservative Party
  - Agrarian Labor Party (1945)

- Conservative Party, Liberal Party (1857)
  - United Conservative Party (1957)

- Popular Action Front (1958)
  - Salvador Allende (28.9%)

- Christian Democratic Party (1957)
  - Eduardo Frei (20.7%)

- Radical Party (1861)
  - Luis Bossay (15.6%)

- Jorge Alessandri (31.6%)
parties, however, still did not translate into majority-party control of congress, and conflict between the two branches continued. Parties learned from the earlier era of failed coalition politics that party alliances could only go so far, leading the Christian Democratic Party, in particular, to pursue a hegemonic strategy in which they sought “to exclude other parties from power rather than construct alliances.” The enhanced importance of ideological commitments in this era also contributed to the rigidity of the parties.\textsuperscript{272} It was under these conditions that Salvador Allende’s Chilean road to socialism ran into difficulty. The familiar pattern of executive-legislative gridlock, ideological polarization among elites and the population, the Cold War environment, and deteriorating economic conditions brought on severe political crisis. Strikes, shortages, and institutional breakdown led the Chilean Congress to call on the armed forces to “re-establish the rule of the constitution and the law...in order to guarantee institutional stability, civil peace, security and development.”\textsuperscript{273} Fearful of careening between chaos and Socialist totalitarianism, Allende’s opponents, including former President Eduardo Frei and future President, and leader of the re-democratization movement, Patricio Aylwin, supported a coup to restore order. Party leaders sought assurances from senior military officers that intervention would amount to little more than removing Allende from office and calling for new elections within a year, but the dictatorship looked very different from the “brief and necessary” takeover they thought it would be.\textsuperscript{274} The September 11, 1973 coup ushered in a military regime determined to depoliticize the country.\textsuperscript{275}

\textsuperscript{272} Angell 1993, 141.


\textsuperscript{274} Constable and Valenzuela 1991, 281; Correa et al., 287.

\textsuperscript{275} For a comprehensive accounting of the military moves in advance of the Sept. 11 coup, see Spooner 1994, 17-48.
The Military Ruled through Policide

One of the primary goals of the Pinochet regime was to “break the hold of parties over political life in Chile;” to do away with politics by committing “policide—annihilating the Left and more broadly, Center and Left cultural understandings of politics as a process of popular mobilization.”\(^{276}\) The military regime conceptualized its enemy in the parties of the left not as “creatures of a small political class” but the broader population to be silenced and re-made in an apolitical form.\(^{277}\) The Cold War environment was central to carrying out the coup. Domestically, the coup reflected military adoption of National Security Doctrine, the U.S.-Latin American military doctrine emphasizing internal warfare and economic development to combat Marxist threats.\(^{278}\) Internationally, it was one more Cold War battle. The United States considered ways of preventing President Allende even from taking office in 1970.\(^{279}\) Once in government, U.S. efforts turned to undermining the economy, initially by cutting off international lending to the country.\(^{280}\) President Richard Nixon ordered the Central Intelligence Agency to “make the

\(^{276}\) Angell 2007, 11; for more on the concept of “policide” as the destruction of politics, see Stern 2010, 102.

\(^{277}\) Angell 1993, 178.

\(^{278}\) For more on National Security Doctrine see: Stepan 1973, 47-68; Varas, Agüero and Bustamante 1980.


economy scream” in order to promote a coup.\textsuperscript{281} United States policy was to see President Allende deposed.\textsuperscript{282} In the aftermath of the 1973 coup, the military declared a state of siege, sealed the nation’s borders, imposed a curfew, banned unions, dissolved congress, and put parties in recess.

In keeping with the PDC’s invitation for military intervention, Osvaldo Olguín, party president at the time, “welcomed the political ‘recess’ after the trauma of the Allende years.”\textsuperscript{283} Very quickly, however, the character of modern military rule revealed itself as thousands of Chileans were killed, tens of thousands sent into exile, and many more arrested as political prisoners.\textsuperscript{284} Persecution hit the Socialist Party hardest.\textsuperscript{285} As an open and public political party on the left, it was an obvious target for the military regime, and they lacked the clandestine structure of the Communist Party, which had learned from previous periods of repression how to operate in harsh conditions.\textsuperscript{286} The PDC was technically suspended in 1973 as well but used its

\textsuperscript{281} Central Intelligence Agency director Richard Helms, “Notes on Meeting with the President on Chile, September 15, 1970.” National Security Archive; http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB8/nsaebb8i.htm.


\textsuperscript{283} Constable and Valenzuela 1991, 281.

\textsuperscript{284} Correa et al. 2001, 287.

\textsuperscript{285} In an interview with \textit{Qué Pasa} on March 27, 1986, Ricardo Lagos, a leader of the moderate Socialists stated, “How can a party exist when practically all of its leadership has been exiled, imprisoned or ‘disappeared’? All the regional committees of La Serena, of Atacama, of Calama, of Autofagasta, of Iquique, died. In Chile, there are only two parties that managed to maintain a unified leadership in the period of dictatorship—the PDC and the Communist Party. The rest were incapable of overcoming the organic crisis created by the dictatorship, and we were no exception,” quoted in Angell 2007, 12.

\textsuperscript{286} Angell 2007, 10; Loveman 1988.
privileged position as a centrist force to voice opposition to the military regime. For its trouble, the PDC was formally banned, along with all parties, in March 1977.287

Political repression took a heavy toll, yet the military government failed in its mission to destroy parties and depoliticize the country. As Brian Loveman argues, “the ultimate failure of the military efforts and policies since 1973 was the survival of all pre-coup political movements, groups, parties, and ideologies.”288 Regime pressure served to deepen debate and interest in political commitments among parties of the left and center.289 The Pinochet regime could not undo more than a century of political patterns and party competition, as the familiar left-center-right cleavages persisted through military rule.290 Chilean parties, having deep roots in society and generations of experience, were not easily brushed aside.291 Simultaneously, the anti-party perspective and mission of the military government and its civilian allies meant opposition to party organization of their own. Chilean military rule took the form of trying to do away with all politics, while other militaries such as those in Guatemala and El Salvador captured the political system and supplanted civilian politics with their own. The dual process of endurance of center and left parties under harsh conditions in Chile and the parallel weakness of military-guided parties ready to compete in the democratic era is key to understanding the post-transition political landscape in the country.

287 Valenzuela and Valenzuela 1986, 209.

288 Loveman 1988, 22.

289 Valenzuela and Valenzuela 1986, 207.

290 Scully 1992, 201.

291 Valenzuela and Valenzuela, 186-187, 199.
Pre-Existing Parties Survived under Military Rule

From the opening days of the military regime, party leaders, activists, and suspected leftists were targeted for arrest, disappearance, and exile. The Pinochet government silenced domestic opposition by diminishing the number of opponents in the country. Party survival was not guaranteed. The form that repression and resistance takes determines the outcome of democratic continuity. The process is defined in three parts: the presence of parties entering the era of military government, their treatment at the hands of the authoritarian regime during its rule, and the alternative provided by the regime.\textsuperscript{292} For Chile, the military regime faced long-standing political parties and set about outlawing them and exiling their leaders. Chileans were sent into exile in unprecedented numbers, and its exile presence in Europe far outpaced that of any other Latin American state at the time.\textsuperscript{293} Exile against politicians of the left and center was employed most routinely in the 1973-77 years but would continue well into the 1980s, and the government vacillated on its policy of return, with some politicians being exiled more than once.\textsuperscript{294} Exiles found refuge abroad with their European party counterparts, but they were divided politically and geographically not only from their home country but also from each other with parties operating out of different European capitals—Communists in Moscow, Socialists in Berlin, and Christian Democrats in Rome.\textsuperscript{295} Efforts to unify the opposition abroad consistently failed in the decade between the 1973 coup and the 1983 political opening in Chile. Activists still

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{292} Table 2.1 in Chapter Two outlines the democratic experience (presence of parties) and military experience (treatment of those parties and creation of alternatives) for each country in the study.
\item \textsuperscript{293} Angell (2007) places the number at some 200,000 all over the world.
\item \textsuperscript{294} Jaime Castillo Velasco, for example, was expelled in 1976 and again in 1981 “for having published a statement supporting [a] new union organization” (Huneeus 2007, 360).
\item \textsuperscript{295} Lawson 2005, 189.
\end{itemize}
identified most strongly with their individual party rather than as proponents of democratization. Nevertheless, political leaders remained engaged with Chilean politics and “keenly aware of the major political debates taking place in their host countries.” A weapon of the regime used to reduce opposition, also proved to be a tool of survival and education.

Domestically, think-tanks and the academy proved to be important stewards of political continuity under dictatorship. Research institutes kept political life alive, even if couched in careful academic language so as not to draw negative attention from the regime; and, these groups came to be crucial actors in the campaign against the 1988 plebiscite that sought to extend Pinochet’s presidency. The left was not unchallenged in the realm of academia, however, as the gremialista movement, espousing libertarianism under Jaime Guzmán, fueled the dictatorship’s neoliberal economic philosophy and exerted particular influence over Pinochet’s speeches and public statements. The anti-party mentality of military rule fueled its opposition to the democratic actors that came before it yet also undermined the potential for the regime to create a political identity for itself. As ruptures in Pinochet’s regime appeared and pressure for democracy grew, the political right was divided and faced setbacks of their own from having exited politics during the dictatorship. The political right depended on the military to uphold its interests, particularly economic, and as a result diminished its own ability to compete in the post-transition environment. This pattern is even more evident in Argentina, where the political right relied on military intervention throughout the 20th century to combat its ideological rivals, and this reinforced the lack of capable democratic organizing on the right.


297 Ibid., 11-12.

Economic Crisis Brought Political Opening

The Pinochet regime, famous for its foray into neoliberal economic policy through the technocratic rule of advisors known as the Chicago Boys, won great acclaim for stabilizing the national economy in the years after the 1973 coup. But, by the following decade, the military government would find itself confronting serious political and popular challenges thanks to popular repercussions of Pinochet’s policies. In the wake of the Latin American debt crisis, the government’s successful program of repression ruptured, giving rise to widespread protests, coordinated party dissent, and eventual re-democratization through the regime’s own constitutional procedure—the 1988 plebiscite choosing between Pinochet’s continued rule or free elections and transition in 1989.

The military regime’s two-pronged strategy of political repression and economic stabilization worked for the government in the 1970s. Pinochet, secure in his power by the end of the decade, sought to legitimize and institutionalize his rule through the 1980 constitution, approved by referendum. Within the next few years, however, economic performance was flagging and the military’s primary rationale for being in power was under scrutiny, even among the regime’s immediate supporters. The neoliberal program of privatization meant short-term benefit to major capital interests who bought state assets for less than they were worth, but more open trade was hurting domestic industry. And, smaller business organizations—including the Confederación de Dueños de Camiones—who had been instrumental in bringing down President Allende, were growing restless with the military regime as the cost of their debts increased as the Chilean currency was devalued.299 Similarly, the growth in consumer spending had been fueled by easy credit, and as that dried up, the boom was over. In 1982, the situation was dire. Gross

domestic product fell by more than 10%, and nearly 20% of the population was unemployed.\textsuperscript{300} Economic policy and the slashing of state services had hurt the poorer sectors of Chilean society for years, but by 1983 the consequences of crisis were being felt at multiple levels and opened the door to mass protest.

Labor organizers and party leaders called for a major strike on May 11, 1983. In the days between the announcement and the planned industrial action, however, the regime flexed its might with an enhanced military presence at mines and factories and through public troop maneuvers. Confronted with such power, organizers transformed the call into the “Day of the first great National Protest.”\textsuperscript{301} Demonstrations were organized for the 11\textsuperscript{th} of each following month (until November 1984 when a new state of siege was imposed) and the military found itself fighting for control of the streets on a daily basis, particularly in the poblaciones (shantytowns) around Santiago.\textsuperscript{302} The Pinochet regime maintained enormous strength in this period, but with public opposition in full view and the military government in neighboring Argentina on the ropes, there was now no doubt that change was possible. In this context, parties began to operate more openly within Chile. The survival of their organizational capacity, now employed to turn “discontent into collective forms of expression,” was crucial in making the regime’s economic failure have deep political consequences.\textsuperscript{303}

In the wake of the rupture in the regime’s ability to suppress dissent, General Pinochet appointed the former president of the Partido Nacional, Sergio Onofre Jarpa, to the post of

\textsuperscript{300} Lawson (2005, 187) puts the numbers at a 14% drop in GDP and a third of the workforce unemployed.
\textsuperscript{301} Stern 2006, 251.
\textsuperscript{302} Angell 1993, 192; Stern 2006, 251.
\textsuperscript{303} Garretón 1995, 219.
Interior Minister and authorized him to engage in talks with the newly formed *Alianza Democrática* (AD), a group founded on August 6, 1983 by leaders of the Christian Democratic Party and the Socialist Party to press for restoration of democracy. The economic crisis “led the regime itself to recognize a de facto end to the political recess” and the AD succeeded in taking a crucial first step toward carving out space for political competition.\[^{304}\] Their demands—principally that Pinochet leave office, the *Centro Nacional de Información* (CNI, the secret police) be disbanded, and the election of a constituent assembly to oversee the return to democracy—were predictably rejected, but the *apertura* (political opening) provided by the ongoing negotiations between 1983 and 1984, when the talks formally broke down and Jarpa was pushed out of the cabinet, provided an important opportunity for a return to the practice of politics.\[^{305}\] Party leaders were able to assert themselves, to gain legitimacy by being recognized as the representatives of an opposition movement, and to take advantage of the temporarily diminished restrictions on communication.\[^{306}\]

Thus, in addition to the monthly episodes of protest, parties coordinated four major demonstrations in late 1983. On September 4\(^{th}\), the country’s historical election day, over 120,000 people marched in the first large-scale anti-regime gathering since the 1982 funeral of former President Eduardo Frei. As the tenth anniversary of the September 11, 1973 coup approached, there was a four-day rally in protest. And on November 18\(^{th}\), the *Alianza*...
Democrática drew a crowd of hundreds of thousands to O’Higgins Park in Santiago. A fourth protest, however, was brutally repressed and a new state of siege imposed. The negotiations between Onofre Jarpa and the AD came to an end in 1984, but the struggle for re-democratization was underway.

In addition to exposing cracks in the regime’s armor and opening the space for opposition forces to see their own strength, the apertura was an important step in learning what would be necessary to restore democratic rule. The AD broadly pushed for Pinochet to go, but they agreed on little else. Party elites had to prove to themselves and to the military government that they would be a viable regime alternative. Thus, opposition unity became a necessity for the democratization movement, seeking to unify not only to be at their strongest to take on the military government but also to take charge when the military left power.

Parties Unified and Pressed for Re-Democratization

Survival did not mean unity. The lengthy transition would prove essential to the center-left resolving its differences and finding a solution to their divisions. Parties of the left and center-left began the military era greatly divided, as they had been rivals for decades and additionally bore the consequences of their departure from democratic principle in the early

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307 Huneeus (2007, 373) puts the number of participants at 300,000 while Stern (2006, 317) quotes “a half million.” Constable and Valenzuela (1991, 286) relate the forcesful speech in which Gabriel Valdés, president of the PDC amidst such massive support explicitly declares Gen. Pinochet to be “the obstacle to democracy in Chile.” This year of protest was a turning point.

308 “Eighteen thousand soldiers hit the streets of Santiago, treating the poblaciones with particular violence, killing twenty-six people and leaving hundreds wounded” (Huneeus 2007, 373).


310 Loveman 1988, 35; Valenzuela and Valenzuela 1986.
1970s. The Pinochet regime had been successful in stifling political activity in the country, cutting off access to popular media, and making it essentially impossible for parties to communicate easily among their leadership, with their supporters, or with each other.\(^{311}\) While parties did manage to survive, they undeniably had been badly damaged. They needed to re-build and unite in an unprecedented fashion.

Prior to the May 1983 uprising, the death of the former president, Eduardo Frei, led to a mass demonstration in conjunction with his funeral in January 1982, but it also “underlined the lack of viable leadership…able to unite the opposition and to convince the military to seek a new political option.”\(^{312}\) With the most recognizable figure of the previous democratic era gone and the major centrist party, the PDC, reduced to “25,000 hard-core loyalists,” the opposition had a long way to go in reclaiming their place in the political order.\(^{313}\) Despite the loss of former President Frei, the opposition did have an advantage over the military on the question of succession. While Pinochet had been purging or assassinating his fellow senior officers who might have been contenders to succeed him, the suspension of politics “froze name recognition for prominent leaders of the previous period of democratic opening.”\(^{314}\) By preventing the practice of politics and thereby stifling the rise of new politicians, former leaders were

\(^{311}\) Angell 1993, 192.


\(^{314}\) For the quote, see Valenzuela and Valenzuela 1986, 205. For examples of Pinochet’s purges and assassinations: In Buenos Aires in 1974 DINA assassinated General Carlos Prats, a constitutionalist with similar credentials (he preceded Pinochet as Allende’s minister of war) in the institution to Pinochet; and General Gustavo Leigh, the ranking Air Force commander, was edged out of the junta in 1978 because he opposed the regime’s neoliberal economic program.
essentially set aside and therefore able to return once the military left power without having been part of the regime. This pattern is in contrast to states such as Honduras or Guatemala where the military exercised control over the pre-existing civilian political system.

With the collapse of the *Alianza Democrática*, parties continued the work they had begun with the initial opening, but another major unifying effort would not come until August 1985 in the form of the *Acuerdo Nacional para la Transición a la Plena Democracia* (National Accord for Transition to Full Democracy), organized by Cardinal Juan Francisco Fresno, which brought together politicians representing 11 parties ranging from Socialists to moderate conservatives.\(^{315}\) The Accord scaled back the demands of the earlier effort, this time focusing more on recapturing political rights afforded during the opening, such as rescinding the state of siege and allowing parties to operate freely, rather than calling for Pinochet’s resignation outright. Nevertheless, General Pinochet once again rejected the opposition’s demands.\(^{316}\) At this point, it was clear that the opposition would have no choice but to battle the regime on its own terms, through the referendum on Pinochet’s rule, scheduled for 1988 as established by the regime’s own constitution. The opposition had difficulty in resolving its differences over how to confront military rule. The Communist Party insisted on pursuing armed struggle against the regime, which meant they were consistently excluded from opposition efforts, but it did not mean that their actions did not have an impact on the rest of the opposition. On September 7, 1986, members of the *Frente Patriótico Manuel Rodríguez* ambushed Pinochet’s convoy in a failed assassination attempt that brought on a new state of siege that would persist until the end of

\(^{315}\) Constable and Valenzuela 1991, 271.

\(^{316}\) Ensalaco 2000, 170.
military government. Not until the opposition (minus the Communist Party) set upon a peaceful path, unified in the strategy of defeating the Pinochet regime through its own constitutionalist tools, could the transition to democracy begin. Pinochet’s insistence on following the plan laid out in the 1980 constitution—a 1988 referendum declaring either “yes” or “no” to eight more years of Pinochet as president—led the opposition to embrace the electoral route rather than the “strategy of social mobilization initiated in the wake of the 1983 protests.”

The false starts, failed pacts, and rescinded openings of the lengthy transitional period proved valuable in growing and uniting the opposition. Parties began to re-group in tandem with growing public unrest, to re-institute internal policymaking, and to practice democracy at low levels. Repression had weakened parties considerably, so when professional associations were again allowed to elect their leadership in 1983, it was critical that members of the Alianza Democrática, experienced politicians from the previous democratic era, entered these contests and won an overwhelming number of the positions. When parties were re-legalized in 1987, Ricardo Lagos, future president and Socialist leader from the pre-coup era, established the Partido por la Democracia as an “instrumental party” to mobilize the citizenry and channel opposition against the dictatorship. Disagreement among democratic forces was no longer an option. They needed consensus on the fundamentals if they were to have an impact.

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319 Barrett 2000, 5.
320 Huneeus 2007, 374.
322 Weeks and Borzutzky 2010; The emphasis on consensus has had negative consequences in the post-transition era, though. The need for elite consensus has meant that the parties of the concertación have not
alliances and unity organizations were vital precursors to the campaign vehicle that would contest Pinochet’s continued rule in the 1988 plebiscite, the *Concertación de Partidos por el No*.

**Citizens Rejected Continued Pinochet Rule through the 1988 Plebiscite**

The center-left was able to compete effectively because of lessons learned in their experience in the previous democratic era and under military rule. The need for unity and consensus was never more apparent than when the time came to vote democracy back into power. Years of military dictatorship left much of the population dissatisfied with the system and significant elements of the institution ready to leave government. Nevertheless, voters and the military needed a credible replacement. Neither would readily choose chaos. Thus, this was the threshold the opposition had to cross and the fear the regime would try to exploit in both the 1988 plebiscite and the 1989 presidential campaign.

Military rule looked to be on the way out as preparations for the vote were underway. Large majorities of voters did not trust the armed forces and wanted their power reduced. In macroeconomic terms, Chile had recovered since the crisis of 1982, but economic benefits were not shared equally, leaving substantial numbers of voters frustrated and planning to vote for a return to democracy specifically because of the economic situation under the military. Simultaneously, years of repression and protest weakened the military’s claim to being effective national guardians. Nevertheless, Pinochet’s own 1980 constitution locked him into the

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323 Lawson 2005, 190.

324 Varas 1995.
referendum, and pressure from fellow senior military officials and rightist political forces ensured that the vote would go ahead.

What they could not control was Pinochet’s insistence that he continue as the regime candidate. This decision was not just a strategic error in the campaign, but also a reflection of the challenge of military succession made acutely problematic by Pinochet’s purging of those who might have taken over from him. In terms of presence of recycled dictators, the situation also reflects the relative weakness of regime forces’ readiness to compete in a democratic system. In August 1988, two months before the plebiscite, polls found that 70% of the public thought his candidacy was a mistake. And if elections are about the future, then the regime’s campaign got everything wrong. Pinochet tried to win through fear by equating democracy with chaos. The campaign relied on a narrative of apprehension that the Concertación was not to be trusted and that a potential victory would mean a return to the problems of the Allende years. Again, though, stoking anti-communist fears in particular was a losing strategy. Even among those who voted in favor of Pinochet staying in office, the anti-communist rationale was minimal. Meanwhile, the regime underscored the brutality of their decade and a half in power by attacking and arresting demonstrators on a regular basis in the lead-up to the vote.

The regime seemed to be running a campaign against Salvador Allende, not against the opponent they actually faced. Being in power, did mean the regime exercised considerable control over how the campaign was conducted, limiting opposition air-time on television, for

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325 Angell 2007, 33. The junta wanted a civilian candidate to run in Pinochet’s place, but he refused to step aside.

326 Lawson 2005, 190.

327 Varas 1995, 75.

328 Huneeus 2007, 384; Lawson 2005, 190.
example. The concertación successfully motivated citizens through a professional, positive campaign that operated under the slogan *la alegría ya viene* (joy is coming) and worked hard to register voters and allay fears of potential repercussions of voting. The campaign was consciously upbeat and celebratory. At the elite level, the think-tanks that had kept politics alive in the worst days of repression took an active role in educating party leaders and activists on public policy and served a critical function for the opposition in “breaking down barriers and agreeing on common principles and strategies.” The official campaign period was limited to 30 days, but the battle had been joined years earlier. Successfully uniting the parties and fronting well-known political leaders from the pre-1973, democratic era made the concertación what it needed to be: a credible alternative to military rule. On October 5, 1988, the opposition carried the day with 56% of the vote denying Pinochet another eight years as president.

The victory also marked the starting point of the presidential campaign as the *Concertación de Partidos por el No* quickly shifted gears to become the *Concertación de Partidos por la Democracia* and carried the momentum and unity of their long struggle to restore democracy toward the 1989 presidential elections. The country was in a constant campaign from October 1988 to December 1989. In May 1989, Patricio Aylwin was officially nominated as the concertación candidate for the presidency. As president of the PDC (the largest party in the coalition) and an important spokesman during the *No* campaign, Aylwin was an experienced party leader, serving as a credible candidate for the center-left coalition.


331 Otano 2006, 69.


The Right Faced Disunity

When electoral competition returned to Chile, the center-left was organized in a way that eluded forces on the right. Parties on the right faced historical division, just as the left had, but the experience under dictatorship planted three new problems in the right’s camp. First, the major party on the right at the time of the coup, the National Party, dissolved itself even before the political recess was put into force. The party disappeared and with it went the prior-era institutional organization of the right, which meant that while the left was struggling to survive and fighting to return, the right, ironically, had done itself a serious disservice for its future electoral prospects. Second, the civilian right under military rule was composed primarily of either technocrats with little political experience or members of the anti-party Gremialista movement. And third, once the right was free of Augusto Pinochet as a candidate, those competing in the new landscape were confronted by the question of how to approach the legacy of his rule. This was a tension they failed to resolve before the 1989 election.

The National Party’s withdrawal from politics in 1973 left a vacuum on the political right. Sergio Onofre Jarpa, party president at the time “supported a full recess—and a majority of members dutifully agreed.” Their departure meant internal rightist competition between the libertarian gremialistas and the hard line nacionalistas but neither were traditional electoral movements accustomed to (or even accepting of) the idea of politics. When Jarpa was called into service in Pinochet’s cabinet in 1983, it was not a universally supported move. His presence in the cabinet and the opening of talks with the AD prompted Jaime Guzmán, leader of the gremialistas, to form the Unión Democrática Independiente (UDI). Once Jarpa’s talks had failed

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and he again left public service, he lent his support to Andrés Allamand in founding the Movimiento Unión Nacional (MUN) in an attempt to unify the regime’s non-gremialista supporters. Jarpa’s involvement dragged down interest from his fellow pre-coup rightist colleagues; they had not let go of animosities from the earlier era. And, the group had an incoherent stance on the regime, claiming at once to be supportive yet independent while also “involved in public tasks” of the government. The National Party also technically reconstituted itself under Carmen Saenz de Phillips, a former leader of the party; and Jarpa went on to found the Frente Nacional del Trabajo (FNT) in 1985.

In contrast to the forces on the center-left, these organizations did not work in concert with each other, and not until February 1987 did they attempt to join forces under the banner, Renovación Nacional (RN). Their differences proved irreconcilable, and within a year UDI “was expelled” from the alliance. The UDI were firmly committed to supporting the regime and acting as the partisan heir to military government, while Jarpa and those aligned with him sought greater distance from the regime. By constituency, the UDI and RN were also at odds, and this too would prove to be seriously damaging to the right’s unity and prospects in the 1989 presidential election. UDI found support among business leaders and the country’s main industrialist organization, Sociedad Fomento de Fabril (SOFOFA), giving them the power of

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335 Huneeus 2007, 375. Allamand had been a National Party student leader before the coup; see: Barrett 2000.

336 Huneeus 2007, 376.


money in the campaign. RN, by contrast, thought of itself as representing the “working men” of the right.\textsuperscript{339}

For its failures in uniting the right behind a single platform, the RN did play a vital role in the plebiscite. As the October vote approached, there was some doubt as to whether Pinochet would accept the result if it did not return in his favor.\textsuperscript{340} This fear persisted, and “on the night of the plebiscite...[the RN] threatened to denounce the regime if it did not recognize defeat.”\textsuperscript{341} This powerful statement served as a warning to the regime and as a signal of support to those around Pinochet who had been displeased with his presence in the referendum at all. It was also a brazen threat that deepened the division between the RN and the UDI as they looked toward the presidential election.

**Hernán Büchi Was the Regime Heir**

Coming on the heels of the 1988 plebiscite, the 1989 presidential election served as a second-try for the regime. Internal factions of the military government who had preferred to see Gen. Pinochet stand aside in favor of a different officer—or indeed a civilian—referendum candidate now had the opportunity to run a different potential successor. Sergio Onofre Jarpa, as leader of the RN was an obvious contender on the non-regime right, while Pinochet, the UDI, and financially motivated industrialists SOFOFA drew Hénan Büchi into the electoral arena.

\textsuperscript{339} Barrett 2000.

\textsuperscript{340} Rojo and Hassett 1988.

As an ex-regime candidate, Hernán Büchi was a regime heir. He served under the Pinochet government as Finance Minister from 1985 to 1989, when he stepped down to run for the presidency. He had started as an aide in the ministry in 1975. Büchi won admirers overseas for his success in spurring the Chilean economy and reducing its debt at a time when other countries in the region were facing lingering problems from the debt crisis. He was heavily associated with the economic system of the late Pinochet regime, as it sought to address problems that had afflicted the country during the economic crisis of the early 1980s.

Because of his stewardship of the economy, Büchi enjoyed support from business leaders, and as the 1989 presidential election approached, they urged him to run. He resigned his post as Finance Minister in April 1989 in order to consider the prospect. Büchi was thought to be the most popular of the potential rightist candidates due to his association with positive economic growth during the Pinochet years. Büchi made a series of stumbles in his efforts, which hurt his campaign considerably. He dithered in making a decision on entering the race, formally announced he would not run in May 1989, effectively pulling out of the race, but then re-entered 24 hours later. Business leaders had to “invest millions of dollars in a blitz of publicity

342 For more discussion of the regime heir type of successful recycled dictator candidate, see Chapter Three.


to woo him back.”

His indecisiveness and general lack of enthusiasm for the campaign was problematic, but the greater challenge was the continued lack of unity on the right. The major rightist party, Renovación Nacional (RN), led by Onofre Jarpa—also a former member of Pinochet’s cabinet—had been trying to distance itself from the Pinochet regime by balancing conservative principles with more populist economic policies such as having a higher minimum wage and greater spending on health and education, while Büchi continued to espouse the merits of the structural adjustment programs he helped to put in place.

This disconnect meant that Renovación Nacional would not support Büchi’s candidacy and initially maintained its support for Jarpa, but demand for Büchi among business interests proved more powerful, and they went so far as to boycott Jarpa’s candidacy, causing that campaign to suffer from a lack of funding. Meanwhile, the opposition was firmly committed to nominating one candidate, Patricio Aylwin, to stand for election. By August 1989, Jarpa withdrew his candidacy and threw his support behind Büchi. Nevertheless, the campaign continued to suffer from divisions and the view from RN leaders and volunteers that Büchi’s ties to Pinochet made him “an inevitable loser.”


Büchi’s status as a regime heir had mixed effects. The perception that Büchi would be a “continuation of the Pinochet regime” weighed heavily on his chances.\textsuperscript{356} Thus, the two parties supporting Büchi, the UDI and the RN were not entirely convinced by his candidacy, given that he did not fully adopt the RN mantle of populist efforts to tackle poverty.\textsuperscript{357} To combat the perception that he was a continuation of the Pinochet regime, Büchi tried to emphasize his independence, but this merely upset his rightist supporters. They were not pleased by his meeting with human rights groups nor by his proposal that Pinochet not continue in his post as commander-in-chief.\textsuperscript{358} The opposition played up his association with military rule, saying “he’s stuck with his past as a minister under the dictatorship” and that his success with the economy came at the expense of everyday living standards.\textsuperscript{359}

Büchi and his supporters attacked opposition candidate Patricio Aylwin for the support he and the \textit{concertación} received from Marxist parties and those who had been part of President Salvador Allende’s \textit{Unidad Popular} (UP) in the 1970s. Because the formerly outlawed communist party agreed to support Aylwin, rightist forces tried to equate their potential victory with a victory for communism in order to scare middle class voters into supporting a pro-government candidate. The Büchi campaign also tried to pull voters away from Aylwin by arguing that opposition victory would be detrimental to the economic health of the country and that only Büchi himself was capable of managing the economy and keeping Chile from sliding into the economic problems being experienced at the time by other countries in the region after


\textsuperscript{357} Gilles Baudin, “Infighting on the right leaves Aylwin a clear run in Chile’s election,” \textit{Manchester Guardian Weekly}, 24 September, 1989.


\textsuperscript{359} Ibid.
Meanwhile, Aylwin used Büchi’s ties to the Pinochet regime against him, pledging to investigate human rights violations of the military government and calling on Pinochet to give up his position as commander-in-chief of the armed forces. Büchi’s support from the military at times backfired in the campaign. Defense Minister Patricio Carvajal said “a Büchi victory would allow the former finance minister to run the economy while Pinochet directs the political decisions.” For a populace that was eager for change, and unified enough to bring together 17 parties ranging across the political spectrum, the idea that a Büchi victory would represent more of the same was a considerable negative. As a result, in the closing month of the campaign, Büchi’s campaign adopted the slogan “Büchi is different” in a last minute attempt to set him apart from the military regime. This move underlined the regime’s desperation, particularly in contrast to Aylwin, who behaved as a president-elect even during the campaign. The concierto looked confident and ready to assume office.

Additionally, Büchi’s candidacy was weakened all along by the fact that he was not the only candidate on the political right, despite Jarpa stepping aside. Businessman Francisco Javier Errazuriz was running as an independent, capitalizing on much of the right’s disappointment with Büchi. This split favored Aylwin as the two right-wing candidates were “fighting each other

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362 Ibid.

just as hard as they [were] fighting their common adversary.” In the end, Aylwin secured 55% of the vote, avoiding a runoff election. Büchi won 29% of the vote.

**Conclusion**

Chile’s experience with recycled dictators was determined by the high degree of democratic continuity—in long-standing democratic practice and well-established political parties prior to military rule that were able to reconstitute and push for democratization. The pattern of military rule through policide attempted to destroy these parties and to do away with politics altogether, but this effort undermined the ability of pro-regime forces to compete in the democratic era by also doing away with rightist politics. The manner of military rule also created a problem for rightist parties in the democratic transition as they struggled to define their relationship to the old regime. Leaders of the National Party, which pre-dated the military government, sought to return to the democratic system that they had left behind just as other parties did in the wake of democratization. Meanwhile, regime forces wanted a continuation of their rule under democratic auspices and thus ran Hernán Büchi, the regime heir.

General Pinochet secured military interests before his departure, so that even in leaving the presidency, the armed forces retained “authoritarian enclaves” and “reserved domains.” Augusto Pinochet continued in his role as Commander-in-Chief and established a number of former regime members as “senators for life.” Funding for the armed forces in Chile also was

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366 Article 45 of the 1989 Chilean Constitution established senatorial positions for former presidents, as well as ex-ministers of the Supreme Court and former commanders of each branch of the armed forces.
secured with the Chilean Copper Law, which has guaranteed that 10% of profits from copper mining in the country go to the military.\textsuperscript{367} The newly created binomial electoral system in legislative elections also ensured overrepresentation of minority rightist candidates.\textsuperscript{368} Pinochet had built in safeguards against change to military prerogatives, and public support for the military was high enough that civilian policymakers “had to take military interests seriously.”\textsuperscript{369} Thus, military interests were not under threat in the post-military era. Indeed, Javier Couso has argued that “until 2005, the Chilean system of government was a democracy protected by the tutelage of the military forces.”\textsuperscript{370} Therefore, the level of democratic continuity and level of threat place Chile in the category of country that will see the return of democratic party leaders and the lowest rate of recycled dictator competition in presidential contests.

\textsuperscript{367} Baldez and Carey 1999; RESDAL 2008.

\textsuperscript{368} The system uses party list elections and allocs two seats per district, giving one seat to the highest vote recipient. In order for the second seat to go to a member of the same party or coalition, however, the candidate must receive twice as many votes as the next party’s list. That is, “33.4 per cent of the total vote for the top list is required to win one seat. However, a list needs to receive 66.7 per cent of the total vote to be guaranteed both seats” (Huneeus 2005).

\textsuperscript{369} Weeks 2003, 57.

\textsuperscript{370} Couso et al. 2013.
## Chapter Four: Chile Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1830</td>
<td>Battle of Lircay. Conservative victory over Liberals ushers in civilian government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1831-1861</td>
<td>Presidential dominance, Conservative rule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1833</td>
<td>New constitution establishes “Portalian system” of presidential authority, congressional control of purse strings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1851</td>
<td>Liberal rebellion against Conservative rule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1857</td>
<td>Liberal, National, and Conservative Parties formed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1859</td>
<td>Liberal rebellion against Conservative rule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1861-1891</td>
<td>Presidential dominance, Liberal rule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1861</td>
<td>Radical Party formed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1887</td>
<td>Democrat Party formed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>Chilean civil war, characterized by “congressional revolt”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891-1924</td>
<td>Parliamentary Republic, Conservative rule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1912</td>
<td>Socialist Workers’ Party formed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>Arturo Alessandri elected president on reformist platform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td>Communist Party of Chile formed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924-1932</td>
<td>Military interventions in government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>New constitution re-establishing presidential authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932-1973</td>
<td>Civilian electoral democracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>Arturo Alessandri elected president for a second time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>Popular Front formed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>Law for the Defense of Democracy outlaws the Communist Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>Former General Carlos Ibáñez elected president on anti-party platform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>Communist Party re-legalized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>Eduardo Frei (Christian Democratic Party) elected president on a “revolution in liberty” platform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>Salvador Allende (Unidad Popular) elected president on a “Chilean path to Socialism” platform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973-1990</td>
<td>Military rule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973-1977</td>
<td>New constitution approved by referendum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>Death of former President Eduardo Frei. Mass rally at his funeral.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>Latin American debt crisis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>Major protest against the Pinochet regime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983-84</td>
<td>Alianza Democrática formed by leaders of the Christian Democratic Party and the Socialist Party to push for re-democratization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>Major protest against the Pinochet regime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>Unión Democrática Independiente formed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>Major protest against the Pinochet regime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983-84</td>
<td>Political opening and talks between Pinochet regime (Sergio Onofre Jarpa) and Alianza Democrática</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>New state of siege imposed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Event</td>
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<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>Movimiento Unión Nacional formed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>Frente Nacional del Trabajo formed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 1985</td>
<td>Acuerdo Nacional para la Transición a la Plena Democracia formed representing 11 parties across the political spectrum in opposition to Pinochet regime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 7, 1986</td>
<td>Assassination attempt against Pinochet by Frente Patriótico Manuel Rodríguez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>New state of siege imposed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 1987</td>
<td>Parties re-legalized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>Concertación de Partidos por el No formed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 5, 1988</td>
<td>Plebiscite voting “yes” or “no” on eight more years of Pinochet as president</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1989</td>
<td>Patricio Aylwin nominated as Concertación candidate for president</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 1989</td>
<td>Sergio Onofre Jarpa withdraws his candidacy after facing financial boycott from SOFOFA and other capital interests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 14, 1989</td>
<td>Presidential election between Patricio Aylwin (Concertación), Errazuriz (Independent), and Hernán Büchi Buc (Democracia y Progreso, RD candidate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990-pesent</td>
<td>Civilian electoral democracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 11, 1990</td>
<td>Patricio Aylwin inaugurated. Civilian control of the presidency restored.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 11, 1993</td>
<td>Second presidential election; José Piñera Echeñique (Independent, RD candidate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Pinochet leaves his position as Commander-in-Chief of the armed forces, declaring misión cumplida (mission accomplished)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 5

Argentina: Authoritarian Collapse and the Protest Candidate

The military regime in Argentina was politically and socially repressive and engaged in some of the worst human rights abuses in the hemisphere during the Proceso de Reorganización Nacional, the 1976-83 dictatorship. Security forces carried out political assassinations, arbitrarily detained and tortured citizens, and disappeared 30,000 people. On December 10, 1983, Raúl Alfonsín, a civilian attorney with a human rights background, was inaugurated as president of Argentina, the new national congress was seated, and the armed forces formally relinquished power over government, ending more than seven years of military rule. For Argentina, the sight of the military entering and leaving government was a familiar one. The widespread political violence employed by the regime in pursuit of its war against subversion, however, was different. The Alfonsín administration immediately launched the Comisión Nacional sobre la Desaparición de Personas (CONADEP), the national truth commission, while initially allowing the military to address the issue of responsibility for the crimes of their government internally. When the military failed to hold its leadership accountable, the country pursued judicial action against the juntas. As the program of prosecution reached further down the chain of command, Lt. Col. Aldo Rico led a group known as the carapintadas in barracks revolts in order to force

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371 The 20th century in Argentina is replete with examples of military intervention in government. The armed forces were in power numerous times: 1930-32, 1943-46, 1955-58, 1966-73, 1976-83.

372 Previous military dictatorships in the country had engaged in repression and banning of political activity, but open political violence was limited. A mass protest in the province of Córdoba that was put down by force in 1969 (an affair known as the cordobazo) during Gen. Juan Carlos Onganía’s rule, led to a military coup against him.

373 Acuña and Smulovitz 1997.
President Alfonsin to relent and to cease the trials of field officers. These uprisings secured an amnesty against prosecution.374

The military government’s own failures—economic mismanagement, internal disunity, and the ineffective war against the United Kingdom over the Falkland Islands—established a difficult environment for any political aspirant coming out of the military regime. The thoroughly discredited military government had little to show for its tenure in office. Indeed, there would be no “regime heir” from the Proceso government. Meanwhile, the long-standing, durable parties— principally the Unión Cívica Radical (UCR) and the Partido Justicialista (PJ, better known as the Peronist party, named for its founder and patron, Gen. Juan Domingo Perón)— returned to the political arena and dominated the electoral space, marginalizing other candidates, regardless of ideological position or past affiliation.375 And, the high-profile condemnation of the dictatorship, through the truth commission and trials, underscored the aberrant nature of the military regime and ensured that the conduct of the armed forces while in power would be an issue for any ex-regime presidential candidate. Nevertheless, the conflict generated by the split within the armed forces— between the high command and those field officers like Lt. Col. Rico who felt betrayed by them—and the transitional justice process, would prove to be the same motivation for these candidates to enter presidential elections. Thus, while Argentina did not experience the return of military presidents, junta members, or cabinet ministers from its last military dictatorship as presidential candidates, the country did see the

374 The amnesty laws were subsequently thrown out in 2005 under the Nestor Kirchener administration, again opening the door for human rights trials against those accused of abuses under the military dictatorship. “Argentina: Amnesty Laws Struck Down,” Human Rights Watch, 2005.

375 For example, the combined vote share for the Radicals and Peronists in presidential elections during the 1980s and 90s did not dip below 62% -- 1983: 91.9%, 1989: 79.9%, 1995: 61.7% (the combined vote share here could be reported as 90.1%, considering the 28.4% of the vote secured by Jose Octavio Bordon, who was a Peronist up until the 1995 election), 1999: 86.64%.
involvement of non-government members of the armed forces who sought to make an impact in the political sphere. Each of the five recycled dictator candidacies at the presidential level in Argentina came from former rebel officers from the *carapintada* uprisings.

This chapter proceeds as follows: First, I outline broadly how the theory of the presence of recycled dictator competitors in presidential elections applies to the Argentine case. Second, I discuss the development of parties in Argentina, noting their electoral capability along with their shortcomings, challenges which have led scholars to characterize parties in the country as weak or poorly institutionalized. Third, I establish the goals of the Argentine military regime from 1976 to 1983 in its war against subversion and the cyclical battle against Peronism. The *Proceso* government ruled through repression and the denial of politics similar to Pinochet’s policide, and as the regime began to fail attempted to create political space for a pro-regime successor party. Fourth, I discuss the transitional justice program in the post-authoritarian period that left members of the armed forces feeling under threat and prompting *carapintadas* to enter presidential elections in what I term “protest candidacies.” Finally, I conclude by reflecting on the historical tendency of Argentine elites to defect from the rules of the democratic game and the importance of recycled dictators in elite acceptance of democracy.

**Argentina and the Recycled Dictator**

The level of democratic continuity available to a country and the level of threat posed to the interests of those associated with the former military government explain the presence of recycled dictators in contemporary post-military rule presidential elections across Latin America. In effect, countries with higher levels of democratic continuity see fewer recycled dictators
compete in presidential elections than those countries with little democratic continuity. And where the military and its allies stand to lose more by not being in power, ex-regime candidates present themselves for office at higher rates. Figure 5.1 categorizes the 12 countries in the study, placing Argentina in the quadrant of high democratic continuity and high threat to ex-regime actors.

Figure 5.1 Presence of Recycled Dictator Candidates by Country

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Democratic Continuity</th>
<th>Level of Threat to Former Regime Actors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Protest Candidacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Argentina, 4 (0.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Return of Democratic Party Representatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brazil, 4 (0.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chile, 2 (0.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uruguay, 1 (0.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peru, 3 (0.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Mixed Competition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ecuador, 3 (0.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Paraguay, 2 (1.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Honduras, 4 (3.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bolivia, 9 (3.2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Numbers in parentheses are recycled dictator candidates per 1000 potential candidates as calculated by cataloging all cabinet ministers, junta members, presidents under military rule, and estimating the officer corps of the country as 10% of total armed forces personnel. This is discussed at greater length in Chapter One. Integers after the country name are the number of actual candidates who stood for election, thereby distinguished from the number of candidacies which counts the same individual’s campaigns separately. For example, General Hugo Bánzer of Bolivia is one candidate but because he ran for president four times, he is counted four times in the number of recycled dictator candidacies.

Argentina’s modern democratic era began with the Sáenz Peña electoral law of 1912 that introduced the secret ballot and formally gave the franchise to all adult males, making the 1916

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376 For full discussion of democratic continuity, see Chapter Two.
presidential contest the first fair and meaningful electoral contest in the nation’s history. Prior to this reform, the country had been dominated by an oligarchy characterized by persistent fraud and electoral violence under one-party rule of the Partido Autonomista Nacional (PAN). The new democracy survived until 1930, when the military overthrew President Hipolito Yrigoyen and ruled for two years, attempting to reset the political system and secure elite interests. This pattern of democratic opening and military intervention would be repeated each decade from the 1930s to the 1980s, with five of these ruptures in democratic government. Despite the challenges to uninterrupted democracy, however, Argentina developed political parties adept at winning elections. The two major parties were responsible for two of the primary political expansions the country experienced—the UCR in 1912 and the Peronists in 1946. The parties were effective at channeling popular support into electoral victory. The Peronist party, as a working-class movement centered on mobilizing labor support, came to be seen as an institutional rival to the military, while the UCR, traditionally representing middle class interests, was more acceptable to the military, though it was ousted from government on numerous occasions as well. Post-1946 Argentine politics have been characterized by the strength of Peronism at the polls and by military reversal of Peronist electoral gains through intervention. The UCR and PJ traded victories in the intermittent democratic elections of the latter half of the 20th century. The result for the post-1983 electoral environment is clear: the UCR and PJ are significant democratic actors that, combined, win the vast majority of presidential vote share, leaving any other candidate to secure only a marginal percentage of the vote. Similar to its neighbor in Chile, the Argentine military government attempted to destroy politics, specifically

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378 Peronism has been the dominant movement in the country since 1946, but with Perón’s overthrow, exile, and the banning of his party in 1955, the Radical party held the presidency from 1958 to 1966.
with the mission of diminishing the strength and appeal of Peronism. This effort meant targeting labor and other “dissidents” of many stripes. The Argentine military placed itself in an isolated policy-making position, initially excluding many civilian leaders, even those who professed support. As in Chile, the attempt at policide failed. The regime’s ineffectiveness against Peronism meant that it and the UCR survived yet another round of repression and returned to occupy the electoral space in a way that would not have been possible without their long-standing role in politics.

The military’s own failures brought their rule to an abrupt end. Partly in an effort to weaken labor as a political force, the military government reduced state involvement in the economy, pursuing neoliberal economic policies that privatized previously state-owned enterprises. Focus on importing low-cost consumer goods further hollowed out Argentina’s industrial sector. As the debt crisis of the early 1980s hit Argentina, economic criticism and dissatisfaction with the regime began to mount. Even among its civilian supporters, the regime’s economic philosophy was called into question. The new military president, Gen. Roberto Viola, deviated from the regime’s neoliberal policies after taking over from Gen. Jorge Videla in July 1981. Economic disagreement revealed long-standing fissures between the service branches and between hard-liners and soft-liners in the junta. The military’s violent campaign against guerrillas in the interior of the country and its targeting of students, labor, and other activists had masked divisions in the institution. In the wake of economic failures and disagreement over how to address them, however, the regime’s fragility was on full display. Viola was overthrown only

379 Gibson 1996, 82-86; Castiglione 1992. Gibson argues this about the top leadership and Castiglione on the high percentage of active-duty officers in government administration. At the cabinet minister level, however, Chile and Argentina had roughly the same percentage of military versus civilian personnel in these positions: 55% military, 45% civilian.

months after taking office by hard-liners who reinstated the neoliberal economic program and attempted to return to the isolated, siege mentality of the early days of the regime.

Instability led the military government to look for another unifying mission. They trained their sights on the British-held Falklands/Malvinas Islands in the South Atlantic. For two months in 1982, the war temporarily distracted from the regime’s disunity and poor performance, but Argentina’s surrender underscored the armed forces’ failures—now in the fundamental task for which a military is meant to exist. The presidency again changed hands among the military leadership in July 1982. It was under these conditions that the armed forces would call for elections and cede power to President Alfonsín. Leaving power in a state of such weakness, and after having committed intense and widespread human rights abuses, members of the former regime were vulnerable to punishment. These conditions, however, also enabled the field officers who had fought in the Falklands War and who felt betrayed by the military leadership to respond to the threat against them (loss of institutional prerogatives, changes in military identity, prosecutorial efforts) by staging rebellions and embracing this same mission in their subsequent political careers.381 The dominance of the major parties in presidential elections ensured that these candidates would not get far, but they ran nonetheless, advancing campaigns centered on “dignity” rather than anticipated electoral results.382

Thus, Argentina illustrates how the theory of recycled dictators’ presence in presidential elections operates under conditions of high democratic continuity and high threat to the interests

381 The *carapintada* candidates are members of the rogue officer type—members of the armed forces who lead an uprising against the democratic system and then enter as presidential candidates—defined and discussed in comparative perspective in Chapter Three.

of ex-regime actors. I exploit differences in the pre-military rule history between Argentina and Chile to tease out the causal importance of political parties even under conditions of interrupted preceding democratic rule. That is, the existence of effective electoral vehicles prior to military rule and their survival and return—indeed preceding and returning with each military interruption in the 20th century—meant the UCR and Peronists resumed their dominance in presidential elections with the return to democracy in 1983. Candidates from these two parties edged out their competitors for the next 20 years. Even with the collapse of the UCR and disruption to the party system in 2003, the Peronist party retained its electoral dominance. Rather than seeing a well-articulated, organizationally distinct challenge to the Partido Justicialista, intra-party conflict between Peronist factions now plays out in national elections. Transition through collapse enabled the Alfonsín administration to pursue accountability, but these conditions also gave the carapintada leaders an opportunity to fight against trials and to carry their mission of defending the military into presidential politics as protest candidates. The country saw the candidacy of Lt. Col. Aldo Rico in 1995, Lt. Col. Enrique Venturino and Ricardo Terán in 2003, and Captain Gustavo Breide Obeid in 2003 and 2007. The Argentine experience with presidential candidates from the final period of military rule is limited to former carapintadas. No military presidents, members of the junta, cabinet officials (either military or civilian), or field officers unaffiliated with the carapintada movement have run for president.

**Major Parties Developed in Parallel Fashion in 20th Century Argentina**

The two major Argentine political parties competing in the return to democracy in 1983 developed through similar experiences but at different times in the nation’s history. The Unión Cívica Radical grew in opposition to the 19th century oligarchy, first acting as a violent
challenger to the exclusionary rule of economic elites. The Partido Justicialista developed from Gen. Juan Domingo Perón’s careful maneuvering under the military government of 1943-46, in which he served as labor minister, building ties with unions that he parlayed into a broad working class movement. The Radicals and the Peronists each forced new rounds of political liberalization in 1912 and 1946 and brought new class sectors of society into politics—the middle class and labor, respectively. And by granting women’s suffrage in 1947, the Peronist movement brought women into the electoral system. Each party dominated its early period of political competition before being disrupted by military intervention that sought to reset the political system and deactivate the newly incorporated political actors. Figure 5.2 illustrates the similar experiences of these two parties over the course of the 20th century. Both parties have been effective electoral vehicles, enabling them to succeed in capturing the presidency in the country’s democratic cycles. In the contemporary era, their combined electoral appeal has edged out any potential recycled dictator candidates. Nevertheless, these parties are also characterized by an emphasis on patronage and personalist politics, exclusionary governance, and defections from the rules of the democratic game. Thus, they too bear responsibility for the frequent failures of democracy in the country.

Argentina’s period of post-independence chaos dragged on much longer than in neighboring Chile. While Chile’s internal wars were finished by 1833, violent conflict among competing groups—particularly arrayed across the divide of centralized rule in Buenos Aires versus provincial autonomy—continued until nearly the end of the 19th century. The Radical Party began as a violent opposition movement to the exclusionary rule of the oligarchy under the constitutional and electoral, yet heavily corrupt, one-party system under the Partido Autonomista.

383 It was not until 1880 that Argentina would have a permanent capital and could claim to be generally at peace internally. For more, see Ruiz Moreno 2010.
Nacional (PAN). Popular sectors such as labor and the middle class were not afforded representation in government in the pre-1916 era as the PAN and its institutions resisted any opening to meaningful elections. Thus, “political parties developed as a challenge to government authority” rather than as instruments of representation within an agreed-upon system.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5.1 Common Experiences of the Two Major Argentine Parties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Party</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Founding Year</td>
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<td>New Sectors Mobilized</td>
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UCR pressure first took the form of attempts to forcibly overthrow the national government then as demonstrations organized around the goal of both showing and attracting popular support, which were successful in bringing reform.³⁸⁷ By 1912, they had developed their middle class identity and began to operate more openly, functioning essentially as “management

³⁸⁴ Remmer (1984) notes that “in functional terms PAN might be described as a mechanism for ensuring that economic progress would not be jeopardized by democratic politics. Elections were so meaningless that opposition candidates rarely appeared. PAN had little need even to bribe voters; they were almost irrelevant” (30). For more on the PAN and its rule, see Ansaldi 2010; Gallo 1993.

³⁸⁵ Remmer 1984, 11.

³⁸⁶ While Gen. Juan Perón was first elected to the presidency in 1946, his party at the time was labeled the Labor Party. The PJ was not formed until 1947.

³⁸⁷ Calvert and Calvert 1989, 92-93.
agencies in the task of popular mobilization.”\textsuperscript{388} The UCR shifted practices and consolidated over a 20-year period, building their capacity as an electoral force, so that by the time the Sáenz Peña electoral reform allowed for open democratic elections, the party won handily with 45% of the vote, more than three times the showing of its nearest rival. The Radicals would go on to win the 1922 and 1928 presidential elections in similar fashion, increasing their vote share each time and seeing the performance from their competition diminish considerably.\textsuperscript{389} The party system of the time consisted of four major parties—the UCR, the Socialists, the Progressive Democrats, and the Conservatives.

Similar to the UCR’s experience as a middle-class movement breaking into a political system that had previously excluded them, General Juan Perón tapped into the labor movement and brought the working class into politics as a powerful electoral constituency. As a military officer, Perón began his own political career in the 1943-46 military regime as the Minister of Labor—a position that afforded him unique power in managing the outcome of labor disputes and winning the allegiance of those who benefited from new programs such as social security. The military government in which he participated had become isolated from society, and Perón intended his labor reforms to “prevent the radicalization of [labor] conflicts and the spread of Communism” among the working class, which had grown over the preceding decades with increasing industrialization and urbanization.\textsuperscript{390} In 1946, as the country transitioned out of

\textsuperscript{388} Rock 1975, 49. For more on the history of the oligarchy and the pre-Sáenz Peña electoral era, see Rock 2002.

\textsuperscript{389} Remmer 1984, 96. The UCR won the 1922 election with 47.75\% of the vote and the 1928 election with 57.41\%. The conservative (somewhat an heir to the PAN) Partido Democracia Progresista, the closest rival to the UCR in the 1916 election with 13.23\% had ceased to exist as a legal party in the 1928 election.

\textsuperscript{390} Torre and de Riz 1993, 243.
military rule, Juan Perón was elected to the presidency on the Labor Party—the Partido Justicialista formally being founded the following year. Perón’s strong performance in office and victory in the re-election campaign boded well for his political fortunes, but the foundation of military intervention against him in 1955 had already been laid. The class-based structure of the Peronist movement placed labor, as an electoral force, in direct conflict with elite and middle class interests. Perón was overthrown by the armed forces and his party barred from competition. Nevertheless, Perón himself remained immensely powerful and the Peronists successfully endured nearly 20 years of exclusion from government either by military regimes (1955-58 and 1966-73) or the Radical party (1958-1966) until they were once again allowed to compete in 1973. Failure of the military or the Radical party to accept the Peronists as a legitimate electoral competitor meant continued instability in the political system and the final round of military intervention in 1976, culminating in the Proceso dictatorship.

The Military Ruled with an Anti-Political, Anti-Peronist Agenda

The military took power in a coup on March 24, 1976. The armed forces in Argentina claimed as their mission an effort to end the historical cycles of military intervention by fundamentally re-ordering society and politics. Similar to the Pinochet regime in Chile, the new Argentine junta sought the de-politicization of the country. Initially, the regime attempted to reassure the population and did not impose measures that had been immediately instituted in

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391 Lupu and Stokes 2009; Ostiguy 1997.

392 A Peronist, but not Perón himself, was allowed to stand for election in 1973. Héctor Cámpora won the presidency, lifted the ban on the PJ, and resigned from office. Perón won in a special election later that year and served as president until his death in 1974.

393 Snow and Manzetti 1993, 108.
Chile when the military seized power—“there was no curfew and no black ink on newspapers.” Under the guise of continuing the fight against guerrilla threats, repression in Argentina soon became widespread. The dictatorship emphasized “morality,” the need to root out “subversion,” and targeted wide-ranging groups from clergy and journalists to trade unionists and their own conscript soldiers. The search for enemies was tied to the military’s quest for internal unity. The regime’s inability to chart a successful economic and political course of its own, and the need to unite by facing an outside threat, led the junta to find one enemy too many in the form of the United Kingdom and prove to be its final undoing.

Prior to the military takeover of government in 1976, the armed forces had been tasked with putting down insurgent threats to the civilian administration of Isabel Peron, particularly the Montoneros, made up of left-wing Peronists, and the Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo (ERP), originally founded in opposition to the previous dictatorship of Gen. Juan Carlos Onganía (1966-1970). Operación Independencia, as the counterinsurgency campaign against the ERP was known, was a complete success for the military. It emboldened the armed forces’ sense of battlefield capability and “served as a pilot project” for repression across the country under the

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395 CONADEP 1984; Feitlowitz 2011; Torre and de Riz, 328.
396 In Argentina, the Army, Navy, and Air Force ruled together and established a rotating presidency (though a member of the Army held the office for most of the 1976-83 period). The regime never evolved into a personlistic dictatorship as Chile did under Gen. Pinochet, making inter-service competition and disagreement on policy-making a consistent problem for the regime.
397 Cavarozzi 1986; For a detailed history of the Montoneros, see: Gillespie 1983.
398 Burzaco 1994, 150. The ERP was based in Tucumán province in the northwest of the country, where Gen. Antonio Bussi fought them, became de facto governor in 1976, and later built his democratic political career.
Thus, the original insurgent threat was not imaginary, and the use of violence to settle the country’s political disputes had been growing for some time.

Intensifying cycles of violence between Peronist and anti-Peronist forces were set in motion from Perón’s first term in office. While General Perón was freely elected to the presidency in 1946, he ruled in authoritarian fashion. Through a combination of repression of opponents and redistribution of resources, he built a powerful movement. Support of labor during his first presidency (1946-1955) activated the working class as a major new political constituency, but economic decline in his second term, meant it was more difficult to provide for his followers. Ruling through force and division was increasingly the only instrument available to his government. Perón’s “populism and antielite rhetoric fostered intransigent anti-Peronism among the socioeconomic elites, much of the middle class, and most of the officer corps,” pitting different sectors of society against each other and leading the military to oust Perón in 1955. The armed forces exiled Perón and banned Peronism, but these actions only reinforced the idea of Perón’s indispensability as the patron of labor and gave him mythical status within the country. The military’s 1966-73 dictatorship, like the subsequent 1976-83 Proceso, repressed political opposition and the labor movement. Peronism’s proscription at the ballot box meant there was no electoral safety valve. Students and labor showed their opposition in a major uprising in Córdoba province (the *cordobazo*) in 1969 that was put down with force. This

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400 Boron 1989, 28; Cavarozzi 1986, 22-23.

401 Wright 2007, 96.

402 Although, despite the repressive moves against labor, Gen. Onganía (1966-1970) also attempted to “entice particular union leaders to cooperate with the government, not totally unlike corporatist labor practices that began with Perón” (Epstein 1992, 10).
response in turn provoked the formation of the Montoneros, ERP, and other groups who felt no other option but force was available to them in opposing the anti-Peronist forces.  

Therefore, by the time the military seized the reins of government for the final time in 1976, they had effectively been in the process of battling pro-Peronist groups for more than a decade. They met with success against guerrillas, particularly in Tucumán province with Operación Independencia, by the mid-1970s and shifted the campaign onto the civilian population. The military takeover in 1976 was “not merely a coup against the government of Isabel Perón. It was a coup against Argentine political and civil society.” Through the military lens, the problem in Argentina was with the political order. The military wanted to “banish the existing party leadership from Argentine political life” in much the same way Pinochet had intended in Chile.

The Proceso Government Attempted to Re-order National Politics

In contrast to its western neighbor, the problem from the Argentine military’s viewpoint was not party intransigence, but rather a confluence of factors in institutions and behavior that fragmented political competition and produced instability since the inception of pluralistic politics. Argentina’s 20th century political history was one of political pluralism without political democracy. In Samuel Huntington’s terms, the level of mobilization exceeded the level of institutionalization, producing persistent instability. Lack of elite commitment to democracy

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403 Wright 2007, 96-98.
404 Gibson 1996, 79.
405 Ibid., 79.
was both a cause and symptom of political dysfunction. Rightist political forces relied on the military to uphold their position—again, a self-reinforcing dynamic in which the political right lacked a viable party to represent its interests electorally. Repression in Argentina took the form of denial of politics similar to the Chilean experience. The military project sought to reverse political liberalization in the country, just as it had in previous interventions.

The major parties—the UCR and the PJ—rather than being too ideologically entrenched to work together, were too ideologically weak to distinguish themselves on that basis alone. They operated on patronage, outbidding, and the politics of fear and division for electoral advantage. Peron’s unique combination of leftist populism and rightist nationalism meant bifurcated appeal and ideological incoherence. And from its early days (before it had to compete with Peronism), the UCR also exhibited the traits that would come to characterize Peronism as well—dependence on a single leader, excluding rivals from power when they held the presidency, and reliance on connections with the armed forces to assert a role in government. Both groups

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408 As discussed in Chapter Four on Chile, the motivation for the 1973 coup was breaking gridlock in government and bringing the country back from the chaos that the military blamed on parties. And, the intellectual underpinnings of Pinochet’s civilian backers such as the gremialista movement advocated individual liberty, shunning political parties.

409 Arceneaux 2001; Snow and Manzetti 1993, 108. Guillermo O’Donnell (1979; 1986) argued the BA regimes of the Southern Cone took power to push the country through the “bottleneck” they experienced in economic development as well.

410 This division in support also finally caught up with the movement when Perón returned from exile in 1973. The massacre at Ezeiza airport laid bare the fact that admiration of Perón did not mean acceptance of his other admirers. And, as the left and right wings fought each other with increasing intensity in the ensuing months, Perón clearly came down on the side of his more fascist followers. Just months before he died, he spoke to the assembled masses of Montoneros at the presidential palace, dismissing them as “idiots” and expelled them from the party: Dávila 2013; Gillespie 1983.

411 Calvert and Calvert 1989.
traditionally “have mobilized loyalties and feelings rather than operating as parties with a political program.”

The period in which Peronism was banned (1955-73) is instructive in understanding the nature of the parties and their mobilization strategies. The Radicals soon split into two competing forces in 1957, not based on ideology but rather on the basis of “personalities and electoral strategy” as party leaders tried to determine whether and how to bring Peronist supporters into their own electoral coalition. While the country was still under military rule, the UCR faction that wanted to “integrate” Peronists into their movement promised that in exchange for their support, the Radicals would re-legalize the party once they were back in power. The UCR only partly followed through on this promise by allowing the PJ to field its own candidates in the 1962 legislative elections. And when they did so, the UCR immediately turned to mobilizing voters by stoking anti-Peronist sentiment, equating a Peronist victory with a return to dictatorship. Meanwhile, out of power, Peronist union and party leaders “played an essentially negative role in the political system… vehemently opposed to both the [UCR presidents] Frondizi and Illia administrations and were overjoyed at the fall of each.” In short, party competition was dysfunctional. Parties failed to abide by the rules of the democratic game in Argentina from its inception. And, the frequent military interventions did not just mean

413 Snow and Manzetti 1993, 55.
414 Allegedly, this deal was explicitly made between Arturo Frondizi and Perón, while he was in exile in Caracas; Snow and Manzetti 1993, 55-56.
415 Ibid.
416 Ibid., 63.
417 For analysis of long-standing patterns that pre-dated democratic government, and set the stage for these challenges, see: Calvert and Calvert 1989; Turner and Carballo 2010.
disruptions to democratic rule but also limitations on electoral competition that further eroded the possibility of channeling opposition into the democratic game—that is, during their periods of proscription, the UCR (in the 1930s) and the PJ (from the late 1950s to the early 1970s) were unable to do anything but challenge from outside of the system. This was the only mode of political expression available to them and the pattern of being a disloyal opposition fed the cycle of not accepting the results of elections as binding and of civilian encouragement of military intervention in government. Competing groups sought to exclude each other from power and each administration, whether civilian or military, tried to undo everything the previous one had accomplished.418

Long-term patterns of political dysfunction and acute political violence in the first half of the 1970s—this is the context in which the military took over in 1976. The armed forces seized power and, took two lessons from the failures of the previous military regime under Gen. Ongania. First, during Ongania’s rule, the army had been the primary actor in the military government. The other service branches were marginalized, making Ongania vulnerable to criticism from the navy and air force. This time around, the military wanted to minimize this problem by ensuring inter-branch equality. They ruled through a junta, made up of the each of the services’ commanders-in-chief, and a legislative council, with members appointed in equal numbers from each service.419 Second, the military had watched itself become more isolated from society during Ongania’s rule. The military received the blame for policy failures while having very little control over that policymaking. Therefore, in the Proceso regime, the military

418 Calvert and Calvert 1989.

419 Arceneaux 2001. The presidency, however, still had to be in one person’s hands, and the army managed to retain control over the position, arguing that they were the most important branch in the “war on subversion.”
took control of the policy process and of the entire state apparatus. These two changes are important in understanding the fate and conduct of the new venture. First, including all branches in equal number only intensified inter-service rivalry and meant the government was in a constant state of tension, particularly once the regime started to falter. Second, control over policymaking gave officers more to disagree on, which enhanced discord. Only focusing on an outside foe provided unity.

The Proceso Government Failed in Its Mission and Collapsed

The military seized power expecting to fight subversion, establish new governing institutions, and consolidate those institutions. What consolidation would look like went consciously undefined. And, though the armed insurgent threat mostly had been defeated even before the March 1976 coup, the military campaign against the opposition escalated in the early years of the regime. Intense focus on the first phase of the military project meant that the regime did little to establish the institutions of a new order; rather, they ruled through inherently unsustainable means of coercion. Initial success led the junta to neglect the goal of re-ordering politics through new institutions. Only collapsing rule brought the regime to revisit the issue of how to establish a post-Proceso order.

As battlefield success against the ERP and Montoneros removed the external unifying force of a common enemy, divisions within the armed forces became more apparent. These

420 Arceneaux 2001; Castiglione 1992.

421 This pattern is consistent with theoretical expectations for the breakdown in institutional order for a military that attempts to govern. A military lacks the internal mechanisms for debate required to develop policy. And, the factionalism produced by policy disagreement erodes fidelity to chains of command, perilng institutional coherence, discipline and war-fighting capability. For more, see Maniruzzaman 1987, 61-80.

422 Wright 2007.
disagreements were based, in part, on the very question of succession to the military regime.\textsuperscript{423} In contrast to Chile, where the political right had been well represented in party politics prior to military rule, Argentina’s conservative forces did not have a strong national party in the modern democratic era. Reliance on exclusionary rule in the days of the PAN and the military in the 20\textsuperscript{th} century to serve their interests meant conservative electoral politics were underdeveloped. Thus, one of the goals of the \textit{Proceso} was to create political space for the right to organize and unite into the party they never previously had. The dictatorship’s expectation of re-structuring competition looked more similar to Brazil’s imposition of new parties than Chile’s attempt at doing away with political parties altogether.\textsuperscript{424} Nevertheless, the plan deviated from Brazil’s. The \textit{Proceso} did not want to be seen as creating their own official or state party, but rather to “encourage the spontaneous formation of ‘currents of opinion’ in society favorable to the regime.”\textsuperscript{425} The military intended to shepherd a movement through its evolutionary stages until it could become a competitive political party. In the meantime, members of such a party would be governing partners.

In effect, the \textit{Proceso} wanted to create regime heirs. This effort failed. Hardliner suspicion of political leaders meant internal resistance to early efforts to incorporate conservative groups who had immediately lent their support to the military government.\textsuperscript{426} And, by the time these elements of the regime’s leadership recognized the inevitability of transition, the internal

\textsuperscript{423} Gibson 1996, 86; Pion-Berlin 1985.

\textsuperscript{424} From the 1964 coup in Brazil, the military created two official parties—one (the \textit{Aliança Renovadora Nacional}, ARENA) meant to represent its interests as a regime successor and the other (the \textit{Movimento Democrático Brasileiro}, MDB) to perform the duty of loyal opposition. For more on the concept of policide, see: Stern 2006, 2010 and the discussion in Chapter Four on Chile.

\textsuperscript{425} Gibson 1996, 88.

\textsuperscript{426} Ibid., 82-83.
divisions, policy failures, and a ruinous war with the United Kingdom led previously supportive civilian groups to reject these overtures.\textsuperscript{427}

As economic and political challenges mounted in the late 1970s, the regime’s dithering caught up with it. One potential rightist successor group, \textit{Fuerza Federalista Popular} (FUFEPO), remained supportive, but others, particularly the \textit{Movimiento Línea Popular} (MOLIPO) under Francisco Manrique, began criticizing the regime for its “lack of social sensitivity and indifference to the deterioration of national industry and the provincial economies.”\textsuperscript{428} This criticism resonated with other conservatives. The regime’s poor economic performance became a serious setback, as conservative leaders became less and less interested in tying their fates to the flagging military government. Faced with decisions about how to engage with the regime’s institution-building efforts, Manrique and others decided to wait until after the scheduled transition from the first junta to the second before proceeding.\textsuperscript{429} Meanwhile, nonconservative parties formed the \textit{multipartidaria} alliance in an “explicit rejection of the regime’s goals of restructuring the party system and doing away with preexisting political alignments.”\textsuperscript{430}

The newly seated president, Gen. Roberto Viola, departed from the neoliberal orthodoxy, but this met with opposition from members of the second junta, who overthrew him only months after he took office. Viola veered from the regime strategy in other ways too. Attempting to end the political isolation of the regime, he sought dialogue with labor groups, but this only

\textsuperscript{427} Ibid., 91-92.

\textsuperscript{428} Ibid., 91.

\textsuperscript{429} Ibid., 91-92.

\textsuperscript{430} Ibid., 95.
undermined the regime’s original mission of diminishing the political power of Peronism and spelled the end of military unity in government as different factions disagreed vehemently with these moves. Gen. Leopoldo Galtieri reverted to the regime’s original economic policies, ceased to engage with civilian leaders, and tried to re-implement the war footing of the early period of the Proceso. With mounting pressure for answers to the regime’s abuses of human rights in the preceding years, financial ruin from the debt crisis, and no clear mission for their continued rule, the junta looked to the South Atlantic for distraction from its conduct and justification for its existence.

On April 2, 1982, Argentina acted on its persistent claims to the British-held Falkland Islands and South Georgia, occupying the islands in an international act meant for a domestic audience. Thinking that it would stem the tide of opposition protest, the junta pursued a path of conflict. But the military commanders had badly miscalculated. The United Kingdom dispatched a task force and reclaimed the islands by mid-June. The Argentine Army’s review of the conflict, the Rettenbach Report, concluded that the military leadership made the decision to go to war with inadequate preparation. The military’s performance was severely hampered by the lack of planning and resources. And, the report acknowledged that the decision for war was made for internal political reasons—an attempt to revive the deteriorating Proceso government.

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431 Pion-Berlin 1985.

432 There is disagreement over whether the junta actively chose war with Britain or if they genuinely misjudged how Britain (and the United States) would respond. The original plan was a short-term, symbolic occupation of the islands, but the positive domestic response led Gen. Galtieri to “decide unilaterally to countermand the withdrawal.” And even then, from the Argentine perspective the conflict did not begin with their occupation of the islands on April 2, but rather when the British sank the Argentine cruiser General Belgrano on May 2. See: Welch 2012, 198 and Zarza 2010.

The failed conflict had two profound consequences for understanding Argentina’s experience with recycled dictators in the democratic era. First, instead of unifying and reinvigorating the military regime, the defeat produced more instability, laying bare the military incompetence of the military government on the heels of failures in other realms. Gen. Galtieri was removed from office in favor of the final military president, Gen. Reynaldo Bignone. At this point, the military would not even be able to make a graceful exit from power, much less reorder national politics and leave behind a successor party. Gen. Bignone announced that elections would be held in 1983, and the military stepped down in an extremely weak position. Even before the call for elections, civilian leaders acknowledged the end of the regime. Indeed, one of the most influential rightist leaders, Alvaro Alsogaray, founded his party, the Unión del Centro Democrático, one week after the end of the Falklands War with the express purpose of competing in the postauthoritarian period. He declared to supporters that the Proceso was dead: “nothing can be expected regarding the fundamental reforms that it once promised.” And, the Radicals became more vocal in their calls for a return to democracy. It was clear that this was the end of this particular round of military rule. With the lengthy record of mass human rights abuses and a legacy of failure, the military was vulnerable to civilian retribution upon its departure.

Second, field officers ended the era of military rule highly disgruntled with their superiors, feeling abused by the junta for sending them to war unprepared and in pursuit of little more than a quest to preserve their own political fortunes. The defeat was humiliating to career soldiers. And, Malvineros, as veterans of the war came to be known, were shunned upon their

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435 The Argentine force was composed of small numbers of well-trained units and otherwise heavily dependent on conscript soldiers. The overall force (~12,000) was never large enough to expect to hold the islands in the event of British counterattack.
return to Argentina. The nationalist outpouring from the days after the occupation had long faded and the regime was making a hasty retreat. UCR leader and future president, Raúl Alfonsín, played on the tensions between the military brass and their subalterns. In a speech in June 1982 (just after the end of the war), he stated: “The armed forces do not deserve this destiny, and the people do not deserve this government. A civilian transition to democratic rule must now begin.” Drawing a distinction between “the armed forces” and the Proceso regime foreshadowed the carapintada rebellions of the late 1980s, as groups of mid-level officers would make their dissatisfaction with both the new civilian government and the military leadership well known.

Carapintadas Asserted Military Identity

Raúl Alfonsín, candidate of the Radical Party, won the October 1983 election and was inaugurated as president two months later. The military left power badly weakened. Just as the Pinochet regime in Chile had, the Proceso government failed to destroy the pre-regime parties, and its last-minute efforts to restructure politics in favor of a rightist party instead left behind the same political dynamics from the previous era—strength of Peronism and uncertain commitments to democracy from varied actors. Economic performance under the Proceso had been poor: high inflation, punctuated years of negative growth, and extraordinary levels of


437 The first carapintada revolt had the clear rationale and function of challenging the prosecutorial efforts against field officers and junior officers, winning amnesty in the form of the ley de Punto Final and the ley de Obediencia Debida. The subsequent uprisings took on a different character in which the rebellious officers were agitating for other corporate interests; Acuña & Smulovitz 1997; Brysk 1994.
international debt.\footnote{GDP shrank four of the regime’s eight years (1973-1983), inflation had decreased in the late 1970s (though it remained persistently high) but was again on the rise from 1981, and external debt was “equal to over five years of exports.” (Peralta-Ramos and Waisman 1987).} And, defeat in the Malvinas called into question any hero-status they had previously won with victories over the ERP and Montonero guerrilla groups. The disgrace of widespread human rights abuses became increasingly clear as the regime dragged on. As the junta contemplated its departure, it attempted to dictate the terms of its post-transition fate to the returning civilian leadership. This effort was quickly rejected, and the military pared back its demands. It sought only an assurance that disappearances would not be investigated nor prosecuted. Parties and public opinion were firm. The military had no cards to play and was left issuing their own unilateral 
Documento Final and subsequent ley de Pacification Nacional amounting to a self-amnesty.\footnote{Mendez 1987, 9-13.} These rounds of edicts, each narrower and more desperate than the last, demonstrated the party and public attitude toward the military project by 1983. There would be no regime heir emerging in the transitional election nor would any of the traditional potential candidates enter presidential politics in subsequent years.

Alfonsín stressed the importance of prosecuting perpetrators of human rights abuses as a moral imperative. Human rights issues and the status of the armed forces featured prominently in the 1983 contest. Campaigning for the UCR nomination, Alfonsín advocated major reforms of the armed forces. He sought to abolish conscription, greatly reduce the military budget, change the hermitic code of military justice, and to establish “a special body to make available ‘privileged information’ to organizations dedicated to the defence of human rights.”\footnote{“Argentina--General elections-Debt renegotiations,” Keesing's Record of World Events, December 1983, 32555.} Once elected, the Alfonsín administration pursued legal efforts against the ruling juntas, seeing it as an
essential step toward achieving justice for victims, officially condemning the past, and helping the country to move forward.\footnote{Nino 1996, 62.}

The junta’s \textit{Documento Final}, issued two weeks before the 1983 election, defended the 1976 decision to seize the reins of government and attempted to establish impunity for the armed forces on the grounds that they were following orders of the previous civilian government.\footnote{Mendez 1987; Nino 1996, 61-62. By the military’s logic, Isabel Peron had authorized military intervention in government, and so their actions were fully legal.} Candidates and public opinion rejected this notion and the Alfonsín government proceeded with a program of prosecution against the nine members of the three successive juntas.\footnote{During the campaign, Alfonsín strongly rebuked the \textit{Documento Final}: La Comisión de Acción Política de la UCR. 1983. “Respuesta del candidato Alfonsín al ‘Documento Final.’” www.desaparecidos.org} While the administration immediately instituted a truth commission to investigate detention, torture, and disappearances, Alfonsín initially gave the armed forces high command the opportunity to clean house on its own accord, rather than pursuing civilian trials right away.\footnote{Acuña and Smulovitz 1997.} The military failed to cooperate and civilian legal efforts were set in motion. In 1985, trials successfully convicted and sentenced five members of the military juntas for human rights violations.\footnote{Méndez and Tinajero-Esquivel 2001.}

While arguing for the necessity of trials, Alfonsín also recognized the need to keep them limited in order not to unify the military against the new administration. The process got away from this vision, however, as the senate asserted its authority and pressed to “hold responsible all those subordinates that had committed atrocities or aberrations.”\footnote{Pion-Berlin 1995, 94.} Deviating from the relatively
limited intentions that Alfonsín had set forth provoked the rumblings in the military that he had wished to avoid. In late 1986, to again take charge of the process and to appease the military, the executive issued the *Punto Final*, a measure that gave victims a two-month period in which to bring charges against perpetrators.\(^{447}\) After that time had passed, no more cases could be submitted. The ensuing flurry of legal activity proved to be too much. Mid-level officers were suddenly under threat. Lt. Col. Aldo Rico and others rebelled over Easter weekend of 1987. After a tense and uncertain period, the revolt ended and the government passed the *Obediencia Debida* law which “instructed judges to apply the principle of due obedience to all officers below the rank of colonel and close any pending cases against them.”\(^{448}\) Thus, the uprising was successful, but Lt. Col. Rico and many of his fellow mutineers were arrested. Their status in the military was uncertain for a long while. It was not until October 20, 1989 that the leaders of the rebellion would finally be dismissed. Even before the decision was made, Rico and others “had announced that they would be starting new careers in politics.”\(^{449}\)

These rebellions took place in the context of a legal threat to members of the military. Field officers did not want to be put on trial for their actions under the dictatorship. They retained the means to push back and disrupt the civilian program; so, they utilized the tools at hand. The failures of the regime both enabled the pressure on military interests and heightened the potential payoff of rebellion. In the post-dictatorship era, career officers were not only under acute threat of prosecution, but their budgets were cut, their prerogatives were under attack, and

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\(^{448}\) “Crime without punishment: Impunity in Latin America,” Amnesty International, 1996; Alfonsin’s successor, Carlos Menem, would go on to pardon the generals who were convicted in 1985. For more, see: Nino 1996, 104.

civilians groups were winning the long-term battle over characterizing military identity in the country. The *carapintada* leaders saw their revolts as an opportunity for mid-level officers to reassert the military’s position after years of decline.\(^{450}\)

Lt. Col. Aldo Rico and his fellow *carapintadas* would maintain this mission in their political careers. What brought these officers to the fore also motivated them to stand for president. Argentina’s experience with recycled dictators at the presidential level is limited to these former leaders who ran to voice their ongoing opposition to what they saw as threats to the armed forces and society. They did not explicitly take up the mantle of the former regime but rather carved out a distinct political identity for themselves based on the movement they had established as rogue officers.\(^{451}\) Indeed, it is notable that these ex-regime candidates did not enter the system in the immediate transitional period, but rather began running more than a decade after the restoration of democracy and the failure of armed means to make themselves heard. Where once these leaders used the traditional tools of force to agitate for their interests, they now entered the electoral system.

**Rogue Officers Ran as Protest Candidates, 1995-2007**

In the early years of Argentina’s return to democracy, the country saw no recycled dictators enter presidential elections. In the shadow of the military government’s collapse, individuals associated with the former regime were not quick to contest for power through democratic means. The 1983 and 1989 presidential contests did not involve ex-regime candidates. Despite the economic crisis that prompted Raúl Alfonsín to depart office early, and the political instability caused by the military itself in the *carapintada* rebellions, members of the

\(^{450}\) Brysk 1994.

\(^{451}\) For full discussion of rogue officers in theoretical and comparative perspective, see Chapter Three.
former dictatorship were not running for president. Revelations about the military’s grotesque campaign of torture and disappearances were consistently on display in the years after the transition, through the trial of the generals, the CONADEP truth commission, and in newspapers every day. Ex-regime candidates did not face a favorable political environment, and army officers such as Aldo Rico and Mohamed Seineldin, leaders of the carapintada movement, still chose the old tools of military agitation to pursue their interests and secure institutional prerogatives. They had not yet accepted the rules of the democratic game. Thus, Rico’s path toward competing in elections is significant.

Aldo Rico was a Lieutenant Colonel and combat veteran of the Falklands/Malvinas War with the United Kingdom, but he rose to prominence as the original saber-rattling leader of a series of barracks revolts in the late 1980s. After the second rebellion in 1988, he was imprisoned and cashiered from the army, but he would later be “reincorporated so [he] could be tried by military courts.”452 Despite losing his position in the military, he retained his influence with his former comrades and remained a controversial figure. Observers still looked to him as a representative of the ultra-nationalist element of the Argentine military, making his acceptance of Peronism and the prospect of Carlos Menem’s victory in the 1989 presidential election an important turning point. During this time, he also announced his intention to pursue a political career, himself.453 He founded the political party MODIN (Movimiento por la Dignidad y Independencia) in April 1990. Crucially, having already launched his political career, Rico

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dissociated himself from the final *carapintada* rebellion led by Col. Mohamed Seineldin in December 1990.  

Rico lost his first election in 1991 for governor of Buenos Aires province, but in the 1993 midterm elections MODIN added to its total of seats in the chamber of deputies on the strength of votes from “the jobless in Buenos Aires working class suburbs” given the high unemployment rate in the country at the time. Rico was critical of President Menem and referred to his rule as a “monocracy, a government of one accompanied by the worst people” in part due to Menem’s heavy use of presidential decrees, ironically placing Rico in company of those who had opposed military rule and who were also disapproving of Menem’s style of governance which often bypassed the legislative process. MODIN, along with many other political parties, supported a national labor march in opposition to Menem’s economic policies that they blamed for the increase in unemployment in the early 1990s. Rico ran in the 1995 presidential contest. The campaign was dominated by the economy, minimizing the importance of Rico’s background. Unemployment and corruption were central concerns of the electorate, and the leading candidates, Menem and Jose Octavio Bordon, largely agreed on the approach to future economic stability.

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458 Marcela Valente, “Argentina-Elections: Will Menem Be Back on Top?” *Inter Press Service* 13 May, 1995. They agreed on policy in large part because they were both Peronists. Menem was the official Peronist candidate while Bordon had broken away from the Peronist party to form the Alianza Frepaso.
By the time Rico ran for president, the image of the armed forces was recovering. Among voters in 1991, those supportive of MODIN had the largest percentage response of positive image of the armed forces (50%), while voters who identified with other parties were less supportive—UCEDE (45.5%), FREJUPE (37.5%), A.Unidad Soc. (25%), UCR (24%). 459

Nevertheless, the image of the armed forces was at a high point in the May 1995 election, with the overall positive image among those polled recorded at 42% by the *Centro de Estudios Unión para la Nueva Mayoría*. 460 In the 1995 election, positive views of the armed forces were highest among those who voted for the Peronists (42%), with UCR voters (29%) and FREPASO voters (20%) maintaining lower positive views of the military. 461

Thus, the military in general and Rico in particular had made strides in improving their images among the public. In the aftermath of the last uprising in which Rico was involved, he sought to distinguish his efforts from those of terrorist organizations and other groups seemingly composed of Falkland war veterans that pursued their goals through bombings and intimidation campaigns. 462 But, the appeal of Rico’s right-wing, military maverick persona at times manifest itself in uncontrolled ways from supporters. In May 1994, after Rico had announced his candidacy for the 1995 presidential election, three men were “detained while painting swastikas and slogans in support of Aldo Rico” on walls in a Jewish neighborhood in Buenos Aires. 463

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459 Fraga 1993, 244-245.

460 Fraga 1997, 217.

461 Ibid., 220.


Rico refused to comment on this particular incident. In general, however, he claimed to be interested in being part of mainstream politics and expressed his “sympathies for Peronism.”

His stance toward Peronism, traditionally an antagonist of the military in Argentina, cost him support on the political right and prompted a split in the party he founded. Ahead of the MODIN nominating convention for the 1995 presidential election, the party splintered with the founding of the “Blue and White” MODIN. Leaders of the new party cited Rico’s joining of “Menem’s, Cavallo’s and Duhalde’s project” as “betraying the national movement’s banners.” The fracturing of the party cost Rico voters’ support. Public polling preceding the 1995 election showed Rico with roughly 5% support, but he received only 1.7% of the vote in the May election. Rico remained active in politics and later contested elections at other levels, but 1995 would be his only run for the presidency.

The 2003 presidential campaign—the first after the 1999-2001 financial crisis—included three former *carapintadas*—Enrique Venturino, Ricardo Terán, and Gustavo Breide Obeid. Their involvement in the election further underscores the classification of the Argentine experience with recycled dictators as taking the form of protest candidacies. With the Peronists dominating the electoral arena, outsider candidates such as the *carapintadas* were assured of low vote share, but they continued with their movement nonetheless. Lt. Col. Enrique Venturino had been a young army officer during the military regime. He participated in the *carapintada* uprisings along with Aldo Rico and ran for senator from Buenos Aires in 1991 with the MODIN

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party. His candidacy in the 2003 presidential election attempted to capitalize on the perceived broad dissatisfaction with politicians of all ideologies at the time. He ran on the ticket *Que se vayan todos* (They all should go). This campaign resonated with some voters who were upset about the missteps that brought about the economic and political crisis at the end of the 1990s, but ultimately Venturino captured only a minor portion of the vote—0.67% nationally. Ricardo Terán finished with a similarly poor showing, 0.16% vote share. The first round vote was heavily fractured among leading candidates Nestor Kirchner, Ricardo Lopez Murphy, Elisa Carrió, and former President Carlos Menem. The former president out-flanked any potential candidate on the political right by promising “to bring the military out on the streets” to end protests and restore order. Menem, therefore, represented the potential military solution to the country’s problems even more so than the former military officials in the race.

Captain Gustavo Breide Obeid was associated mostly with the final, violent and unsuccessful *carapintada* revolt that “dramatically turned the tide against the rebels.… [Some] initially involved in the plan, anticipated that the uprising had become a losing enterprise and chose the expedient route of avoiding involvement in a probable defeat. Most dramatically, Captain Gustavo Breide Obeid, responsible for the occupation of Edificio Libertador, was left...

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469 This election further revealed the increasing fragmentation of the Peronist and UCR parties in the contemporary democracy. Kirchner and Menem were both Peronist politicians while Ricardo López Murphy, a long-time UCR politician ran on the Alianza Movimiento Federal para Recrear ticket (winning 16.37% of the vote), while the official UCR candidate, Leopoldo Moreau finished with only 2.34%.

awaiting replacement by a superior officer” who never appeared. In her account of the barracks revolt, Deborah Norden argues, “[Colonel Mohamed] Seineldín may have been the recognized leader, but he was also absent from the entire event due to his imprisonment. Control, therefore, appeared to be shared between Colonels Baraldini, Romero Mundani, and Vega, Lieutenant Colonel Tévere, Major Abete, and Captain Breide Obeid, with the lower-ranking officers (Breide and Abete) probably representing the true leadership.” Breide Obeid won just 0.22% of the vote in the 2003 election and 0.25% when he ran again in 2007.

Conclusion

The Argentine experience with recycled dictators is the result of the interaction of high democratic continuity and high threat to ex-regime actors. The major parties of the pre-Proceso era—the UCR and the Peronists—endured multiple rounds of exclusion from government throughout the 20th century yet persisted and always returned to compete after each transition back to democracy. Democratic openings allowed the UCR and the Peronists to organize and develop. In Argentina, democracy was periodically interrupted by waves of short-term military intervention. The process is distinct, however, from that seen in states such as Guatemala and El Salvador in which an original democratic opening was entirely short-circuited by long-term military rule. Parties are the mechanism by which democratic actors organized and competed in the democratic era, endured policide in Argentina and Chile, pressed for a return to democracy, and edged out recycled dictator candidates in the new system.

In states where democratic parties are not able to develop independent of military control or are repressed for generations, such as Guatemala and El Salvador, the preceding democratic

471 Norden 1996, 149.
472 Ibid., 152.
era provide less party guidance for the new system. Meanwhile, military control over an electoral façade provides it with an ongoing party structure, privileging such actors in new elections. And, the exclusionary system diminishes the potential for democratic actors to push for military withdrawal for government—that pressure is instead channeled into revolutionary movements.

The pre-existing major parties successfully returned to politics after the military government in Argentina, just as they had in Chile. The military’s own poor record in governing, economic performance, and external war led to its collapse. Argentina would have no regime heir. The collapse left the military vulnerable to transitional justice measures, and these same characteristics of the post-regime era paved the way for the carapintada uprisings.

The 2003 presidential election demonstrates two important points about the recycled dictator phenomenon in the country. First, despite the severe economic and political failures of the late 1990s and early 2000s, voters rejected these former military candidates. This election demonstrates vividly the importance of party viability in determining the electoral prospects for ex-regime candidates. Even the tremendous economic instability that saw multiple presidents and vice presidents resign in rapid succession from 2000 to 2003 did not produce an environment appealing enough for a recycled dictator to break out of the single digits. Rogue officers in contexts of low democratic continuity perform at a higher rate. Because the carapintadas were running in an environment in which the UCR (up until 2003) and the Peronists together consistently captured over 80% of the vote, they were competing on the margins.

Second, there were three former regime candidates in the running. They were not coordinating around the ex-regime identity nor putting forward one candidate who carried a message of return to authoritarian government. Even in this instance in which each had been part of the carapintada movement, they were not unified as a single party. They did share a common
theme in attempting to use the electoral system to voice the agenda created in that series of rebellions. Rico and the others sought “dignity” more than they expected electoral success. Their minor parties had no hope of competing against the long-standing Peronist and UCR institutions, and their efforts were fractured further amongst themselves. In light of one of the original motivations for the *carapintada* uprisings—the end to human rights trials against junior officers—and the continued anti-system message of the candidates, these cases amount to “protest candidacies” separate from the efforts of military government figures in all other countries in this study.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1874-1916</td>
<td>One-party rule of the <em>Partido Autonomista Nacional</em> (PAN), characterized by massive and consistent electoral fraud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>Wars between Buenos Aires and provinces end; Buenos Aires established as permanent capital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1912</td>
<td>Sáenz Peña electoral law passed, introducing secret ballot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916-1930</td>
<td>Electoral democracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916</td>
<td>First free and fair presidential election; Hipolito Yrigoyen of the Radical Party elected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930-32</td>
<td>Military rule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932-43</td>
<td>Electoral democracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1943-46</td>
<td>Military rule, Gen. Juan Perón serves as Minister of Labor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946-55</td>
<td>Electoral democracy: First presidency of Gen. Juan Perón</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>Women’s suffrage granted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955-58</td>
<td>Military rule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>Peronist party banned at the polls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>Radicals split over how to incorporate Peronist voters into their party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958-66</td>
<td>Electoral democracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>Limited competition from Peronist candidates allowed in legislative elections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966-73</td>
<td>Military rule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966-70</td>
<td>Regime of Gen. Juan Carlos Onganía serves as forerunner to the 1976-83 mission to re-order Argentine politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973-76</td>
<td>Electoral democracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>Peronist party again allowed to compete; Juan Perón returns to the presidency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>Juan Perón dies; His wife, Isabel Perón, assumes power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974-76</td>
<td>Successful military campaigns against insurgencies from the <em>Montoneros</em> and <em>Ejercito Revolucionario del Pueblo</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976-1983</td>
<td>Military rule: <em>Proceso de Reorganización Nacional</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 24, 1976</td>
<td>Coup against Isabel Perón. Military returns to its mission of attempting to re-order economic and political power in the country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early 1980s</td>
<td>Debt crisis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 1981</td>
<td>Gen. Roberto Viola ousted in a coup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 2, 1982</td>
<td>Argentina militarily occupies the Falklands and South Georgia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 14, 1982</td>
<td>United Kingdom successfully reclaims the islands by force. Argentina surrenders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 1982</td>
<td>Gen. Leopoldo Galtieri removed from the presidency by the junta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983-present</td>
<td>Civilian electoral democracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 30, 1983</td>
<td>Raúl Alfonsin (UCR) elected to the presidency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 10, 1983</td>
<td>Raúl Alfonsin inaugurated. Civilian control of the presidency restored</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984-85</td>
<td>CONADEP Truth Commission conducts investigation, reports that more than 30,000 people were disappeared during the dictatorship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>Trials convict five members of the 1976-83 juntas for human rights crimes committed during the dictatorship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td><em>Punto Final</em> law limiting the window of time in which citizens could bring suits against the military passed</td>
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<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>Lt. Col. Aldo Rico leads first <em>carapintada</em> uprising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>Lt. Col. Aldo Rico leads second <em>carapintada</em> uprising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Leaders of first uprising dismissed from the armed forces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 1990</td>
<td>Lt. Col. Aldo Rico founds the political party MODIN (<em>Movimiento por la Dignidad y Independencia</em>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 1990</td>
<td>Col. Mohamed Seineldin leads third and final <em>carapintada</em> uprising. It is put down with considerable force. Rico distances himself from it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Lt. Col. Aldo Rico runs for president</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Radical Party collapses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Captain Gustavo Breide Obeid runs for president</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lt. Col. Enrique Venturino, Ricardo Terán, and Captain Gustavo Breide Obeid run for president</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 6

Guatemala: Persistent Ex-Regime Competitors

Government by the military was the norm in Guatemala throughout the 20th century. From personalistic dictatorships of fascist generals such as Jorge Ubico (1931-1944) to institutional rule under “elected” military administrations of the 1970s, the military controlled politics and government in the country for decades, repressing opposition efforts and destroying or capturing civilian institutions.473 The democratic revolution of 1944 was, itself, military created, military dominated, and proved short-lived as the interests of domestic and international economic elites came under greater threat from agrarian reform in the administration of Col. Jacobo Arbenz. His ouster in 1954 by counterrevolutionary forces put an end to meaningful democracy in the country for the next three decades. In that time, numerous military administrations of different forms came and went, consistently dominating the political sphere, repressing opposition, excluding civilians from electoral competition, or engaging in outright manipulation of those elections. Thus, Guatemala’s experience with recycled dictators stands in distinction to that of a country such as Chile or Argentina. While those countries experienced continuity in the return of democratic political actors that pre-dated military government, Guatemala has seen continuity of another kind: The ongoing involvement from ex-regime candidates in presidential elections, including victories from Jorge Serrano Elias in 1990 and General Otto Perez Molina in 2011.

Divisions within the military would produce rebellion in 1960 and the beginning of a 36-year conflict that would cost more than 200,000 lives. The context of civil war gave the military

473 With few brief periods of exception, Guatemala could be considered to have been under military control effectively for its entire post-independence history prior to 1986. Moreover, not until the transfer of power from Juan José Arévalo to Jacobo Arbenz in 1950 did a president serve out his full term in office and peacefully hand the office over to his successor. For more, see: Fauriol and Loser 1988.
great power in pursuing counterinsurgency and destroying opposition, but these repressive and exclusionary practices also fed the war. The country lacked institutions through which civilians could compete for power, making armed conflict the only instrument available in the struggle for change. By 1986, military factionalization—most concretely evident in recurrent coups and countercoups that undermined regime stability—combined with need to focus on effectively prosecuting the war, and pressure from the United States, led the armed forces to give up the burdens of governance. Nevertheless, the military potentially stood to lose greatly by leaving power. The fate of traditionally secure prerogatives such as budgets, missions, and personnel decisions or, the institution’s privileged position in the country suddenly might not be determined by the military alone. Most troubling for hardliners in the armed forces, however, would be the possibility of success for ideological rivals. What revolutionary groups could not achieve on the battlefield they could now potentially achieve through the ballot box. Having faced severe repression and few opportunities for organizing in the long period of military rule, with essentially no preceding era in which to develop as electorally viable parties, new democratic actors were at a disadvantage (in comparison to parties in states undergoing *re-democratization*) and ex-regime actors had much to lose by ceding control. This combination explains the high rate of recycled dictator competition and their relative success in Guatemala.

This chapter proceeds as follows: First, I demonstrate how the theory of the presence of recycled dictator competitors in presidential elections applies to the Guatemalan case. Second, I discuss the nature of military rule and civil war in Guatemala, establishing the impact on future party competition of this environment in which political parties were not able to operate, were co-opted by the military, or were simply vehicles for intra-military conflict in fraudulent elections. Third, I discuss the process of transition from direct military rule to civilian
government in the 1980s. Fourth, I present the numerous recycled dictator candidates for president in the country, divided into minor-performing candidates and by category of success, from the 1985 transitional contest to 2011, which saw the election of former General Otto Perez Molina. I conclude with a discussion of the continuity of military power in Guatemala as evidenced by the high level of participation from ex-regime officials in the new democratic government.

**Guatemala and the Recycled Dictator**

The level of democratic continuity available to a country and the level of threat posed to the interests of those associated with the former military government explain the presence of recycled dictators in contemporary post-military rule presidential elections across Latin America. In effect, countries with higher levels of democratic continuity see fewer recycled dictators compete in presidential elections than those countries with less democratic continuity. And where the military and its allies stand to lose more by not being in power, ex-regime candidates present themselves for office at higher rates. Figure 6.1 categorizes the 12 countries in the study, placing Guatemala in the quadrant of low democratic continuity and high threat to ex-regime actors.

The armed forces have been a dominant national actor throughout the country’s modern history. Apart from the Ten Years of Spring from 1944 to 1954, Guatemala had no experience with liberal democracy prior to its 1986 transition. Even this brief window of democratic revolution was brought about by a military rebellion against the personalistic army dictator, Gen. Jorge Ubico. And, it was brought to an abrupt end by military and civilian elites in concert with
the United States in the early days of the Cold War in a counterrevolutionary coup d'etat that put the military back into power under Col. Castillo Armas. Conflict between revolutionary and counterrevolutionary forces was not over though. In 1960, a faction of junior officers rebelled from the corrupt and ineffective high command and touched off a civil war that would persist until 1996, taking many forms over the years. Military control of government would also evolve over time, initially resembling the continued procession of army dictators from pre-professional armed forces to more direct, bureaucratized rule. Greater control did not mean greater stability, however, with each military president vulnerable to premature ouster from his fellow officers. Similarly, the one return to a civilian president, Julio Méndez Montenegro (1966-70), was not a

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Democratic Continuity</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| High                           | Protest Candidacy Argentina, 4 (0.3) | Persistent Ex-regime Competition
Panama, 1 (1.8)
El Salvador, 6 (3.5)
Guatemala, 12 (3.6) | |
| Low                            | Return of Democratic Party Representatives
Brazil, 4 (0.1)
Chile, 2 (0.2)
Uruguay, 1 (0.3)
Peru, 3 (0.4) | Mixed Competition
Ecuador, 3 (0.9)
Paraguay, 2 (1.2)
Honduras, 4 (3.2)
Bolivia, 9 (3.2) |

Note: Numbers in parentheses are recycled dictator candidates per 1000 potential candidates as calculated by cataloging all cabinet ministers, junta members, presidents under military rule, and estimating the officer corps of the country as 10% of total armed forces personnel. This is discussed at greater length in Chapter One. Integers after the country name are the number of actual *candidates* who stood for election, thereby distinguished from the number of *candidacies* which counts the same individual’s campaigns separately. For example, General Hugo Bánzer of Bolivia is one candidate but because he ran for president four times, he is counted four times in the number of recycled dictator candidacies.
departure from military control. Though elected in a contest “generally regarded as honest,” the new president was allowed to take office only “after literally signing a pact with the army.”

Shielded by this civilian façade, the military vastly increased its powers and ratcheted up its counterinsurgency campaign. United States military influence in the form of training and aid also dramatically increased in this period, underscoring the privileged position of the institution in Guatemala.

The subsequent political epoch (1970-1982) saw the use of elections to select a president, but these contests were restricted, with each candidate being an active-duty member of the armed forces and with the added curb that the result would be manipulated to reflect the desires of the most powerful faction of the army at the time. The principle political parties in the country existed as vehicles of intra-military competition. The Movimiento Democratico Nacional (MDN), formed in 1954 to consolidate the counterrevolutionary movement of Col. Castillo Armas. The MDN was finished as a political force by the 1963 coup against General Ydígoras Fuentes, with the Movimiento de Liberación Nacional (MLN), which had broken away from the MDN in 1960, taking its place as the political vehicle of the liberacionistas—that is, the right-wing elements who “liberated” the country from the populist Col. Jacobo Arbenz in 1954. When General Enrique Peralta Azurdia came to power in the 1963 coup, he founded the Partido Institucional Democrática (PID) to institutionalize military influence in government. Both the MLN and PID survived through to the democratic era, periodically allying, including in the 1985 transitional election. Meanwhile, non-military parties in the military era faced outright bans,

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475 Prior to rebels ambushing and killing an entire army platoon in May 1965, the military had not wholeheartedly pursued the rebel threat. Considering them fellow officers in the military family, rebels and loyalists remained in contact for years after the initial 1960 split. For more on the interaction between the two sides during this early period, see Schirmer 1998, 15-17.
violent repression through assassination of their leaders, or as a consequence of such measures chose self-censorship and collaboration with the army. The Christian Democrats in particular, though “the main channel for reform forces,” pursued “a strategy of co-government with the army” in order to have any influence in the national direction at all. Nevertheless, it meant running military candidates for president throughout the 1970s, including future dictator Gen. Efraín Ríos Montt, in the 1974 contest. Guatemala’s political experience preceding the 1986 transition to democracy was characterized by army dominance of politics and government, which meant greater opportunity for the persistence of military power than potential for democratic continuity. There was no preceding democratic period in which to organize viable electoral parties independent of military control and from which those democratic actors could survive in order to return to the political arena.

The Guatemalan military’s long control over the state, in alliance with economic oligarchs, gave it a position of considerable privilege in the country. Any potential change to this order met with fierce resistance for decades. Indeed, the reform efforts of the Arévalo and Arbenz era came crashing down because of the threat they posed to oligarchic interests. Consequently, military departure from government was not the most obvious solution to the prolonged crisis in the country. Nevertheless, the civil war itself became a key reason for the military to give up the reins of government. Divisions within the officer corps were not conducive to battlefield success. The counterinsurgency strategy called for targeting the revolutionary combatants and the cause of their discontent simultaneously. Political liberalization would free the military from the burdens of governance while also giving citizens the belief that reform without revolution was possible, thereby limiting support for the guerrillas.

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476 Trudeau 1993.

477 For the first quote, see: Di Tella 2005, 125; for the second, see: Jonas 1991, 170.
Pressure from the United States also played a role in the Guatemalan transition. Thus, while military withdrawal did not come through regime collapse as it did in Argentina, the high level of control the army enjoyed over decision-making in the country for essentially its entire history meant that any change, if not a loss of power, at least introduced uncertainty for a military that had otherwise historically been able to determine the parameters of competition, decide the form and composition of government, and provide for their own interests with little opposition. Having established new rules for politics, then, members of the former regime entered that arena in some of the largest numbers seen in the region.

Guatemala illustrates how the theory of recycled dictators’ presence in presidential elections operates under conditions of low democratic continuity and high threat to the interests of ex-regime actors. The lack of historical democratic experience in which to build electorally viable political parties that would be ready to return to politics and dominate the transitional elections of the mid-1980s combined with the relative loss of military control to produce an environment open to large-scale competition from candidates associated with the former regime. And, persistent economic and social challenges, combined with institutional failures to deal with these problems, have created an environment in which authoritarian promises from the executive branch hold great appeal. The country has seen numerous presidential candidates who served in the armed forces or government in the era of military rule and higher levels of success than in states with more democratic histories. Table 6.1 outlines the Guatemalan candidates.
Table 6.1 Recycled Dictator Candidates in Guatemala

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate Name</th>
<th>Party Name</th>
<th>Year of Candidacy</th>
<th>Vote Share</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mario Sandoval Alarcón</td>
<td>Movimiento de Liberación Nacional/Partido Institucional Democrática (MLN/PID)</td>
<td>1985</td>
<td>12.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alejandro Maldonado Aguirre</td>
<td>National Renewal Party (PNR)</td>
<td>1985</td>
<td>3.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leonel Hernández Cardona</td>
<td>Frente Unido de la Revolución</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrade Díaz-Durán</td>
<td>Union del Centro Nacional/Partido Democracia Cristiana Guatemalteca/Partido Social Democrática (UCN/PDCG/PSD)</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>12.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gen. Angel Aníbal Guevara</td>
<td>Partido Demócrata Guatemalteco (PDG)</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>0.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gen. José Efraín Ríos Montt</td>
<td>Frente Republicano Guatemalteco (FRG)</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>19.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Col. Hector Rosales</td>
<td>Desarrollo Integral Autentico (DIA)</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>0.57</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gen. Mario Lopez Fuentes</td>
<td>Movimiento de Liberación Nacional (MLN)</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>2.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gen. José Alejandro Peralta Azurdia Gramajo</td>
<td>Frente Nacional Unido/Partido Institucional Democrática (FUN/PID)</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>1.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gen. Carlos Agusto Morales Villatoro</td>
<td>Alianza Popular (AP-5)</td>
<td>1995</td>
<td>0.4</td>
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**Democratic Revolution Produced Continued Military Control**

Military rule in Guatemala did not come as a rupture in an otherwise democratic history, as it did in Chile. In Guatemala, rather, the historical pattern has been rule by force, making “the primary model of governance...authoritarian in character, exploitative in style, and military in institutional terms.”\(^{478}\) In the early decades of the 20\(^{th}\) century, Guatemala saw the continuing

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\(^{478}\) Fauriol and Loser 1988, 5.
rule of *caudillo* military dictators characteristic of pre-professional Central American armies. In 1944, General Jorge Ubico, a self-identified fascist who had ruled for 13 years, was forced from power by a series of student protests, military demands, and general strikes in Guatemala City.\(^{479}\) The subsequent administration led by General Federico Ponce did not last long, as rival officers ousted him as well.\(^{480}\) The following year, Juan José Arévalo became the first elected president in Guatemalan history. With the establishment of this civilian administration, there was hope for a new era in Guatemalan politics, but the conditions under which it developed again demonstrated the military’s strength and influence in determining the leadership of the nation. It became clear that no ruler could gain power, or stay in power, without the support of the military. Democratic reform was not universally accepted. President Arévalo faced dozens of rebellions and coup attempts from military and civilian allies during his term of office.\(^{481}\)

The 1945 Constitution, while extolling the virtues of civilian democracy, firmly gave the military a tutelary role in overseeing the nation’s politics.\(^{482}\) And Arévalo, while freely elected, had been allowed to take office essentially only with the consent of Major Francisco Arana in exchange for placing him in the newly created position of Chief of the Armed Forces, which served as a parallel presidency.\(^{483}\) Thus, even in this seemingly fresh start in Guatemalan politics, military personnel were calling the shots.\(^{484}\) Major Arana, as Chief of the Armed Forces, and

\(^{479}\) Jonas 1991, 22.

\(^{480}\) Schirmer 1998, 10.

\(^{481}\) Streeter 2001.

\(^{482}\) Schirmer 1998, 13.

\(^{483}\) Ibid., 11.

\(^{484}\) For more on (and an optimistic view of) the 1944-54 democratic period, see: Black 1984, 12-15.
Col. Jacobo Arbenz, as Minister of Defense, were the expected frontrunners to succeed Arévalo, long before the campaign started. Arana was assassinated in 1949, which sparked a sustained rebellion that Arbenz himself put down with force.\footnote{Responsibility for Major Arana’s assassination was never determined, but Col. Arbenz was suspected of arranging it. For more, see Gleijeses 1990.}

Colonel Jacobo Arbenz won the 1950 presidential election, and though there was an orderly transfer of power between the two elected administrations, but Arbenz’s history as an army officer, role as Minister of Defense, and the fact that either of the anticipated successors to Arévalo drew their power from their relationship to the military underlined the control the institution enjoyed in running the country, despite the shift to democratic elections. As president, Arbenz became more ambitious with the reforms begun under Arévalo, and in 1952, initiated agrarian reform that included expropriation of lands owned by the United Fruit Company.\footnote{For more on the feudal economic conditions in the country at the time, see: Jonas 1991. For more on the Arévalo and Arbenz reforms, see: Gordon 1983. For more on the specifics of Arbenz’s reforms, see: Berger 1992; Gleijeses 1989.} This action raised the ire of the United States, and in 1954, he was deposed through a U.S.-sponsored invasion from a small counterrevolutionary army under Col. Castillo Armas.\footnote{For more on the lead up to the coup and the 1954 coup itself, see: Miller and Seeman 1981, 3-4 and Schlesinger and Kinzer 1983.} The high command remained was split on how to respond, and not wanting to antagonize the United States, they remained inactive.\footnote{Jonas 1991, 36; Schirmer 1998, 14.} Arbenz resigned after negotiating assurances that the previous years’ reforms would not be reversed. The subsequent rule of Armas nevertheless brought the undoing of political and economic reforms as well as a closer relationship between the Guatemalan military and the United States. During this time, the military began to exercise more political control by writing a new constitution in 1956 and intervening in the 1958 election. The
radical shifts from revolution to counterrevolution were further damaging the officer corps. Older officers characteristically sought to maintain traditional social alliances and to prevent reform, while junior officers began to view the reactionary stance of the counterrevolutionaries and the military’s increasingly overt military presence in politics negatively. These serious divisions within the military would be exacerbated at the end of the decade and produce the beginnings of civil war.

The Military Supplanted Civilian Politics with Its Own

Fidel Castro’s 1959 takeover in Cuba had a profound impact on the rest of Latin America. It inspired rebels and frightened militaries. Cold War battle lines were drawn, as militaries became Washington-oriented, anti-communist forces. The mounting discontent with the High Command among junior officers led to a 1960 uprising that failed to remove Ydigoras and resulted in the court-martial of nearly 21% of the officer corps. Those who were not captured, though, including Lieutenants Luis Augusto Turcios Lima and Marco Antonio Yon Sosa fled to the countryside separately to continue the rebellion for “social justice [and] a just distribution of national wealth.”

The overt split in the military was one more expression of the revolutionary and counterrevolutionary conflict set in motion in 1944. This time, however, it touched off the civil war that would last for 36 years. With the breakdown of military cohesion and the

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490 Intense fighting did not begin immediately. As Schirmer (1998) describes, in the early years of the insurgency, “guerrilla leaders maintained close contacts with their old junior-officer cohorts, even appearing in the capital at parties for officers of the same promoción (graduating class) in the Escuela Politécnica” (16). This situation changed with the ambush and killing of an entire platoon in May 1965. The army took the threat more seriously from that point on.
development of different rebel groups, the nation’s internal security and political environment deteriorated.\textsuperscript{491} In anticipation of the potential return of former president Juan Jose Arévalo, Col. Enrique Peralta Azurdia overthrew Gen. Ydigoras Fuentes, canceled the 1963 elections, and instituted a state of siege.\textsuperscript{492} Guatemala would spend much of the next several years under such conditions, which granted the military exceptional powers and further stifled political expression.\textsuperscript{493} The obvious, concrete challenge of guerrilla forces, allowed the military to conduct a counter-terror campaign that simultaneously gave it more control over the state apparatus and a freer hand in clamping down on political opposition.\textsuperscript{494} This behavior reflected and fed the long-term pattern of military governance of the country.\textsuperscript{495}

Party politics, as with meaningful democracy, seemed to have a bright future during the brief window of the Ten Years of Spring.\textsuperscript{496} The groups of the 1944 revolution—the Frente Popular Libertador (FPL), Renovación Nacional (RN), and the Partido Acción Revolucionaria (PAR)—operated effectively in the early years of the Arévalo administration, but consistent internal disagreements meant they weakened themselves as time wore on and Col. Jacobo Arbenz relied more on the Communist Partido Guatemalteco del Trabajo (PGT), which at the time was a “well-organized…vehicle for popular participation and mobilization.”\textsuperscript{497} The 1954

\textsuperscript{491} Woodward 1999, 246.
\textsuperscript{492} Black 1984.
\textsuperscript{494} Schirmer 1998, 17-18.
\textsuperscript{495} Fauriol and Loser 1988.
\textsuperscript{496} Black 1984.
\textsuperscript{497} Di Tella 2005, 124; While Arbenz worked with the Communist party and eventually raised alarm from the United States as a leftist in the early Cold War environment, Arbenz identified his goal as making
coup, however, brought these organizations to an end along with the labor movement that had grown during the democratic era. Labor unions were “dissolved and their leaders killed, jailed, or deported.” The period immediately following saw the reversal of progress achieved under the short-lived democracy. The United States, seeing the democratic revolution as nothing more than a communist success (and potential financial disaster for high-placed U.S. corporations), sought to “root out all traces of progressive politics.” This counterrevolutionary zeal meant, initially, an attempt to turn back the clock in every way imaginable and simply to reinstitute the caudillo political model through Col. Castillo Armas (1954-57) and Gen. Ydigoras Fuentes (1958-63). The 1960 rebellion of junior officers, however, demonstrated that the pressure for reform from within the military had not disappeared and hardliner elements of the military would need a more sustainable form of control.

Under Col. Peralta Azurdia (1963-66), the armed forces began a more systematic program of control over government than it had exercised in years past, outlawing political activity through the justification of pursuing national security. This new regime “established a political strategy that effectively prevented opposition reformist parties from participating in politics for the next fifteen years.” Parties, though essentially excluded from any competitive elections, had actually proliferated in the late 1950s, numbering over 30 when they were then

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498 Fried et al. 1983a, 156.

499 Jonas 1991, 42.

500 Calvert 1985, 105.

“reduced by decree to only four” after the 1963 coup.502 The 1966 presidential election demonstrated the character of the new Guatemalan system—that is, the militarization of politics. The four parties allowed to compete were the Democracia Cristiana Guatemalteca (DCG), the Partido Revolucionario (PR), the Movimiento de Liberación Nacional (MLN), and the newly formed Partido Institucional Democratico (PID).503 The DCG chose not to participate. The PR, which drew its lineage from the PAR of the Arévalo-Arbenz era, was now substantially more moderate “after its leadership purged the entire left wing of the party in the late 1950s.”504 The MLN and the PID were both rightist military-oligarch parties that served as vehicles for candidates who were active-duty officers in the armed forces, Colonel Juan de Dios Aguilar and Colonel Miguel Angel Ponciano, respectively.505 Competition was taking place among factions of military elites (and their civilian allies), not among freely chosen candidates representing broad public participation.506 Indeed, while election day was considered free and fair, the campaign was far from it. In addition to the legal restrictions placed on the competition, the threat of violence against candidates and voters was ever present. Several months before the election, PR founder and likely presidential nominee, Dr. Mario Méndez Montenegro, was murdered, leading the party to nominate his brother, Dr. Julio César Méndez Montenegro, in his

502 After the 1954 coup, “all existing parties were dissolved” and Col. Castillo Armas’s own newly founded National Democratic Movement (MDN) “was the only one allowed to contest the 1955 congressional elections” (Calvert 1985, 104).

503 The PID was founded by General Enrique Peralta Azurda in 1963 as a military institutionalist party modeled after Mexico’s PRI. The MLN, a spinoff of the original MDN, upheld the mantle of those who overthrew Arbenz in 1954 and identified as the party of “national liberation.”


505 Calvert 1985, 82-85; Trudeau 1993, 37.

506 As Gen. Carlos Arana Osorio (president, 1970-74) noted: “there has never been a separation between the private sector and the army” Fried et al. 1983b, 113-114.
place. Méndez Montenegro won the election, but despite wishing to identify his administration as the third government of the revolution, the PR “was a shell of the party” from the days of the PAR, and Méndez Montenegro essentially “endorsed the transfer of power from the National Palace to the barracks.” The PR was discredited and political space either for reformist elements of the military or for the political left—indeed of the armed forces—narrowed more and more.

The willingness to use open violence against political organizing meant that party leaders and activists were always at the mercy of the military and right-wing death squads. Dr. Mario Méndez Montenegro was not the only party leader to be murdered during the decades of military rule. Even as activists pursued the rules laid for them to achieve legal party status, they were vulnerable to assassination. Disappearances escalated in the early 1970s and targeted even those “intellectuals, trade union officials, moderate party leaders—who had explicitly agreed to playing by the military’s political rule-book.” The leader of the center-left Revolutionary Democratic Union (URD), Adolfo Mijango López, was assassinated in 1971. Alberto Fuentes Mohr, leader of the Social Democratic Party (PSD), and Manuel Colom Argueta of the United Revolutionary Front (FUR), were both assassinated in early 1979. Guatemalan police and

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508 Black 1984, 21-22. As Jonas (1991) outlines, Méndez Montenegro signed a pact “brokered by the U.S. Embassy” in which he promised to “exclude ‘radicals’” from his administration and “not to retire too many generals.” It also gave the military “a free hand in counterinsurgency operations (and the accompanying repression) and autonomy in such matters as budgets [and] selection of the defense minister and chief of staff” (60).

509 Di Tella 2005, 124.

510 Black 1984, 30.

511 Argueta 1983, 122.
military disappeared and assassinated the leadership of the Central Nacional de Trabajadores (CNT) in 1980.\textsuperscript{512} As a transition to democracy appeared on the horizon, scholars identified the system as one “maintained by the fatal elimination of parties, organizations, and individuals who are trying to gain entry into political life.”\textsuperscript{513} The danger to political and labor organizers persisted after the democratic transition, as evidenced by the assassination of Daniel Barillas, leader of the Christian Democrats, in 1989.\textsuperscript{514} In short, as Susanne Jonas argues, the era of counterrevolution meant the frequent “physical elimination of moderate and leftist opposition forces. Virtually an entire generation of moderate leaders was removed from Guatemalan political life during the 1960s and 1970s.”\textsuperscript{515}

Thus, the Guatemalan Army pursued a dual strategy of destroying political opposition and providing its own institutions and leaders to run the country long-term.\textsuperscript{516} This combination of factors is essential in understanding the country’s subsequent experience with recycled dictators. The armed forces did not rule with the intention of de-politicizing the country as militaries did in Chile and Argentina, but rather to institute their own political power. In Chile and Argentina, military rule sought to reset what they saw as broken political systems but they did so by disrupting them temporarily rather than by capturing the system as the military did in Guatemala. The 1963-82 era of the Guatemalan military project moved away from the caudillo model of strongman military rule and instead used the façade of democracy to exercise its power.

\textsuperscript{512} GHRC 2009; Jonas 1991, 132.
\textsuperscript{513} Fried et al. 1983b, 113.
\textsuperscript{514} Trudeau 1993, 36.
\textsuperscript{515} Jonas 1991, 62.
\textsuperscript{516} In addition to national-level control, the military incorporated local politics and governance into its own bureaucracy, using its “network of military commissioners, representatives of the army reserve in each town…as paramilitary forces to protect the interests of rural property owners” (Jonas 1991, 61).
This experience ensured that the political Right and the military itself had political institutions such as the MLN and the PID, and officers who were accustomed to standing for election (even if in a pro forma manner). Essentially, Guatemala experienced not only the destruction of nascent democratic actors that otherwise might have been able to return to politics in 1986, but also their replacement by military actors that were prepared to enter the new, more liberalized system in the wake of the democratic transition. While Chile and Argentina experienced continuity of democratic actors, it is the persistence of military regime actors that provided the continuity in states such as Guatemala and El Salvador.

The War Evolved and Guatemala Transitioned to Democracy

Exclusionary governance and use of violence even against those who attempted to play by the military’s rules pushed resistance underground and fed the insurgency. Revolutionary opposition became the only option for systemic change. The consistent use of fraud in elections made them meaningless, and widespread violence closed off the safety valve of any other form of routine opposition. Some labor unions and peasant groups did manage to organize under these difficult circumstances, but military control over politics curbed any political voice they might have attained, also driving their organizational capacity toward revolutionary solutions.\(^{517}\) It was widely recognized that “by mid-1980, repression was so extreme it became obvious that any form of open or legal struggle would be suicidal.”\(^{518}\) Thus, the militarization of politics in Guatemala took place in the context of widespread civil war and contributed to it as well.

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\(^{517}\) Albizurez 1983.

\(^{518}\) Fried et al. 1983c, 258.
The 1960 rebellion of junior officers was an intra-military conflict that reflected the broader tensions between revolution and counterrevolution and how the country would be structured socially, economically, and politically. Nevertheless, in the early stages of the insurgency, the war did not overtly take the form of attempted social revolution. Rebel officers made an impact on the country by attacking police stations and military posts.\(^{519}\) The army pursued these threats in a military fashion, rather than addressing the underlying issues through reform. By the end of the 1960s, the FAR suffered serious setbacks and had been effectively “neutralized” by government forces.\(^{520}\) This success against the insurgent groups was built on “government-sanctioned police and military terrorism” including assassinations, bombings, and targeting civilian populations.\(^{521}\) The military’s offensives had nearly destroyed the guerrilla movements. It also left villages obliterated, peasants displaced, and 15,000 dead.\(^{522}\)

The initial rebellion of army officers was relatively small and did not constitute a significant threat to the existence of the Guatemalan state. Nevertheless, the guerrilla movements they formed in the subsequent period created the perception that the military was losing its monopoly on the use of force in the country. Traditional economic elites and conservative forces saw the surge of communist activity as a threat to their dominance, and the military’s early reluctance to engage the rebels broke the oligarchy’s confidence in the military’s loyalty to elite interests. Consequently, right-wing terror organizations proliferated in an attempt to destroy

\(^{519}\) Landau 1993.

\(^{520}\) Central Intelligence Agency 1967, 3.

\(^{521}\) Ibid, 3-4.

\(^{522}\) Landau 1993, 165.
leftist opposition. The increasingly dangerous situation was not reversed with the apparent defeat of the rebel army movements. Instead, the war entered a new phase with rampant, uncontrolled violence and poorly defined military goals.

Right-wing death squads and the military’s terror tactics served to destabilize the country and to undermine the government’s relationship with the population. The heavy-handed response to the relatively minor guerrilla groups of the 1960s created serious resentment among civilians and provoked popular resistance to the government. Guatemala’s skewed income distribution—in which more than half of the population earned less than US$150 per month, while one percent of the population had an income eight times that figure—made the country susceptible to communist agitation. It was not long before a new rebel movement would rise to take advantage of this situation. In 1975, the newly formed Ejército Guerrillero de los Pobres (EGP) began attacking landowners, property, and government installations in the western part of the country. The military response to the EGP was one of “blind, random, and massive” repression that only increased support for the guerrillas. This trend continued throughout the 1970s.

Under these conditions, the military regime had no popular legitimacy, and the weakening alliance between the army and its economic allies endangered the military’s rule. During the 1970s, high-level officers were becoming increasingly involved in business ventures

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524 Woodward 1999, 250.
525 Landau 1993, 169.
and simply exploiting their political power—securing their own economic prosperity by gaining lands and corporate assets.\textsuperscript{528} The military government had become a struggle “between factions of the same gang.”\textsuperscript{529} The level of corruption in the military was undermining its efforts in fighting the war by diminishing any popular support it might have once had. Meanwhile, the EGP and the Organization of People in Arms (ORPA) had been securing popular support in the western highlands.\textsuperscript{530} Weakening political power, increasing violence, and a shrinking economy beset the military regime and prompted a transformation in its approach both to the war and its role in government.

By the time of the 1982 election, misgivings about the exclusionary government pressured the military to reconsider the pattern of contests among military officers. The sitting president, General Romeo Lucas García, argued that only civilians should stand for election, but when he made this offer to “several loyal ‘partyless’ civilian national figures, they all turned him down.”\textsuperscript{531} And in the end, the Gen. Lucas’s effort only contributed to divisions in the institution and uncertainty in government. Hardliners resisted any attempt to change the long-standing electoral façade and instead simply put forward Gen. Angel Aníbal Guevara as successor. Gen. Guevara won the election, but the mounting concerns of junior officers led them to stage a coup and prevent him from taking power. Instead, General Efrain Ríos Montt was installed as part of a larger junta.\textsuperscript{532}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{footnotes}
\item[528] Woodward 1999, 248.
\item[529] Landau 1993, 170.
\item[530] Barry 1986, 17.
\item[531] Schirmer 1998, 19.
\item[532] Most accounts claim Gen. Rios Montt was not involved in the March 1982 coup and that he was only recalled to active duty because high-level hardliners would not accept the rule of the junior officers who
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the transition from military to civilian rule while simultaneously overseeing escalation in military violence against peasants suspected of sympathizing with the guerrilla movement.

The self-serving nature the military’s rule not only tarnished its image among the population, but also was creating serious divisions within the institution not conducive to success in the conflict. The junior officers who staged the coup were, in part, prompted by the “increasing fatalities among soldiers and junior officers,” a situation that increased tensions in the officer corps. Internal conflict diminished military cohesion and created an environment of uncertainty in a country facing internal enemies. The military administration that seized power in 1982 under Ríos Montt reformed military strategy while escalating the use of brutal tactics.

Counterinsurgency operations had been the official effort in Guatemala since the 1963 inception of the U.S. Alliance for Progress. American military planners intended for the Guatemalan Army to counter the guerrilla movements of the 1960s not only by fighting the rebels, but also by building a better relationship with civilians and involving them in anti-guerrilla activities such as civil patrols. This plan was not followed carefully at the time, but it became the core of the “security and progress” operation of the 1980s. One of the first goals of the Ríos Montt government was to halt the random political violence from death squads that sought to discourage support for the rebels by terrorizing the population. In his March 23, 1982 statement as head of the new junta, Ríos Montt claimed: “no more cadavers will appear along the highways; those who go against the law will be shot, but no more murders, we’re going to respect the rights of men.” The brutality of the new military campaign was unquestionable, but Ríos Montt won support among some even in the most affected areas because he brought order

actually pulled off the coup. Bonner (1983), however, cites accounts claiming that Ríos Montt had an active role in the plotting.

where before there was only chaotic terror. The ambitious new counterinsurgency program clearly articulated a year-by-year plan, beginning in 1982 with a “scorched-earth pacification campaign” that would target guerrillas in the field and destroy the presumed support base among villages in the countryside. The following two years brought the establishment of civil patrols to involve peasants in combating the guerrillas and reconstruction efforts to provide food and clothing to people for their cooperation and loyalty. In 1985, the military oversaw a presidential election and allowed the civilian victor to take office in 1986, thereby completing the military withdrawal from government. The war reflected a broad social conflict that could not be won with force alone. Counterinsurgency doctrine brought a comprehensive approach of fighting guerrillas and pursuing economic development.

Efraín Ríos Montt began to waver in his support for the transitional plan and as a consequence was deposed just 17 months after he took office, replaced by Gen. Oscar Humberto Mejía Víctores. Nevertheless, Gen. Ríos Montt had a crucial role in changing public perception of the armed forces. The belief that the military was corrupt and self-serving undermined public support for the regime and its policies. Thus, in tandem with the escalated battlefield effort, Ríos Montt pursued a public relations campaign that amounted to a “repentant government’s promise to recover its legitimacy and authority.” The most ubiquitous image of the campaign was a cartoon hand with thumb, forefinger, and middle finger extended (as though counting off), the

534 Stoll 1993.
536 Ibid., 24.
537 Klare and Peter Korbbluh 1988, 26.
538 Garrard-Burnett 2010, 61.
new promise of the government: “no robo, no miento, no abuso” (I do not steal, lie, or abuse). The image and slogan soon appeared everywhere from being “whitewashed on mountainsides” to running as “full-page ads in national newspapers.” Virginia Garrard-Burnett argues that Ríos Montt effectively won the ideological, psychological war against the guerrillas. As the military was carrying out battlefield operations, the administration was successfully using these kinds of images and involving average citizens in the “new Guatemala,” claiming that peace and security was everyone’s responsibility and that this required, for example, that people actively denounce guerrillas. The success of the campaign both on and off the battlefield—and particularly targeting the issue of corruption—left a lasting impression on many citizens. As Ríos Montt entered democratic politics in the late 1980s, public opinion surveys demonstrated support for him often on the basis of these very issues—being seen as honest, responsible, and as someone who lives up to his promises. The blue hand in a three-finger salute became the emblem of Ríos Montt’s eventual political party, the Frente Republicano Guatemalteco (FRG), this time with the words “Seguridad, Bienestar, Justicia” (security, well-being, justice).

Thus, Ríos Montt was successful in guiding the country toward a transition to democracy, and when he began to deviate from it, he met the fate of so many of his fellow leaders—ousted in a coup. The transition took place in 1986 as anticipated with the inauguration of the leader of the Christian Democrats, Vinicio Cerezo. The civil war continued for another decade and during this uncertain time, members of the former regime sought to continue exerting their influence in politics, and army officers had not universally accepted the rules of the game. Factions of the military did not agree with the transitional effort, and this prompted more than one coup attempt.

539 Ibid., 61.

540 Ibid., 10.
in 1988 to return to direct military rule. The armed forces faced uncertainty not only in the sense of maintaining institutional preferences in government, but also in the threat from the guerrillas. Revolutionary success in Nicaragua in 1979 reinvigorated communist movements in the region and underscored the communist threat to state militaries as the Sandinistas dismantled the National Guard after taking power. The Guatemalan military, therefore, sought continued control through proxies and agreements with ostensibly non-regime politicians and their parties, as with Vinicio Cerezo and the Christian Democrats.

Despite coup attempts, the newly established democracy survived, and three years later, the country saw the election of Jorge Serrano and the first transfer of power from one democratically elected leader to another since the 1950 handover from Juan José Arévalo to Jacobo Arbenz. The minimal democratic experience in Guatemala prior to 1986 meant the actors entering the electoral arena in the transition were essentially doing so for the first time. The high level of control the military exercised over politics and government during their reign meant the stifling of free political groups that might otherwise have survived from the limited democratic era or grown under military repression. The military’s own success in capturing potential opposition parties, such as the Christian Democrats, and institutionalizing their rule through fraudulent elections meant, ironically, they were among the best prepared to compete in the liberal democratic system. And potentially losing the traditional control the institution and its rightist civilian allies enjoyed over the many decades of military rule encouraged electoral participation from these actors.

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541 Serrano would later stage his own auto-coup—attempting to seize dictatorial powers while already in elected office—similar to that of Peru’s Alberto Fujimori. This brazen attempt to subvert the growing democracy was cause for alarm, but due to widespread outrage Serrano was not allowed to succeed in his power grab.
Recycled Dictators Run in Presidential Elections, 1985-2011

Guatemala has had one of the highest rates of ex-regime candidates participating in its presidential elections of any of the 12 post-military rule countries in the study. And, two recycled dictators have returned to the executive, including current president, former General Otto Perez Molina, who was elected in November 2011. Nearly all of the country’s presidential elections since the transition have included at least one former regime candidate, beginning with the transitional election in 1985. I analyze the performance of each of the candidates, categorized below by their type and level of performance in national vote share. Mario Sandoval Alarcón exemplifies the regime heir type, as he ran in the transitional election on an allied ticket of the long-standing military parties—National Liberation Movement and Institutional Democratic Party. Guatemala has had no rogue officers run for president, but two caudillo democrats have gone far—Gen. Efraín Rios Montt and Gen. Otto Pérez Molina.

Mario Sandoval Alarcón Was the Regime Heir

Mario Sandoval Alarcón was the regime heir in the 1985 election, running of the MLN and PID ticket—the MLN having been founded by the leaders of the 1954 coup against Jacobo Arbenz. Sandoval Alarcón had served as Vice President under the military regime of General Kjell Laugerud from 1974 to 1978 and was thereafter leader of the MLN. Sandoval Alarcón claimed, “I am a Fascist, and I have tried to model my party after the Spanish Falange.” Both he and his party were accused of death squad activity and of being responsible for politically motivated violence against other candidates for office in the 1984 campaign for the Constituent


543 Black 1984, 17, 22.
Assembly.\textsuperscript{544} He too was the target of violence, though, including numerous death threats and attempts on his life.\textsuperscript{545} While the MLN was embedded in the extreme rightist interests of the business elites and an institution of preceding military dictatorships, it appeared that by the time of the 1985 presidential election campaign, Sandoval Alarcon had bought into the rules of the democratic game. Rumors of a coup against the incumbent military president, General Oscar Humberto Mejia, in response to a proposed sales tax grew in the period before the election, and Sandoval Alarcon, uncharacteristically, issued a statement opposing any such action and urging other political and military leaders to continue with the democratic process.\textsuperscript{546} As the elections were a crucial condition for renewed United States aid to Guatemala, and the country was in severe economic crisis at the time, Sandoval Alarcon’s interest in upholding the elections may have been motivated more by an effort to serve his business constituency than by a genuine conversion to belief in democracy.\textsuperscript{547} Nevertheless, the candidate consistently defended the democratic process in the months leading up to the election and was a powerful voice on the right in attempting to keep the military at bay and eventually to respect the results of the election.\textsuperscript{548} Sandoval Alarcon won 12.56\% of the vote, not enough to make it to the second round vote in which the Christian Democrat Party candidate, Vinicio Cerezo won the election.


\textsuperscript{545} Alfonso Anzueto, “Unidentified Gunmen Try to Kill Former Vice President,” \textit{Associated Press}, 19 December 1984.


Gen. Efraín Ríos Montt and Gen. Otto Pérez Molina Were Caudillo Democrats

In 2003, former General Efraín Ríos Montt finally secured his opportunity to run for president. After the 1982 coup d’etat by junior officers against General Romeo Lucas García, Ríos Montt was brought in to lead the new military government. His short-lived administration oversaw a dramatic intensification of the civil war and a period of extreme violence, massacres, and destruction of entire villages under the new “scorched-earth” policy of prosecuting the war.\(^{549}\) Indigenous populations were most targeted. Ríos Montt simultaneously set Guatemala on a path to democracy, promising elections shortly after he came into office. When he seemed to waver on his commitment to a rapid reinstitution of elections he was deposed in another military coup by General Oscar Mejia Victores. When the country held presidential elections in 1990 and 1995, Ríos Montt ran for office, but his candidacy was formally barred both times by the Guatemalan Supreme Court on the grounds that he was constitutionally ineligible as a former coup participant.\(^{550}\) The 1986 Guatemalan constitution forbids anyone who took power in an undemocratic fashion from standing for election as a presidential candidate. This clause was meant specifically to deny Efraín Ríos Montt the ability to lead the country again. He was nevertheless a powerful figure in the nation’s politics, having founded the Frente Republicano Guatemalteco (FRG) and been elected to the national congress and becoming president of that body. For nearly a decade, he served as a congressional leader, cultivated a constituency, and grew his party’s presence in the congress. His persistence in pursuing presidential eligibility paid off as the Supreme Court finally allowed his candidacy in 2003. This would not be the first time Ríos Montt competed for presidential power through the ballot box. He stood for election in

\(^{549}\) REMHI 1999.

\(^{550}\) Article 186 of Guatemalan Constitution (PDBA 2011).
1974 in a military-controlled election that he is believed to have won but never was able to assume the office due to fraud, which brought in General Kjell Laugerud instead.\textsuperscript{551} In the 2003 campaign, Ríos Montt’s dictatorial past was a major issue. The protracted battle to allow him to run ensured that his previous role as a brutal military leader would be front and center in the campaign. Ríos Montt consistently denied having ordered massacres or condoned torture and human rights violations as president in interviews at the time and during the 2003 campaign. Nor did he express any remorse for the abuses that happened during his rule, whether responsible or not.\textsuperscript{552} Voter response to the prospect of a Ríos Montt presidency was mixed, with some remembering his rule having brought order and others horrified at his potential return to power.\textsuperscript{553} Mass rallies were held in Guatemala City to protest Ríos Montt’s candidacy.\textsuperscript{554} And there were clashes between “several thousand FRG supporters and supporters of various opposition parties.”\textsuperscript{555} The mob violence of July 24, 2003 in support of Ríos Montt came to be known as \textit{Jueves Negro} (Black Thursday).\textsuperscript{556} Paradoxically, however, his law-and-order mantle meant he would find support amongst some voters. Especially in rural areas, rising crime rates

\begin{flushleft}


\textsuperscript{555} “Guatemala: Ruling on Ríos Montt,” \textit{Keesing's Record of World Events}, July 2003, 45511.

\textsuperscript{556} Peacock and Beltrán 2003.
\end{flushleft}
meant that vigilante justice was reportedly a common method of dealing with crime.\textsuperscript{557} His image as a proven iron-fisted ruler also found appeal among some voters who were disturbed by the disorder into which the country had fallen in previous years.\textsuperscript{558} The campaign, itself, was extremely violent. Numerous candidates for public office were threatened, assaulted, or killed. Many accused the FRG and its supporters of being behind the attacks.\textsuperscript{559} Ríos Montt came in third in the first round of balloting with just over 19\% of the vote.\textsuperscript{560} He proved more popular in rural areas, winning an average of 1 in 4 votes in those locales, but he was thoroughly rejected in Guatemala City, winning only 1 in 10 votes there.\textsuperscript{561} Ríos Montt’s dictatorial past did not drive his results entirely. The incumbent administration, also of the FRG, was seen as corrupt and ineffective, leaving voters to look for a new political force. And, one of Montt’s chief rivals in the campaign was the popular former mayor of Guatemala City, Oscar Berger.\textsuperscript{562} Berger secured the support of many voters who had chosen Montt in the first round.\textsuperscript{563} Nevertheless, Ríos Montt’s final attempt at the presidency ended in a resounding no from voters. Ríos Montt’s case


\textsuperscript{558} Jo Tuckman, “Ex-dictator vies for power in Guatemala: Shadow of one of Latin America’s most brutal civil wars hangs over tomorrow’s presidential poll,” \textit{The Guardian}, 8 November, 2003.


\textsuperscript{560} PDBA 2003.


\textsuperscript{563} “Guatemala: Berger victory in presidential election,” \textit{Keesing’s Record of World Events}, December 2003, 45734.
demonstrates the opportunity and challenge of electoral participation from ex-authoritarian candidates. His campaign did neither put the past in the past nor helped to reconcile opposing forces from the guerrilla war. He never apologized nor even accepted responsibility for the atrocities committed during his tenure in office. Yet, in the electoral result, it was clear that Ríos Montt’s political career had come to an end, and voters rejected the notion that an authoritarian past was better than a democratic future.

The strongest recycled dictator candidate in Guatemala has been Otto Pérez Molina. He was a general in the army, having served in a number of positions over a lengthy career. Unlike candidates such as Ríos Montt, however, he never served in a governing role during military rule. After leaving the service, he founded the Partido Patriota in 2001 and ran successfully for congress. His first attempt at the presidency came in 2007. Despite the failure of Ríos Montt’s overt authoritarianism in the 2003 campaign, the country was once again adjudicating the issues of how to deal with pressing national problems such as rising violence and crime in 2007. Otto Perez promised the iron fist—and made it the party’s emblem—and advocated using the army to fight crime. The duality of this warlike posture was completed by his rival, Alvaro Colom, who promised peace—complete with dove as his party’s symbol—and proposed greater social spending to solve the country’s problems. Crime and violence dominated the campaign, with both major candidates seeking to gain the votes of those

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564 From June 1969 to May 1972, he was a platoon commander in the Brigada Militar Mariscal Zavala in the Zona Militar 705 in Zacapa, in the East of the country; company commander of the Guardia Presidencial from March 1976 to May 1982; and from April to October 1983, he was commander of the first battalion in Zona Militar 8, Chiquimula. From November 1983 to December 1984 served as an Oficial de Operaciones at the Base Militar de Tropas Paracadistas (paratrooper command) in San José in the south. He was a chief at the Centro de Adiestramiento y Operaciones Especiales Kailbil (Center for Training and Special Operations) from May 1969 to December 1985.

concerned with the issue by promising to be tough. Ideology seemed to take a back seat in the campaign, and in many ways the views of the two candidates converged on the issue of crime. While Colom presented himself as a candidate of peace, he also promised toughness and followed suit when Otto Perez said he would institute the death penalty. Neither Colom nor Otto Pérez were prepared to tackle what observers saw as the true root of the problem, however—the reigning culture of impunity. The country faced the most violent campaign since the end of the civil war, with many attacks and assassinations of candidates, journalists, and activists. It was widely recognized, even by candidate Colom himself, that the country was more dangerous then than during the civil war. Thus, Otto Pérez’s biography and tough stance on crime had considerable appeal, but it also presented a problem for the candidate. He was unable to distance himself from the atrocities of the past and even found himself the focus of new accusations during the campaign, including for coordinating the murder of Bishop Juan Gerardi, who oversaw the Catholic Church’s truth commission report on the civil war in Guatemala. Otto Pérez secured 24% of the vote in the first round, but he lost to Colom in the run-off.

Otto Pérez Molina entered the 2011 presidential campaign with much the same message as he had in the previous election and with the country in the same condition—soaring crime and

violence once again made him an immediate frontrunner as a proven leader who pointed to his background as proof that he could bring order to the chaotic situation. The four-year interval was important to the Pérez campaign in many ways. He had gained greater experience as a politician in the legislature, the security condition of the country deteriorated further, and the general refined his message. He was now the candidate of the “iron fist, head, and heart” and insisted that dealing with drug-related crime was about more than brute force but rather the careful application of intelligence gathering and precise justice. The additional four years also put the war further in the past, an important factor in a country where “70% of [the population] is under 30.” Older voters had strong feelings about the general’s past, but Otto Perez could present himself anew to the younger electorate. Otto Perez won 36% of the vote in the first round and went on to win the second round by a seven-point margin. In January 2012, he was sworn in as President of Guatemala.

Other Recycled Dictators Secured Low Vote Share

Alejandro Maldonado Aguirre served as Secretary of Culture and Education of Guatemala (1970–74) and as an ambassador (1978–81). One of the questions that remained to be answered as the campaign unfolded was how willing the military was to give up power and exactly how much it would cede to a new civilian leader. Maldonado was keenly aware of the

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potential limits on the democratic opening in Guatemala during the 1985 presidential election. Three years prior, he had been a candidate for the presidency, competing against the military’s hand-selected candidate, General Angel Anibal Guevara, who himself, though winning the election, never took office due to the coup that installed General Efraín Ríos Montt. Alejandro Maldonado won 3.2% of the vote in 1985.

General Mario Lopez Fuentes had been Chief of Staff of the Guatemalan Army under Ríos Montt’s military government. He was an important stabilizing force after Ríos Montt was removed from power. Lopez had a reputation for ambition and was “widely considered the power behind [General Oscar] Mejia,” but the new military president soon asserted his authority, dismissing Gen. Lopez from his position. He ran on the MLN ticket in the 1995 election and won 2.3% of the vote. General Angel Anibal Guevara had been Defense Minister under General Romeo Lucas Garcia. In the 1995 election, Angel Anibal Guevara won 0.43% of the vote. Two other former army officials, General José Alejandro Peralta Azurdia Gramajo, and Brigadier General Carlos Agusto Morales Villatoro also ran in the 1995 election, winning 0.4% and 1.2% of the vote, respectively.

Hector Rosales, a former colonel in the Guatemalan Air Force, ran in the 2007 election winning 0.57% of the vote. He held a number of positions in the Ministry of Defense over his

career, including that of a spokesman for the armed forces in the mid-1980s.\textsuperscript{578} He became ambassador to Panama in 1990.\textsuperscript{579} After leaving government service, he was a leader of a veterans’ organization through which he continued to advocate for military interests. He opposed the reduction of forces called for in the peace accords on the grounds that it would “leave some areas of the country unprotected.”\textsuperscript{580} Rising crime and violence were central issues in the 2007 presidential election. But these issues were not limited to the debate stage, as Rosales and other candidates faced violent attacks. He claimed that the Frente Republicana Guatemalteca (FRG), Rios Montt’s party, was responsible for targeting candidates for assassination.\textsuperscript{581} Guatemala demonstrates high rates of continued competition from ex-regime candidates in presidential elections.

**Conclusion**

Guatemala’s experience with only brief democratic practice followed by long-term military rule in which political parties were captured or co-opted by military candidates left the country with a low degree of democratic continuity and instead an scenario of powerful military actors prepared to continue in their political dominance. The uncertainty created by the ongoing civil war at the point of transition heightened military interest in maintaining control. This effort was expressed not only in the explicit candidacies of recycled dictators but also in the form of

\footnotesize


attempted coups to reverse the democratic opening and restore military rule. Similar to the 1966 election of a civilian leader under the watchful eye of military stewards, the first civilian administration of the post-1986 era, with Vinicio Cerezo, found the new president giving the armed forces continued influence in government and leeway in fighting the guerrillas. Members of the armed forces sought many routes to continued power, including participating in elections.

The low level of democratic continuity and high level of threat to ex-regime actors produced one of the highest rates of competition from ex-dictators in the region. The performance of these presidential contenders is in keeping with the broad experience of ex-regime candidates region wide. Those who enter as independent former army officers or cabinet members do not perform well. The regime heir in the transitional election, Mario Sandoval Alarcón, and the caudillo democrats who established political careers before running for president, Gen. Efraín Ríos Montt and Gen. Otto Pérez Molina, broke out of the single-digits in their campaigns. Gen. Pérez won the presidency in 2011, becoming one of eight total recycled dictator victors in Latin America.
## Chapter Six: Guatemala Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1931-44</td>
<td>Personalist dictatorship of Gen. Jorge Ubico</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1944-54</td>
<td>Democratic era, the “Ten Years of Spring”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1944</td>
<td>Popular uprising and coup against Gen. Jorge Ubico, beginning of democratic era</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frente Popular Libertador (FPL), Renovación Nacional (RN), and Partido Acción Revolucionaria (PAR) formed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Juan José Arévalo elected to the presidency in the first clean election in the nation’s history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Col. Jacobo Arbenz becomes Minister of Defense, Major Francisco Arana becomes Chief of the Armed Forces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1944-50</td>
<td>Administration of Juan José Arévalo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>New constitution written, giving tutelary political role to the military</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>Major Francisco Arana assassinated, Col. Jacobo Arbenz suspected of involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Communist party of Guatemala, Partido Guatemalteco del Trabajo (PGT), formed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>Jacobo Arbenz elected to the presidency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950-54</td>
<td>Administration of Jacobo Arbenz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>Jacobo Arbenz begins agrarian reform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954-86</td>
<td>Military rule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>Jacobo Arbenz ousted through invasion/coup d’etat led by Col. Castillo Armas, end of democratic era</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Movimiento Demócratico Nacional (MDN) formed by Col. Castillo Armas to consolidate the counterrevolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954-57</td>
<td>Administration of Col. Castillo Armas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>New constitution written, setting the stage for institutional military rule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>Col. Castillo Armas assassinated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958-63</td>
<td>Administration of Gen. Miguel Ydígoras Fuentes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>Fidel Castro’s guerrilla movement ousts the military government of Fulgencio Batista in Cuba</td>
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<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>Movimiento de Liberación Nacional (MLN) breaks away from MDN</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unsuccessful junior officer coup against Gen. Ydígoras Fuentes; Lt. Luis August Turcios Lima and Lt. Marco Antonio Yon Sosa found the Fuerzas Armadas Rebeldes (FAR) and Movimiento Revolucionario 13 Noviembre (MR-13), respectively, to fight for social revolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960-1996</td>
<td>Guatemalan civil war</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963-66</td>
<td>Administration of Gen. Enrique Peralta Azurdia</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Partido Institucional Democrática (PID) formed by Gen. Enrique Peralta Azurdia</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of parties reduced by decree to only four</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966-70</td>
<td>Julio Méndez Montenegro, a civilian, wins the presidency through a clean election, but takes office only after signing a pact with the military</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970-74</td>
<td>Administration of Gen. Manuel Arano Osorio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>Adolfo Mijango López, leader of the Revolutionary Democratic Union (URD), assassinated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Revolutionary movement Organización del Pueblo en Armas (ORPA) formed (originally under the name Organización, adopting ORPA in 1979)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>Revolutionary movement Ejército Guerrilero de los Pobres (EGP) formed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>Gen. Efrain Ríos Montt runs for president on the Christian Democratic ticket, presumably wins but is denied office through fraud, with Gen. Kjell Laugerud</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>President/Leader</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1974-78</td>
<td>Assuming the presidency instead</td>
<td>Administration of Gen. Kjell Eugenio Laugerud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978-82</td>
<td>Administration of Gen. Romeo Lucas Garcia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>Alberto Fuentes Mohr, leader of the Social Democratic Party (PSD), assassinated</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>Manuel Colom Argueta, leader of the United Revolutionary Front (FUR), assassinated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>Leadership of the labor organization, <em>Central Nacional de Trabajadores</em> (CNT), disappeared by police and military forces</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>Unified guerrilla movement, <em>Unidad Revolucionaria Nacional Guatemalteca</em> (URNG), formed bringing together the FAR, EGP, ORPA, and PGT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982-83</td>
<td>Gen. Efraín Ríos Montt chosen to head new military junta</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 3, 1985</td>
<td>Transitional presidential election, 1st round</td>
<td>Jorge Serrano Elias, Mario Sandoval Alarcón, and Alejandro Maldonado Aguirre run for president</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 8, 1985</td>
<td>Transitional presidential election, 2nd round; Vinicio Cerezo (PDCG) elected to the presidency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986-present</td>
<td>Civilian electoral democracy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 14, 1986</td>
<td>Vinicio Cerezo inaugurated. Civilian control of the presidency instituted</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Daniel Barillas, leader of the Christian Democrats, assassinated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Jorge Serrano Elias and Leonel Hernández Cardona run for president. Jorge Serrano Elias elected to the presidency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991-1993</td>
<td>Administration of Jorge Serrano Elias</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 25, 1993</td>
<td>Jorge Serrano Elias stages auto-golpe</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1, 1993</td>
<td>Jorge Serrano Elias resigns the presidency and departs Guatemala</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Andrade Díaz-Durán, former Colonel Carlos Agusto Morales Villatoro, and former Generals Mario Lopez Fuentes, José Alejandro Azurdia Gramajo, and Angel Aníbal Guevara run for president</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Former General Efraín Ríos Montt runs for president</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Former Colonel Hector Rosales and Former General Otto Perez Molina run for president</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Former General Otto Perez Molina elected to the presidency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-present</td>
<td>Administration of President Otto Perez Molina</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 7

**El Salvador: Short-Circuiting Recycled Dictators**

Military dominance of politics and government in El Salvador served to maintain the interests of a small class of wealthy elites. Whether through repression of opposition parties and rural organizing, or through outright manipulation of elections, the Salvadoran army controlled politics from 1931, when Gen. Maximiliano Hernández Martínez was installed in a coup, to 1980, when the military formally handed government over to civilian authorities. Military rule was not without its challenges, however. The officer corps was never fully unified on policymaking nor on the fundamental matter of what sustained its power and the economic system it sought to uphold. Tensions between the minute landholding class and the vast majority of the population—landless and poor—produced two impulses for the army that would play out in the decades from the 1930s to the 1980s. Some factions saw repression of any opposition as the only method to maintain control, while others recognized the need for concessions and reform in order to keep revolutionary conflict at bay. Successive military administrations utilized a mix of the two strategies based on the conditions of the country at the time to stay in power, but any military president’s fellow officers were close by, ready to step in if they felt he was getting the formula wrong. And they often did. Thus, expression of the reform versus anti-reform political cleavage was channeled into the military institution itself, and the conditions of exclusionary government meant there was never a sustained period of civilian democratic rule in El Salvador prior to the 1980 transition. Military control over politics and government meant recycled dictators were on hand to contest presidential elections in the new democratic era, as expected for a country with a dominant military-political class that would seek to further its participation in government once the transition was made.
As in Guatemala, the Salvadoran military withdrew from power in the context of widespread civil war. In the 1970s, after a series of fraudulent elections and increasing repression, guerrilla groups formed and took the battle to the armed forces, launching a “final offensive” in January 1981 that turned out instead to be only the opening salvo in a more than decade-long war that would prove enormously destructive and cost the lives of 80,000 people. Such intense violence and uncertainty for the armed forces would not seem to be conducive to the military loosening its grip on the country’s fate, but the war itself meant a new reality for the institution. The officer corps could no longer indulge the divisions and distractions brought on by governance if they were to prosecute the war effectively. The insurgency put the Salvadoran army on its heels in its early days. In the wake of the 1979 Sandinista victory in neighboring Nicaragua, the United States was determined not to see another Central American country fall to the communists and so stepped in with overwhelming support for El Salvador. The country’s financial and military dependence on the United States came at a cost for the elite system, however. American pressure ensured that the democratic opening in the early 1980s would be different from the others in the nation’s history, which had been so easily rescinded. Long-term control meant the armed forces and economic elites had much to lose by giving up unilateral power. Thus, those leaving power sought to return through whatever means available, including the ballot box.\footnote{Military dominance of politics and the threat to ex-regime actors’ interests explain the high rate of recycled dictator participation in presidential elections in the country.}

\footnote{The country was still vulnerable to coups as the transition began. The junior officers who had taken over in 1979 were effectively marginalized by a “coup within a coup” that returned hardliners to power in 1980 (Keogh 1984). And Roberto d’Aubuisson, a former Army Major who had been cashiered the previous year was found to be plotting a coup to oust even these hardliners (Stanley 1996). Simultaneously, he became involved in transitional politics, founding the Alianza Republicana Nacionalista (ARENA) party in 1981 and getting elected to the Constituent Assembly in 1982. Though competing for, and holding, power in the new system, he demonstrated a willingness to subvert democracy in order to return to the status quo ante. As president of the Assembly he attempted a vote for}
This chapter proceeds as follows: First, I demonstrate how the theory of the presence of recycled dictator competitors in presidential elections applies to the case of El Salvador. Second, I establish the nature of military rule and the long-running historical pattern of political openings being offered by one faction of the army only to see another rescind it. \(^{583}\) Third, I discuss the civil war and transition to civilian government in the 1980s, effectively El Salvador’s first experience with open, civilian democracy. Fourth, I present the recycled dictator candidates for president in the country from the 1984 transitional election onward, noting the phenomenon of individuals associated with military government being candidates across the ideological spectrum. \(^ {584}\) I conclude with a discussion of the process by which El Salvador escaped the fate of having ex-regime actors involved in presidential contests for decades after the transition and the potential implications of the departure of ex-regime actors in a low continuity-high threat environment much more swiftly than in neighboring Guatemala. \(^ {585}\)

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its dissolution. He ran for president in 1984 on the ARENA ticket though it was clear his views had not changed a great deal from his coup-plotting days of 1980.

\(^ {583}\) El Salvador experienced this cruel cycle of hope for meaningful systemic change replaced by more of the same no fewer than six times in its modern history (1931, 1944, 1948, 1960, 1972, 1979).

\(^ {584}\) Continuous military control of government for 50 years, combined with the attempted openings noted above, meant “reformist” juntas brought in civilian leaders who served (often very briefly) alongside military officers before resigning due to the recognition that the army would not move on reforms after all, being overthrown in a countercoup, or otherwise marginalized. Nevertheless, it leaves the result of having civilian leaders on the political left, such as Rubén Zamora, Guillermo Manuel Ungo Revelo, and René Fortin Magaña technically having served in government during military rule.

\(^ {585}\) These civilian leaders who had been part of fleeting reformist military governments, running on tickets of the left such as Acción Democrática (AD) and Convergencia Democrática (CD)—forerunners to the FMLN before it was legalized—and the FMLN itself, continued to be candidates through the 1999 presidential election. But El Salvador was done with its textbook recycled dictators after the 1984 transitional election. This experience stands in sharp contrast to Guatemala’s recycled dictators who have yet to leave the presidential scene.
El Salvador and the Recycled Dictator

The level of democratic continuity available to a country and the level of threat posed to the interests of those associated with the former military government explain the presence of recycled dictators in contemporary post-military rule presidential elections across Latin America. In effect, countries with higher levels of democratic continuity will see fewer recycled dictators compete in presidential elections than those countries with less democratic continuity. And where the military and its allies stand to lose more by not being in power, ex-regime candidates present themselves for office at higher rates. Figure 7.1 categorizes the 12 countries in the study, placing El Salvador in the quadrant of low democratic continuity and high threat to ex-regime actors.

**Figure 7.1 Presence of Recycled Dictator Candidates by Country**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Democratic Continuity</th>
<th>Level of Threat to Former Regime Actors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Protest Candidacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Argentina, 4 (0.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Persistent Ex-regime Competition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Panama, 1 (1.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>El Salvador, 6 (3.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Guatemala, 12 (3.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Return of Democratic Party Representatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brazil, 4 (0.1)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chile, 2 (0.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uruguay, 1 (0.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peru, 3 (0.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed Competition</td>
<td>Ecuador, 3 (0.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Paraguay, 2 (1.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Honduras, 4 (3.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bolivia, 9 (3.2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Numbers in parentheses are recycled dictator candidates per 1000 potential candidates as calculated by cataloging all cabinet ministers, junta members, presidents under military rule, and estimating the officer corps of the country as 10% of total armed forces personnel. This is discussed at greater length in Chapter One. Integers after the country name are the number of actual candidates who stood for election, thereby distinguished from the number of candidacies which counts the same individual’s campaigns separately. For example, General Hugo Bánzer of Bolivia is one candidate but because he ran for president four times, he is counted four times in the number of recycled dictator candidacies.
El Salvador’s political history is one of a long tug-of-war between repression and concession within an army-oligarch alliance. From the colonial era onward, wealth has been concentrated in the hands of a small elite. This pattern was intensified from the late 19th century when the country moved firmly toward a monoculture coffee economy that saw the further aggregation of landholdings into large plantations. The vast gulf between the few wealthy and everybody else in the country, however, was never sustainable. Upholding this system required repression of rights and exclusion from government. But these pressures, with no potential recourse for change, only exacerbated the problem. The history of military government (1931-80) in El Salvador is bookended by revolutionary uprisings against the system—Farabundo Marti’s 1932 communist revolt and the 1979-92 civil war. The intervening 50 years saw one military administration after another attempt to balance repression and concession in order not to give away so much as to lose control of this warped system nor remove all hope of reform within it so as to provoke violent revolution. Thus, prior to the 1980 transition, El Salvador had essentially no experience with civilian democratic government. Each potential democratic opening proved short lived as military factions favoring reform were quickly ousted or sidelined by anti-reform factions. For much of the period of military rule, competition was largely intra-military.

The armed forces were the dominant formal political actor in the country for 50 years, acting through the personalist dictatorship of Gen. Maximiliano Hernández Martínez (1931-44); official parties, the Partido Revolucionario de Unificación (PRUD, 1948-60) and the Partido de Conciliación Nacional (PCN, 1961-80); ‘opposition’ parties, the Partido de Acción Revolucionario (PAR, 1944-68) and the Partido Popular Salvadoreño (PPS, 1965-84); and
smaller party organizations that carried the ambitions of a variety of officers in their attempts at
the presidency under the managed elections of the military era. Similar to Guatemala in its
post-1954 regime, El Salvador constructed a system that did not shut down politics entirely (as
military regimes in such countries as Chile and Argentina attempted) but rather defined politics
as solely their domain for much of the period. Presidential succession at times took a form not
miles away from the manner of selection in the pre-military oligarchic era of “an election in
which opponents were allowed to participate but not allowed to win.” At other times, elections
were more meaningful. The armed forces established in 1944 an electoral regime in an effort to
legitimize their rule through demonstrating popular support and to channel state resources
through the PRUD. This latter rationale for articulating political interests through an official
military party was even more important under the PCN, founded after the 1960 coup. The PCN
saw itself as presiding over a one-party state, emulating Mexico’s PRI. An electoral system
would also provide a small measure of institutional independence from economic elites for
reforms some military leaders saw as necessary to stave off violent challenges to the state.

What best describes the system of military control in this lengthy period in El Salvador is
inconsistency. The desire to find the right balance between repression and concession meant
sometimes a presidential election would be free and fair—as in 1950 and 1967—and sometimes
it would not be—as in 1956 and 1972. And, intra-military competition was not limited to the
niceties of electoral politics. The country saw numerous coups in the era of military rule, with

586 The PCN survived as a party until 2011 when it was deregistered for not having crossed the required
threshold vote share in the previous presidential contest (2009) in order to maintain legality, but it gave up
the presidency in 1980 and therefore ceased being the official state party.

587 White 1973, 90.

588 Baloyra 1982.
successful changes in government on no fewer than seven occasions from 1931 to 1980, with innumerable coup attempts and plots in between.\textsuperscript{589} These often took the form of junior officers seizing power intending to pursue reform only to then face a countercoup. These reform efforts often sought to hold elections, with some even intending to allow the participation of leftist

\textsuperscript{589} Baloyra 1982; Luttwak 1979.
parties including the Partido Comunista Salvadoreña (PCS).\textsuperscript{590} In general, though, the reform/anti-reform political cleavage was a matter of degree in which reformers were looking to tip the scales toward greater concession, rather than abolishing military rule altogether.

**Table 7.1 Successful Military Coups and their Reformist Orientation in El Salvador, 1931-1984**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reformist</th>
<th>Anti-Reformist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 1931</td>
<td>Oct. 1944</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 1948</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 1960</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Salvadoran military, having enjoyed long-term institutional control of government, held a privileged position in the country. Indeed, writing in 1973, Alastair White argued, military elites and civilian moneyed interests “coalesced to form a single ruling class” which had effectively been in command of the country from the 1930s onward.\textsuperscript{591} The military stood to lose this level of control by leaving power. Competing factions of officers had shown themselves eager to defend the status quo for decades as essentially all of the previous potential military-led democratic openings were shut down by more conservative elements of the army. The 1972 election was the most dramatic of these moments in the late military-rule era. Fair balloting practices had grown in the late 1960s, with the 1967 presidential election considered a meaningful contest in which the opposition Christian Democrats performed well, though still

\textsuperscript{590} The PCS was technically the oldest party in the country, founded in 1925, though it spent most of its existence formally barred from operating.

\textsuperscript{591} White 1973, 103.
falling short of victory. Their prospects in 1972 had grown and parties entered the race expecting a repeat of the legal conduct seen in 1967. As José Napoleon Duarte of the PDC was leading in the ballot count on election night, however, the regime shut down media outlets and the next morning announced the victory of the PCN candidate, Col. Arturo Molina. The armed forces were not ready to give up their position. But, as in Guatemala, the civil war itself put great pressure on the military to focus on defeating the guerrillas on the battlefield while leaving government in the hands of civilians. The strategic departure would also serve to undermine the insurgency by restoring the idea that change could come through the ballot box. The conflict brought the attention of the United States, who eventually held considerable weight in decision-making in the country. These factors contributed to military withdrawal from government in El Salvador. Yet, as with each of the other episodes of attempted reform, not all were in agreement. Figures such as Maj. Roberto d’Aubuisson immediately entered the new political system to continue the fight for rightist interests and to perpetuate the violent repression of leftist threats.

El Salvador illustrates how the theory of recycled dictators’ presence in presidential elections operates under conditions of low democratic continuity and high threat to the interests of ex-regime actors. The inconsistency of democratic practice in the country meant considerable challenges to political organizing and the loss of military control over politics and government combined to create an electoral arena in which those prepared to compete were those associated with the armed forces or its various governments through the years. The country diverges, however, from the experience of neighboring Guatemala. The Salvadoran case underscores two important, though not entirely unique, issues for our understanding of the phenomenon: (1) how the depth of control a military may enjoy over government and politics can mean that practically everyone in the political class—those who would be ready to compete in the new democratic
system—may have been at some point co-opted into military rule, as being involved in

government in the 1931-80 era was to be involved in military government; and (2) how a country

that experiences conditions that predispose it to high levels of participation by ex-regime
actors—low democratic continuity and high level of threat to the departing regime—may escape
the long-term pattern of their continued influence in presidential elections. The collapse of the
centrst Christian Democratic Party, the polarized nature of political competition in the country,
and pressure from the United States for moderation, combined to lead the right-wing ARENA
party to make the strategic decision to jettison its ex-regime actors and modernize its image,
putting the past behind it, as quickly as possible once its founder, Roberto d’Aubuisson died.592

Military Rule Swung between Reform and Repression

The military ruled El Salvador in one form or another from 1931 to 1980. The persistent
tension between those in favor of reform and those opposed, manifest itself in the
factionalization of the armed forces. Coups, countercoups, and changes in the mix of repression
and concession meant a series of political openings in this 50-year period, even as the military
maintained control throughout the era. Brief windows of democratic opportunity were quickly
closed, as noted in Table 7.2, which makes the successful shift toward democracy in the 1980s

592 The fact that the PCN candidate, José Francisco Guerrero, would not throw his support to the ARENA
party in the run-off vote of the 1984 election between Roberto d’Aubuisson (ARENA) and José Napoleon
Duarte (PDC), is widely considered to have given Duarte the victory. Guerrero won 19% of the vote to
d’Aubuisson’s 30% and Duarte’s 43% (with minor candidates taking another 7.5%). The run-off vote put
Duarte at 53.6% and d’Aubuisson at 46.4%. Guerrero, as a candidate of moderation, refused to explicitly
support d’Aubuisson because of his extremism. The PCN also moved away from running high-level
former officials as presidential candidates, though as the party of the former military government and
dependent on those resources for its operations, it ceased to be a major force in presidential elections after
the transitional contest and was formally disbanded by the Supreme Court in 2011 for failing to reach the
3% threshold in the 2004 election to continue as a registered party, “El Salvador Supreme Court disbands
two parties,” British Broadcast Corporation, 30 April, 2011.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Incumbent</th>
<th>Political Opportunity</th>
<th>Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 1931</td>
<td>Pío Romero Bosque (traditional oligarch)</td>
<td>Free elections for president</td>
<td>Arturo Araujo elected president in clean contest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>Gen. Fidel Sánchez Hernández (PCN)</td>
<td>Continued free elections</td>
<td>Col. Arturo Armando Molina (PCN) elected in fraudulent contest after it was clear José Napoleon Duarte (PDC) was winning on election night</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
all the more remarkable. As in Guatemala, the armed forces oversaw a period of elections in which military officers dominated the competitions. The Salvadoran military successfully instituted its power through official parties—the Partido Revolucionario de Unificación (PRUD) followed by the Partido de Conciliación Nacional (PCN)—that competed in elections against ‘opposition’ parties, also formed by fellow officers. The conduct of these elections, however, was inconsistent. Ruling elites relied on repression and periodically made concessions, such as new social programs or infrastructure investment in order to keep potential opposition in check.\footnote{White 1973.} Elections were also part of the concession scheme. Free and fair elections were held in the mid to late 1960s.\footnote{Competition was still limited due to the prohibition of leftist parties and restrictions on organizing, particularly in the countryside, but Legislative Assembly elections in these years and the 1967 presidential election, are regarded as having at least been conducted without systematic fraud: Webre 1979; Wells 1967.} When the Christian Democratic Party successfully played by the military regime’s rules, gaining strength, legislative seats, and mayoral posts in these elections, it looked poised to take the presidency via the ballot box in 1972 only to see the government resort to fraud to deny José Napoleon Duarte’s victory. This pattern of openings and closings was nothing new.

El Salvador’s economic and political system, beginning in the late 19\textsuperscript{th} century, was dependent on coffee growing. Landholding was consolidated in a small planter class, while large numbers of the population were landless peasants who experienced slave-labor conditions on
large plantations.\textsuperscript{595} At this time, the military was essentially a rural police force to keep order on these estates.\textsuperscript{596} With the international growth of communism in the early 20\textsuperscript{th} century, El Salvador became more vulnerable to agitation that could change this system. The \textit{Partido Comunista Salvadoreña} (PCS) was formed in 1925, with Farabundo Martí as one of its founders, whose namesake would be invoked by the guerrilla army of the 1980s and today’s political party—\textit{Frente Farabundo Martí de Liberación Nacional} (FMLN)—and began to organize in opposition to the traditional oligarchic leaders. The first political opening came in 1931, when Don Pío Romero Bosque allowed a free election for president. Arturo Araujo won the January 1931 contest on the \textit{Partido Laborista Salvadoreño} party—an organization modeled after the British Labor Party.\textsuperscript{597} As an agrarian monoculture economy, El Salvador was vulnerable to external shocks and price changes in that single crop. The Great Depression hit the country particularly hard, and thus at the same time democracy was taking shape, the economy was collapsing and bringing with it widespread unrest. Seeking to relieve some of these tensions, Araujo called for municipal elections for December 1931 in which even Communist candidates would be allowed to compete.\textsuperscript{598} Before the elections could be held, however, the anti-communist army officers stepped in and overthrew Araujo.\textsuperscript{599} Thus, after just nine months in

\textsuperscript{595} Castellanos 2001.

\textsuperscript{596} White 1973, 94.

\textsuperscript{597} Araujo’s attitude toward reform is murky. Alastair White (1973) notes that Araujo identified strongly with the Labor movement from his time studying in England, but in reference to expectations in his own government, White argues that some of Araujo’s subalterns in the campaign may have made promises, but “there is no evidence that he wanted to carry them out” (98).

\textsuperscript{598} Communists had been excluded from the earlier 1931 contest: Anderson 2001, 125-127.

\textsuperscript{599} Castro Morán 1983.
office, El Salvador’s first freely elected president was ousted and his Vice President, Gen. Maximiliano Hernández Martínez, was installed in his place.

Though they were delayed by a month, the municipal elections went ahead, still permitting the participation of communist candidates. Those who won, however, were not allowed to take their posts. Rescinding the political opportunity this way proved to be the catalyst for a communist revolt under Farabundo Martí that had been in the works in the preceding months. Martí was captured immediately before the rebellion was to take place. The uprising succeeded in seizing government buildings in several towns in the west of the country, but the victory was short lived. The army regained control within a few days and proceeded with “mass executions of suspects, which could often mean anyone wearing Indian dress or indeed almost anyone at all.” As many as 20,000 peasants were killed. This first political reversal was also one of the most severe. Within less than a year, the country went from starting down a democratic path to politically motivated mass killing. Gen. Hernández Martínez would rule for 13 years, overthrown in the next potential democratic opening.

The political experience of Guatemala and El Salvador paralleled each other from 1931 to 1944. Gen. Hernández Martínez represented the first modern military dictatorship in El Salvador, just as Gen. Jorge Ubico did in Guatemala. The Salvadoran leader was brought down by a nationwide strike prompted by the repression that followed a bloody, failed two-day military coup. The overthrow preceded and heavily influenced events in Guatemala. By mid-1944, both countries had brought down the 13-year reign of their respective dictators. There was

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601 For more on the 1932 uprising and ensuing massacre, see: Anderson 2001; Figueroa Salazar 2009.

considerable optimism about the prospect of democracy in both countries. In the months following these dramatic events, new political movements organized and prepared for presidential elections. At this point, however, their experiences diverged. A civilian physician, Arturo Romero, was expected to win the election, leading anti-reform officers to step in, ousting the caretaker military ruler. As in 1931, the election was delayed but went forward, though as a meaningless contest in which the army candidate, Gen. Salvador Castaneda Castro was essentially assured victory. Consequently, while Guatemala experienced its Ten Years of Spring, El Salvador’s potential democratization was truncated.

Military control over the political system meant increasing factionalism, as the officer corps was not unified on its approach in how to keep order. Hardliners won out in the 1931 and 1944 episodes, but Salvadoran junior officers were keeping an eye on growing radicalism in Guatemala and saw limited reform as the only way to prevent revolutionary attempts against the vastly unequal economic system in their own country. As a consequence, reformist officers seized power in 1948, establishing a military-civilian junta committed to institutionalizing military rule while channeling opposition into the system. The Partido Revolucionario de Unificación (PRUD) was set up as an official state party under military control, specifically the stewardship of the 1948-50 junta leader, Lt. Col. Oscar Osorio, who would be elected president in the 1950 contest. This election was conducted fairly, but the only real opposition was another military party, the Partido de Acción Revolucionario (PAR). The government of Oscar

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604 The 1948-50 junta allowed for the formation of political parties and trade unions, though any revolutionary group was still subject to repression, and political organizing remained prohibited in rural areas. Thus, the “revolutionary” nature of the junta and the PRUD was very limited, and as Webre (1979) argues, since the “rewards of electoral participation under the PRUD were few, there was little incentive for these parties to seek coherence or permanence” (22). And prior to the 1950 election, the PAR itself
Osorio—first in the form of the junta and second in his 1950-56 administration—attempted to carry out “controlled revolution” through corporatist measures to preempt external revolutionary efforts.\textsuperscript{605} The political opening, then, was rather limited, but the legitimacy of the 1950 election at least suggested potential for fair competition. But even this minor improvement did not hold. The PRUD won every seat in the legislature for the 1950-60 period as other parties were either barred from competing or withdrew in protest, and the 1956 presidential election was blatantly fraudulent—Col. Lemus (PRUD) won with 93% of the vote.\textsuperscript{606}

Having no popular legitimacy, Col. Lemus relied heavily on repression to stay in power and demonstrated to reformist officers that the PRUD was far from what was necessary to bring change to the country. In 1960, then, junior officers once again took power in a reformist coup, this time establishing a military-civilian junta that brought in a handful of civilian political leaders, including René Fortín Magaña, an attorney who would go on to run for president in the 1984 transitional election. His time in office, along with the hope of reform, did not last long. This time, the political opening was rescinded by a countercoup in 1961 that instead presented a new opportunity for institutionalized military rule.\textsuperscript{607} The PRUD—dissolved by the 1960 junta—was in need of replacement, allowing the new leadership to create the PCN as a stronger state party, modeled after Mexico’s single-party system of the \textit{Partido Revolucionario Institucional} was recognized essentially as “little more than a personalistic vehicle of Col. [José Asencio] Menéndez” (Janda 1980, 631).

\textsuperscript{605} Baloyra 1982, 37; Wells 1967, 8.

\textsuperscript{606} Janda 1980, 626; Col. José María Lemus was elected president. During the campaign, Col. Osorio disqualified three contenders (two of whom were Army officers) and when the remaining two opposition candidates, Col. Rafael Carranza Amaya and Enrique Magaña Menéndez attempted to boycott the election, “the government ordered both…to continue campaigning” (Webre 1979, 23).

\textsuperscript{607} The military-civilian junta had promised free elections, and as in 1931, would allow the participation even of leftist parties, though the Communists remained an illegal party: White 1973, 106-107.
Following the pattern from 1948, the new leadership established the PCN in 1961, and Col. Julio A. Rivera, a member of the sitting junta, became president in the following year’s election (running essentially unopposed), just as Col. Osorio had done 12 years earlier.

Despite its short tenure in office, the 1960-61 revolutionary junta did have a lasting impact on the political situation in the country. The *Partido Demócrata Cristiano* (PDC) was formed in El Salvador in 1960 in anticipation of competing in the free elections the junta intended to oversee. Though the reformist junta was unseated and the election did not take place in the manner originally intended, the PDC became an important counterweight to the military. The Christian Democrats chose to compete within the military system and performed well. The regime under Col. Rivera proved surprisingly accommodating to political democracy. The new constitution established a form of proportional representation in the Legislative Assembly, putting an end to the days of 100% domination by the military institutional party. Regime ideology did not change, and the system was still slanted against challengers to the PCN, given that rural organizing was still prohibited and the PCN leveraged its control over state resources to boost its political position. The military seemed to have learned from the mistakes of the PRUD in that the new system allowed centrist opposition to operate within the military system, rather than pushing it out. The PDC performed well in the legislative elections of the 1960s and in the 1967 presidential election. The 1967 election saw fair balloting once again and civilian challengers from both the PDC and the PAR. Active-duty officers were still candidates on the

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608 For comparison to the PRI, see: Baloyra 1982.


PCN and Partido Popular Salvadoreño (PPS) tickets.\(^{611}\) The PCN candidate, Col. Fidel Sánchez Hernández, won the election, but its conduct was fair enough and the PDC performed well enough, that civilian reformers were optimistic about their future prospects and the potential for real democracy in the country.\(^{612}\)

Once again, however, political progress faced setbacks. In 1969, El Salvador went to war with Honduras.\(^{613}\) The conflict lasted only a few days, the Salvadoran Army’s initial advance being halted by logistical challenges and diplomatic intervention from the Organization of American States. Nevertheless, the war was viewed domestically as a great success for the armed forces, which had profound consequences for the inchoate democratic practices of 1960s El Salvador. In the first election following hostilities, the 1970 legislative contest, military candidates of the PCN performed very well, buoyed by the tide of nationalism and public perception that the armed forces were a competent fighting force.\(^{614}\) The war gave the PCN an issue to run on and forced the opposition to moderate their criticism of the military regime, for fear of looking unpatriotic. The 1970 election, as a fair contest, boosted military faith in its ability to win legitimate (if still restricted) elections and so the electoral opening of the 1960s carried forward into the 1972 presidential competition. The PCN had regained its status as the

\(^{611}\) Wells 1967.

\(^{612}\) Baloyra 1982.

\(^{613}\) The catalyst for El Salvador’s invasion of Honduras were a series of clashes between supporters of their respective national football sides during qualifying rounds for the 1970 World Cup, hence the name “Soccer War,” but problems between the two countries ran much deeper. For more on the causes of the conflict, see: Durham 1979.

\(^{614}\) Blutstein et al. 1971.
only competitive party. But the military had miscalculated, not recognizing that 1970 was a departure from the trend of rising support for the PDC and concomitant decline for the PCN.

By 1972, the success of the war had faded, and the conflict itself was producing serious repercussions as tens of thousands of Salvadoran peasants who had been living in Honduras were forced out of the country and returned to El Salvador, intensifying land pressures. The Christian Democratic Party under Jose Napoleón Duarte formed a multi-party alliance known as La Unión Nacional Opositora (UNO), garnered considerable support, and was expected to do well in the polls. This forecast proved accurate, and as the ballot count ticked higher for Duarte on election night, the army declared a media blackout and the next morning announced that PCN candidate, Col. Arturo Armando Molina, was the victor. Yet again, the path toward democratization had been blocked in El Salvador.

The obvious fraud angered and disillusioned civilians and reformist factions of the military. Days after the election, Col. Benjamín Mejía attempted a coup in order to install Duarte as president. The coup failed—partly because Duarte, himself, urged soldiers to remain loyal to the government, not wanting to provoke further chaos. The coup fit the pattern of the long tug-of-war between reformers and anti-reformers in the military-dominated political realm. This division within the armed forces was not new, but it was growing more dangerous as the institution started to lose its grip on the country.

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615 Of 261 municipal posts, the PCN won 252 (96.5%) and 34 of 52 seats (65%) in the Legislative Assembly: Departamento de Relaciones Publicas de Casa Presidencial 1970; IPU 1970.

616 Russell 1984, 47.


618 Schmidt 1983, 83.
Democratic expectations had grown in the late 1960s given repeated fair conduct of elections and the rising capacity and electoral performance of the PDC. Revoking the opportunity for change within the system led opposition to withdraw from state-centric competition for power.\(^{619}\) Popular organizations had formed in the early 1970s—still at great peril, given that they were formally illegal—to advocate for better wages, land redistribution, and improved labor conditions. After the 1972 fraud, organizations formed explicitly taking up arms to fight the regime.\(^{620}\) Thus, the cycle of governments giving and taking away political opportunity finally caught up with the military.

As the security situation deteriorated, a variety of military actors sought ways to alleviate the crisis. In 1976, in consultation with the United States Agency for International Development, Col. Arturo Molina announced a pilot program for land reform, intended to open landholding opportunities in the departments of San Miguel and Usulután.\(^{621}\) The effort met with resistance from landholders and fellow officers and failed to make much of an impact. The 1977 election brought Gen. Carlos Romero into office through yet another fraudulent poll, followed by a massacre of opposition demonstrators in San Salvador.\(^{622}\) And repression of popular organizations continued unabated in the countryside.\(^{623}\) Junior officers made one last attempt to stave off revolutionary conflict by taking power and embracing revolution themselves.\(^{624}\) The

\(^{619}\) Goodwin 2001.

\(^{620}\) For discussion of specific groups, their identities, and their goals, see: Anderson 1988, 79-84.

\(^{621}\) Armstrong and Shenk 1982, 83.

\(^{622}\) Russell 1984, 49.

\(^{623}\) Danner 1993, 11-12.

\(^{624}\) Fitch 1998, 46.
Oficiales Juventud (Military Youth) saw a government weakened by illegitimacy and growing domestic opposition that could not expect to survive in its existing form.

Junior officers ousted Gen. Romero in 1979 amid increasing political violence and the threat of a widespread guerrilla insurgency. This coup initially provided a new opportunity for implementing meaningful reforms. The leaders of the coup, Colonels Jaime Gutiérrez and Adolfo Majano, intended to establish a civilian junta and completely withdraw the military from government in order to halt the deteriorating political situation. The reformist coup was expected to create an open government no longer under military control and to put the country on the path to democratization. Instead, the reformist officers were marginalized, and by the end of the year the junta had been reorganized to give power solely to “old-guard loyalists” determined to prevent change. The collapse of the original junta spelled the end of the concerted effort to reform the state and avert a looming civil war. With the persistence of a failing regime and seemingly little hope for non-violent systemic change, rebel groups became more brazen in their behavior and began to organize for a coordinated struggle. The conservative element of the military continued to hold on to power. This final episode was a microcosm of the military experience in government with one faction pushing for limited change that they could control while another refused any alteration to the centuries-old economic system. And in the end, failing to choose between one path or the other created a volatile situation in which expectations were raised and then destroyed.

Regardless of the reform effort or lack thereof, the Salvadoran military, like that of Guatemala, created its own political system. From Gen. Maximiliano Hernández Martínez’s Pro-Patria to the PRUD and PCN, army officers used party labels for their rule. The military held

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625 Bonner 1984, 147.
626 Haggerty 1990.
elections and tried to channel competition into a system of their own making, rather than trying to do away with politics altogether as militaries attempted during their rule in Chile and Argentina. The pattern of military officers running for government meant not just a supply of recycled dictators at the end of military rule but leaders accustomed to doing so.

**El Salvador Descended into Civil War and Transitioned to Democracy**

As in Guatemala, El Salvador eventually faced widespread civil conflict that threatened the survival of the state. The mix of repression and concession employed by military rulers throughout the 20th century in El Salvador successfully kept the armed forces in power in one form or another for 50 years, but it was always a precarious system. Repression served to keep the population fearful and disorganized. Early windows of reform created hope but were so fleeting or so limited in who was permitted to participate that they did not have considerable long-term implications for democratic expectations. The increase in democratic practice in the 1960s, however, was long enough and clean enough to allow for a political opposition to rise and to expect fair outcomes in elections. Thus, the return to a fraudulent system in the 1970s shut off the safety valve of meaningful elections and pushed opposition movements out of the system and into open rebellion. Simultaneously, the factionalism and inconsistency in military behavior underscored the primary failing of the Salvadoran military in power: as a traditional semi-repressive regime, it lacked the coercive power to subjugate the population effectively and meanwhile also had little mass appeal. Revolutionary movements promised changes to the exclusionary political and economic system. The severity of the threat and the need to counter it on the battlefield and in the allegiance of the population led the military to a counterinsurgency

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627 Wickham-Crowley 1992, 140.
approach that focused on the root causes of the war. Each side offered incentives and employed violence in order to win loyalty and establish control. The military and the insurgents fought each other to a standstill for a decade. The war brought two major political consequences: (1) military withdrawal from government that would set the stage for recycled dictators to seek power through meaningful elections, and (2) incorporation of the FMLN insurgency as a legal party that would carry its fight off the battlefield and onto the campaign trail.

The transfer of power in El Salvador, as in Guatemala, was designed and implemented in the context of ongoing civil war. The counterinsurgency campaigns in these two countries intended to undermine support for the guerrilla combatants as well as facing them in combat. Military withdrawal from power sought to limit mass support for the insurgents and to enable the military to direct their efforts solely toward prosecuting the wars. Nevertheless, widespread violence and political divergence polarized the masses and elites alike. The military was not unified in its decision-making as the transition approached, just as it had not been in the preceding decades. Some factions favored reform and withdrawal from government while others opposed it. The potential threat to the interests of the military and their wealthy civilian allies was clear. Similar to the situation in Guatemala, the Salvadoran military, essentially for the first time in its institutional history, would face uncertainty by not being in power. Given the long-standing pattern of countercoups against any reform effort, hardliner factions of the armed forces perceived a clear threat to their interests in leaving government.

The military headed for the exits in part due to these internal divisions—as they reduced cohesion and undermined combat effectiveness. On the domestic front, military withdrawal from government signaled a significant change in the nation’s power structure, intended to give the

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629 Fitch 1998, 46.
citizenry reason to believe they could achieve systemic change without revolution. On the international front, the military finally leaving power would keep aid from the United States flowing. As an ideological conflict that intensified in the days after communist success under the Sandinistas in neighboring Nicaragua, and as guerrilla war raged in Guatemala as well, the United States was determined to keep El Salvador from falling to a communist insurgency. U.S. support kept the country financially solvent and militarily viable, and gave the U.S. important leverage over the armed forces in ensuring that any tendency toward rescinding the political opening of the early 1980s would remain dormant.

The war increased the volatility of the situation for members of the old regime. In the 1980-84 transitional period, the outcome of the war was far from clear. Violent opposition to military government intensified in the late 1970s as the route of legitimate political contestation had been closed. Popular organizations proliferated as did outright, armed rebel movements. Persistence of the old regime through discrediting events gave citizens reason to be dissatisfied with their government, and the emergence of the communist Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) as a united force, offered an alternative to the decades-long military control of politics.

The FMLN was a militarily formidable force, with as many as 4,000 active guerrillas and 5,000 militia members at the outset of the war. Though the military eventually would have far

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630 According to American military observers, at the outset of the conflict, an FMLN victory seemed likely: Bacevich and Hallums 1988, v.

631 For example, the Fuerzas Populares de Liberaciòn (FPL, 1970), the Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo (ERP, 1972), and the Fuerzas Armadas de Resistencia Nacional (FARN, 1975) all formed with the intention of pursuing armed conflict. Disparate guerrilla movements would formally unify as the Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN) in 1980 (Anderson 1988, 78-80).

632 Montgomery 1982, 144.
greater numbers of soldiers in its ranks, in the early stages of the conflict, the FMLN was near parity with the Salvadoran armed forces.\footnote{Prior to the conflict, American observers viewed the Salvadoran military as “a militia of 11,000 that had no mission,” Bacevich and Hallums 1988, 24.} Military capabilities and armed strength would not easily translate to victory for either side. The Salvadoran military and the FMLN were competing for the allegiance of the masses. The revolutionary movement would have to demonstrate coherence and readiness to govern in order to sway popular support in its favor.\footnote{Wickham-Crowley 1992, 162.} Meanwhile, the military would have to convince the public they were fighting for more than their own survival. The 1979 coup made important strides in this direction. Despite its ultimate failure to bring reform, the coup destroyed the military-oligarchy alliance that had maintained the status quo for nearly 50 years.\footnote{Bonner 1984, 147.} With sizable numbers of the officer corps pressing for immediate reform, the oligarchy could no longer trust the military to uphold its interests, and so the relationship disintegrated. By the outbreak of civil war, the military had disrupted the old order and was on the path to permitting democratization.

The FMLN employed a strategy that was intentionally destructive and meant to create a dire situation that only an extreme solution could change.\footnote{Wood 2000.} They concentrated their efforts on major economic targets and infrastructure in order to reduce national income used to fund the army and to occupy soldiers with guard duty so that they could not take the offensive.\footnote{Russell 1984, 135.} The strategy was successful in its direct intent, as rebel forces destroyed two important bridges in the early stages of the war, crippling the east-west transport network vital for both the economy and
The peasant population bore the brunt of the fighting, as government forces invaded rebel-occupied territory in which the military targeted civilians believed to support the FMLN, more so than pursuing guerrillas themselves. With such policies, peasant allegiance toward either group was strained. The polarizing tactics of the FMLN negatively affected the insurgents’ ability to gain the loyalty of the non-peasant population, and the military withdrawal from politics would provide a moderate government with the potential for mass appeal. The ideological nature of the war and the intensity of the conflict had lasting consequences on democratic competition. As long as the political left was unable to stand for election—either because they had not given up on the revolutionary route or because they were not yet a coherent political force—the centrist Christian Democrats were able to lead the country. By the 1990s, however, political preferences began to more closely resemble the ideological contours of the civil war, with a diminished independent political center.

The conflict brought the attention of the United States, who had a profound effect on the war and the political situation in the post-transition era. The Cold War environment heightened U.S. alarm against potential communist victory, and the U.S. government would do everything possible to support the armed forces against the guerrilla movement. The role of the United

638 Anderson 1988, 81-84; Russell 1984, 135. This pattern of violence is consistent with theoretical expectations of conflict in civil war: Kalyvas 2006.

639 The Carter administration made a point of suspending aid for human rights violations in a few particular episodes, including in response to the murder of four American churchwomen in December 1980. U.S. assistance was reinstated only days later, though, with the rationale that sufficient progress was being made in investigating the crime. And, in truth, support came from so many sources such as International Military Education and Training (IMET) grants and Foreign Military Sales (FMS), that the
States weighed heavily on the decisions of the guerrillas, themselves. Knowing that incoming President Reagan would be more bellicose in his anti-communism than President Carter, the FMLN launched its blitz on January 10, 1981—days before President Reagan’s inauguration—seeking to win the war quickly and thereby preempt any change that would come with the new administration. The assault failed to achieve this goal and the war carried on until 1992.

Both the Carter and Reagan administrations approached the deteriorating political situation and early stages of the war with incentives and pressures to affect change in El Salvador. American military assistance was intended to be conditional on the Salvadoran human rights record, but reliably enforcing such terms proved difficult. By the time Ronald Reagan took office, the effort to tie overseas assistance to political and economic reform had taken hold within the U.S. Congress, which led to the process of certification. Despite knowledge of government violence against the population, Congress authorized $82 million in military assistance and $182.2 million in economic assistance in 1982. Deep support for the Salvadoran war effort did not mean unqualified support for the political right, however. The United States sought centrist victory in the transitional process. Neither did the superpower want communist revolution nor did it want to see the primary rightist contender for the presidency, Salvadoran military was receiving at least some aid in every year of the Carter administration. And as conditions in the country deteriorated, U.S. FMS jumped from $18,000 in 1979 to $1.1 million in 1980, skyrocketing to the hundreds of millions of dollars by the middle of the decade. IMET grants at this time were principally used for training officers at the School of the Americas (SOA) at Fort Benning, Georgia. FMS credits went toward war materiel such as jeeps and helicopters, the latter of which were crucial in quickly responding to guerrilla attacks: DSCA 2012; For more on the importance of this equipment in the conflict, see Alvarez and Arnson 1982, 185; Bacevich and Hallums 1988, 5.

President Reagan was to report to Congress on the progress of reform and human rights every six months in order to certify that U.S. aid was being used appropriately and not directly contributing to chaos in a country they were trying to defend.

Roberto d’Aubuisson, make it in the new system.\textsuperscript{642} The United States put its support behind Christian Democrat José Napoleon Duarte to be the face of democracy in El Salvador and the preferred victor in the 1984 presidential contest.\textsuperscript{643}

Thus, the conditions under which El Salvador democratized were very polarizing. The civil war pitted people against each other, and a democratic outcome was by no means guaranteed. While the United States pushed for a centrist path, the political left was in open revolt, and the political right resorted to violence to secure its interests as well. This polarization carried over into democratic competition. The FMLN transitioned from being an armed guerrilla movement to a legal political party while the paramilitary ORDEN “was the organizational core” of the ARENA party.\textsuperscript{644} The new democratic competition had its roots in the violent conflict of the civil war. The Christian Democratic Party succeeded in winning the presidency in 1984 and in winning the majority of seats in the legislative assembly in 1985, but by the 1990s, PDC strength was slipping away. The PDC oversaw an incredibly difficult period in the country’s history and took the blame for not being able to solve dissatisfaction with the two biggest challenges of the era—the war and the economy. In 1989, ARENA won the presidency and saw gains in their legislative hold as well. By the next presidential contest, the FMLN would be competing too, finally giving voters the opportunity to choose leftist democratic representation.

\textsuperscript{642} Ryan 1997.

\textsuperscript{643} The United States did not want to see the democratic transition disrupted, but they also did not want d’Aubuisson to win. Vice President George H. W. Bush, in San Salvador in 1983, made it clear that the United States would withdraw assistance to the Salvadoran military if it “failed to protect the [1984 presidential] elections or to respect their outcome” (Bacevich and Hallums 1988, 25). The Reagan administration was anxious to bring an end to the conflict and focus on “social and political modernization” through economic development: Kissinger 1984, 47.

\textsuperscript{644} Stanley 1996, 232; The war came to a close with a negotiated peace treaty in January 1992, and the FMLN was recognized by the Supreme Electoral Tribunal as a legal political party on December 15, 1992.
The governing failures of the PDC positioned ARENA as the major alternative in the late 1980s. The collapse of the PDC meant the political center was an uncommitted constituency, but ARENA’s far-right image and its founder’s association with death squads limited their competitiveness in the early years of their existence. United States leverage in the transitional period boosted PDC strength and pressured the military to keep ARENA and d’Aubuisson as secondary players.\(^{645}\) Thus, ARENA had incentive to moderate from the beginning in order to become more acceptable to U.S. interests, but PDC decline presented ARENA with a very real opportunity to capture the political center domestically. This process moved the party away from military officers or ex-regime officials as presidential candidates. The conservative, capitalist ideology of the party persisted, but its presidential contenders in the next five elections followed more traditional politicians’ paths, with each holding elected positions, ministerial, or bureaucratic posts before campaigning for the presidency.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Election Year</th>
<th>ARENA Candidate</th>
<th>Profession</th>
<th>CD/FMLN Candidate</th>
<th>Role in War, Former Regime</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>Maj. Roberto d’Aubuisson</td>
<td>Army officer</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Alfredo Cristiani</td>
<td>Businessman</td>
<td>Guillermo Manuel Ungo Revelo</td>
<td>1979 junta member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Armando Calderón Sol</td>
<td>Lawyer</td>
<td>Rubén Zamora Rivas</td>
<td>1979 junta member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Francisco Flores Pérez</td>
<td>Teacher, Philosopher</td>
<td>Facundo Guardado</td>
<td>Guerrilla commander</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Antonio Saca</td>
<td>Broadcast journalist</td>
<td>Schafik Handal</td>
<td>Guerrilla commander</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Rodrigo Ávila</td>
<td>Engineer</td>
<td>Mauricio Funes</td>
<td>Broadcast journalist</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This is not to say that the party shifted dramatically away from its conservative stance or turned its back completely on Roberto d’Aubuisson, who died in 1992. The party image evolved

\(^{645}\) Ryan 1997; Williams and Seri 2003.
over time, but there were still telling moments in which ARENA put its ignominious history on display, as in 1999 when Francisco Flores Pérez invoked the memory of their founder in his election-night victory speech, despite the widespread knowledge at that point of d’Aubuisson’s role in organizing death squads and his responsibility for the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero in 1980. And as late as 2007, ARENA legislators caused an uproar when they proposed legislation to name d’Aubuisson a “blessed son of the motherland.” Nevertheless, PDC decline gave ARENA an important opportunity to moderate, and party leaders took advantage of it. Additionally, because ARENA was incorporated into the new democratic system at the point of transition—and the FMLN had to wait another decade to enter the electoral game—ARENA could further present itself as a modern political party that had moved on from the dark days of the war while the FMLN could not so quickly escape the past. FMLN candidates were drawn from their guerrilla leadership or, in the case of the forerunner to the FMLN, the Convergencia Democrática (CD), candidates had themselves been part of a military government, having served in one of the short-lived revolutionary military-civilian juntas. The FMLN would need time to develop a political class free of these historical characteristics. Not until 2009 would the FMLN field a candidate, Mauricio Funes, who had not been a guerrilla combatant. Funes won the presidency.

Recycled Dictators Ran in the Transitional Election, 1984

These combined factors—the opening of the political center due to PDC decline and the FMLN’s exclusion during the war—allowed ARENA the strategic opportunity to turn the past into a disadvantage for the FMLN by modifying their own image and leaving explicitly ex-


647 Lansford 2012, 435.
regime candidates out of presidential contests. Overall, El Salvador experienced competition from the high rate of ex-regime candidates predicted by its low level of democratic continuity and high level of threat to former regime interests in keeping with what has been seen in Guatemala. In contrast to its neighbor, however, recycled dictator candidacies are concentrated in the early democratic era and do not persist beyond 1999. Indeed, if not for candidates who had been part of periodic revolutionary juntas of the military era, the country would have seen no more recycled dictators after the transitional election. United States pressure, PDC collapse, and the strategic opportunity to make the past a liability for the political left, enabled ARENA (the most likely source of recycled dictators) to move toward running traditional politicians instead of those directly associated with the old regime.

**Francisco José Guerrero Was the Regime Heir**

In the 1984 election, Francisco José Guerrero ran on the National Conciliation Party (PCN), the official state party and military electoral vehicle from 1961 to 1979. He had been a founding member of the party and served as foreign minister during military government (1968-71). He remained an influential figure in Salvadoran politics. Before being nominated to the PCN ticket in 1984, he was an aide to the provisional president, Alvaro Magaña. In this position, Guerrero was associated with the effort to bring peace to the country through the transitional elections, themselves, and he would continue with this theme of peace in his electoral campaign.648 He proposed reviving the government’s Peace Commission to work toward a political process for ending the civil war and advocated issuing an amnesty and bringing together representatives of many sectors of Salvadoran society, from academia and business to the

Catholic Church, unions, and political parties. Guerrero envisioned the commission as a way to ensure that these groups were part of the process of incorporating the guerrillas and previously banned leftist parties into the new political system with legislative and local elections the following year. Just before the election, Guerrero outlined his specific approach to dealing with the conflict, but as with the other major candidates, delivered no new ideas on how to end it. As a member of the establishment party that could win the support of business and military interests, Guerrero was favored from the starting gate by the United States who wanted a conservative victory in the election but feared the potential consequences of a win from the ultra right-wing Roberto d’Aubuisson. The United States was heavily invested in El Salvador and its transition from military to civilian rule and found d’Aubuisson to be dangerous and divisive, leading the United States to deny him a travel visa and to lean unofficially further toward Guerrero. Guerrero, while more palatable to the United States, was still in the business of maintaining the status quo in many ways. He defended the actions of El Salvador’s police and armed forces at a time when they were regularly accused of human rights abuses. The National Conciliation Party had been in notable decline with its third-place showing in the elections for Constituent Assembly in 1982 and when nearly two-thirds of the party’s members in the

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Assembly defected to “form another more conservative party.” But, these setbacks provided the party with an opportunity to stake out the middle ground between d’Aubuisson on the right and Jose Napoleon Duarte of the center-left. He sought to be the alternative to d’Aubuisson among the business class and conservative peasants, and stressed that his was the only party that could bring the country together after the election. Guerrero was an adept campaigner, training his campaign sights on promising jobs while his two chief rivals sniped at one another, with each labeling the other an extremist and only occasionally bringing Guerrero into the mix. While Guerrero used the party name, “National Conciliation” to demonstrate his message of peace, the party itself was his chief liability in the campaign. To voters, the PCN represented “decades of corrupt military rule” that could not be overcome with a new image. Throughout the campaign, the perceived unacceptability of both of the major candidates raised concerns about a coup d’etat from the military if either Duarte or d’Aubuisson were to win. And, the United States was expected to cut aid to the country if d’Aubuisson were to win, something that was not lost on either the military or voters. Nevertheless, the vote went ahead, and despite numerous challenges on election day—including threats and sabotage from guerrillas, a complicated

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polling system that bewildered even many poll workers, ballot shortages, and clerical and computer errors—El Salvador carried off the first meaningful presidential election of the new democratic era and the army stayed in its barracks. Guerrero placed third with 19.3% of the vote and no candidate received a majority, so the voting went to a second round. PCN support was then a crucial voting bloc that could give the election to either Duarte or d’Aubuisson. Guerrero was solicitous of the two remaining contenders in the days after the election. As a relatively conservative candidate, he was expected to throw his support behind d’Aubuisson, but he eventually turned down an offer to be part of a d’Aubuisson administration or have PCN members of the cabinet because the ARENA leader refused to moderate its views in order to gain the support of the PCN. Guerrero recognized that endorsing Duarte and the Christian Democrats was a non-starter, as his supporters would not accept such a move, leaving Guerrero to remain neutral in the second round vote. Jose Napoleon Duarte won the election, and Guerrero became Attorney General under the new president. Guerrero later became president of the Supreme Court (1984-89); he was assassinated by the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) in 1989.


Roberto d’Aubuisson Was a Caudillo Democrat

Roberto d’Aubuisson was in the Salvadoran Army from 1963 to 1979. He attained the rank of Major, serving as an intelligence chief under the military government of General Carlos Humberto Romero and as director of the military’s National Agency of Special Services (ANSESAL), which “controlled and coordinated the G-2 and S-2 intelligence agencies of the military, which were responsible for intelligence on leftist movements.”664 He was a graduate of the U.S. School of the Americas and the International Police Academy in Washington, DC.665 He was cashiered from the army in 1979 because of his involvement in death squad activity. He was eventually implicated in the assassination of Salvadoran Archbishop Oscar Romero.666

In 1981, he founded the National Republican Alliance (ARENA). D’Aubuisson had attempted two coups the previous year and continually threatened more against the civilian-military junta that was governing during the transition to democracy, because he considered it not to be doing enough to wipe out the communist insurgency and to be too accommodating of peasant demands for land.667 The government issued an arrest warrant in response, but it was never executed, given d’Aubuisson’s support amongst the right-wing security officers who would have been responsible for carrying it out, and it was eventually thrown out when he agreed to participate in elections.668 D’Aubuisson’s decision to enter the new political system

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666 UNSC 1993.


underlines the potential positives and negatives of ex-regime officials in democratic politics. The formation of ARENA ensured there would be a democratic alternative for rightist voters in the 1982 Constituent Assembly elections, but before that could have any effect, in a forum convened to decide on the rules and timing of those elections, d’Aubuisson put forth a motion to remove the civilian members of the ruling junta and to leave the military solely in charge of the country once again.\textsuperscript{669} The motion failed by one vote but clearly demonstrated that d’Aubuisson was ready to use the tools of democratic practice against democracy itself.

ARENA’s strength grew in advance of the March 1982 elections for Constituent Assembly. The party’s singular message was forceful and clear—to wipe out communism. D’Aubuisson used his militant image to considerable effect in his campaign appearances. He campaigned in rural areas that other parties avoided, regularly wore a sidearm, and advocated the use of napalm to fight the guerrillas.\textsuperscript{670} D’Aubuisson would not allow the Christian Democrats to occupy a middle ground in the political arena, instead continually equating the party with communists. The PDC’s colors—green and white—also leant themselves to a uniquely dramatic performance from d’Aubuisson who would produce a watermelon at campaign events and declare that the PDC was like the melon, green on the outside—and slicing it open with a machete—reveal that it was red on the inside.\textsuperscript{671} This style of campaigning was not without its


risk, however, as d’Aubuisson did come under attack at times and was wounded once. His campaign maintained its focus on ending the insurgency and quashing the communist movement, with his own party’s officials worrying that he had “given very little thought to anything except dealing with guerrillas and building up the Army” while ignoring what observers saw as the roots of the conflict—“poverty and oppression.” After the election, in which ARENA earned the second most votes and would hold a majority in the Assembly in conjunction with other rightist parties, d’Aubuisson was very confrontational, threatening to undo reforms and to arrest Christian Democratic leaders. As the date approached to seat the Assembly—and U.S. pressure mounted—however, d’Aubuisson moderated his tone, proclaiming to “share the destiny of [the] country with the Christian Democratic Party.”

In December 1983, Roberto d’Aubuisson won ARENA’s nomination to run for the presidency in the 1984 elections. His anti-communist message was as clear as ever, but his history of involvement with death squads made him a problematic potential victor. El Salvador had grown dependent on U.S. economic and military aid, and the superpower regularly hinted that this assistance would be cut if d’Aubuisson were to become president. The unacceptability

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of d’Aubuisson to the United States and the threats to military aid meant that the armed forces of
El Salvador were still uneasy in the face of the elections.678 Both Salvadoran and U.S. political
leaders were concerned that Duarte could fall to a coup because the military was concerned he
would be too accommodating to the guerrillas, while d’Aubuisson could fall to a coup because of
the potential loss of aid. As the election approached, members of d’Aubuisson’s own party began
to reconsider his candidacy, believing that his profile and liabilities had become too central to the
campaign.679 Duarte’s campaign ran advertisements on television, referring to the ARENA
candidate as “Major d’Escuadron,” a reference to d’Aubuisson’s involvement with “escuadrones
de la muerte” (death squads).680 But Duarte was not the only one to use suggestive television
advertising. To reinforce d’Aubuisson’s core message of making the Christian Democrats
synonymous with communism, ARENA ran ads showing Duarte with Guillermo Ungo, a rebel
leader who had been Duarte’s running mate in El Salvador’s previous failed attempt at
presidential elections in 1972.681 And, d’Aubuisson never passed up a chance to demean his
rival, referring to Duarte’s party as the “cretin Democrats.”682 The two major candidates
embraced this absolutist form of campaigning, with d’Aubuisson maintaining his claims against

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679 Chris Hedges, “Salvador right said to weigh dropping d’Aubuisson,” Christian Science Monitor, 7


681 Chris Hedges, “Salvador’s rightist party feels the heat over human rights,” Christian Science Monitor,
7 March, 1984; Robert J. McCartney, “El Salvador’s Wealthy Bank on D’Aubuisson,” Washington Post,

Duarte as “a communist, a traitor and an atheist” while Duarte would refer to d’Aubuisson a “Nazi-Fascist.” The civil war and its consequences—displacement of populations, increased unemployment, violence against civilians—dominated the country at the time, but neither of the major candidates addressed the conflict in great detail, nor did they put forth plans for peace. Duarte promised to curb the violence and to investigate death squad activity in the armed forces, though it was always unclear whether he could deliver on these promises. And, while both Duarte and PCN candidate Francisco José Guerrero indicated they would be open to different forms of dialogue with the guerrillas, d’Aubuisson remained steadfast in his opposition to anything other than totally annihilating the insurgents.

There were considerable problems in the March balloting, but the major parties accepted the elections as legitimate and Duarte and d’Aubuisson, as the top two vote recipients, went into a run-off battle set for May 1984. In the intervening period, the army moved to restrict the powers of the future president, whoever it would be, issuing a letter to insist that the armed forces would be an adviser to the president and would ultimately maintain control of all military matters, which it defined broadly to include such issues as any dialogue with rebels. The issue of land reform was emphasized in the run-off campaign as d’Aubuisson came out in favor of

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continuing the government’s multi-stage plan that was underway at the time. It was unclear whether the ARENA candidate was sincere in this shift, however, because he had otherwise consistently been opposed to it and worked actively to stop the program while serving as president of the Constituent Assembly in previous years. Election day in the second round of the vote was far more organized and successful than the March balloting. Duarte won the election with over 53% of the vote, but d’Aubuisson too claimed victory, despite finally being shown to have come in with only 29.8% of the vote. He never formally conceded, instead deciding to claim that the elections were fraudulent. D’Aubuisson continued to be a powerful figure in Salvadoran politics, returning to the Constituent Assembly after the 1985 legislative elections.

**Roberto Escobar García Secured Low Vote Share**

Roberto Escobar García was a colonel in the Salvadoran Army. He had attended the United States School of the Americas as a Lieutenant in 1961. During the democratic transition, Escobar García was expected to be named vice president under a right-wing civilian government headed by Roberto d’Aubuisson, because the rightist forces of ARENA and the PCN together initially held the largest number of seats in the 1982 Constituent Assembly. This administration never came to pass, though. United States opposition to the prospect of a

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d’Aubuisson presidency was so severe that the country threatened to halt economic and military aid to the country and stepped up its efforts to isolate d’Aubuisson. As d’Aubuisson’s fortunes faded, due to U.S. pressure, the PCN/ARENA coalition split. Under Roberto Escobar Garcia, the PCN Assembly members formed a new party, leaving ARENA in the minority and scuttling d’Aubuisson’s chances of being appointed president. In 1983, Roberto Escobar Garcia ran for president on this newly formed party’s ticket, the Authentic Salvadoran Institutional Party (PAISA). The PAISA had gained its position as the third largest party in the assembly by defecting from the PCN, thus its numbers belied its potential at the polls. Escobar Garcia’s party was unknown and had minimal impact on the electoral campaign. Escobar Garcia won 1.2% of the vote in the 1984 presidential race.

Conclusion

El Salvador’s environment of low democratic continuity-high threat to ex-regime actors in the democratic transition produced a high degree of involvement from military regime contenders. The outcome of the internal war and of the democratization process was by no means certain. The country had experienced many attempts at political openings throughout the 20th century only to see them reversed. The window of limited democratic opportunity in the mid to late 1960s nevertheless allowed the formation and growth of the Christian Democratic Party, which proved crucial to providing a centrist alternative to the right-wing ARENA party and the

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695 PDBA 1984.
continuation of military rule through the state-party of the PCN. As in Guatemala, the relatively low level of independent political parties overall and the political repression in the years leading up to the transition limited the ability of parties to push for democratization. Pressure for change was augmented by the revolutionary threat, U.S. interests, and the military’s own need for internal unity. This pathway leading up to the transition is distinct from the pathway available to those states such as Chile and Argentina with long-standing political parties independent of military domination that could both agitate for democratization and return to compete in the new system. Instead, states like Guatemala and El Salvador faced a scenario in which the country had minimal pre-existing democratic parties and well-established military parties—the dual challenge born of limited democratic history and the nature of military rule.

El Salvador stands in distinction to Guatemala in the temporal presence of recycled dictators. The intensity of the civil war in El Salvador polarized the population. The shift to fair elections and participation of the centrist Christian Democrats gave voters an alternative to the military PCN, and the PCN faded as ARENA established itself as the furthest right party in the new system. United States pressure kept the centrist ideal alive during the 1980s, but the Christian Democrats’ governing challenges led voters to look to alternatives. As the war wound down, so did U.S. support. The FMLN had to fail as a guerrilla movement before it could become a political party; thus leaving it 10 years behind ARENA in terms of its public evolution. These factors combined, opened a window of opportunity for ARENA to capture voters in the center by moderating its image and by downplaying the past. The Guatemalan experience did not follow this pathway because the communist insurgency of the URNG was less threatening as a
military force and less united than the FMLN, making it a weaker political party once it was legalized at the end of the war.\textsuperscript{696}

\textsuperscript{696} The party has been a minor actor in presidential elections, receiving only single-digit vote share.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1931-1980</td>
<td>Military rule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td><em>Partido Comunista Salvadoreño</em> formed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931-1944</td>
<td>Personalistic dictatorship of Gen. Maximiliano Hernández Martínez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 1931</td>
<td>Arturo Araujo elected president in first clean election in El Salvador’s history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 1931</td>
<td>Coup against President Arturo Araujo preempts municipal elections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 1932</td>
<td>Municipal elections go ahead, victorious PCS candidates denied their posts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 1944</td>
<td>Gen. Hernández Martínez overthrown after coup, mass strike, and U.S. pressure to resign</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 1944</td>
<td>Anti-reform coup against incumbent military government planning for elections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 1948</td>
<td>Reformist coup brings in military-civilian junta with Col. Oscar Osorio in the lead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td><em>Partido Revolucionario de Unificación</em> (PRUD) formed as official military party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>Col. Oscar Osorio (PRUD) elected president in clean contest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950-60</td>
<td>PRUD holds all seats in legislature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>Col. José María Lemus (PRUD) elected president in fraudulent contest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 1959</td>
<td>Communist victory against long-standing military dictatorship in Cuba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 1960</td>
<td>Reformist coup brings in military-civilian junta promising elections in which Communist candidates would be allowed to compete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 1961</td>
<td>Countercoup ousts reformers, bringing in new junta with Col. Julio A. Rivera in the lead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>Col. Julio Rivera (PCN) elected president in essentially uncontested election</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>Gen. Fidel Sánchez Hernández (PCN) elected president in clean contest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>El Salvador-Honduras Soccer War</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>PCN dominates clean election for legislative and municipal posts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>Col. Arturo Armando Molina (PCN) elected in fraudulent contest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>Gen. Carlos Humberto Romero (PCN) elected in fraudulent contest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979-1992</td>
<td>Salvadoran Civil War</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 1979</td>
<td>Communist FSLN (Sandinista) victory against long-standing military dictatorship in neighboring Nicaragua</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 1979</td>
<td>Junior officer coup brings reformist officers to power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 1980</td>
<td>“Coup within a coup” sidelines reformist officers, replacing them with hardliners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 22, 1980</td>
<td>Presidency handed to a civilian, José Napoleon Duarte, for the first time since 1931. End of military rule.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 1980</td>
<td><em>Frente Farabundo Martí de Liberación Nacional</em> (FMLN) formed as unified guerrilla front</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 10, 1981</td>
<td>FMLN launches “final offensive” marking the beginning of the civil war</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984-present</td>
<td>Civilian electoral democracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 25, 1984</td>
<td>Transitional presidential election, 1st round</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 6, 1984</td>
<td>Transitional presidential election, 2nd round; José Napoleon Duarte (PDC) elected to the presidency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1, 1984</td>
<td>José Napoleon Duarte inaugurated as first elected civilian president since 1931.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 1990</td>
<td>José Napoleon Duarte dies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 1992</td>
<td>Roberto d’Aubuisson dies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 1992</td>
<td>FMLN recognized as legal political party</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 8

Conclusion: Regime Legacies and Recycled Dictators Worldwide

Recycled dictators are a unique feature of the transitional political landscape. As members of a former authoritarian regime, they demonstrate the potential persistence of the old system under new democratic auspices. Simultaneously, their presence in the new system reflects an important acceptance of the electoral system as the legitimate route to government. In many states across Latin America, elite agreement on the rules of the game and the channeling of political competition through elections has been lacking in prior rounds of democratization, thereby enhancing the significance of electoral participation from individuals associated with previous authoritarian regimes.

Among the 12 countries in Latin America that experienced military rule and transitioned in the third wave of democratization, a variety of recycled dictators have presented themselves in presidential contests. From military presidents, junta members, military and civilian members of the cabinet, and military officers in non-governing roles, recycled dictator participation in presidential elections has taken many forms. Tracing these candidates and their second act in national politics reveals variation in the geographic and temporal distribution of their presence and varied characteristics in their candidacies and performance.

A Predictive Theory of Recycled Dictator Presence in Democratic Elections

I explain variation in presence of recycled dictators through a country’s dual regime legacies of experience with democratic government and with military rule. Countries with time under democratic practice that allows for the development of political parties independent from military control have a pre-existing basis for a return to democracy. In these contexts, military
rule has characteristically taken the form of an attempt to repress the very possibility of party politics, disrupting democratic parties but also closing down the space for organizations supportive of the regime, thereby diminishing their potential to compete once democracy returns. As a consequence, these states, such as Chile and Argentina, exhibit a high degree of democratic continuity in which party politics resume and the rate of ex-authoritarian participation in presidential elections is relatively low. These countries stand in distinction to those where democratic practice has been limited or virtually non-existent, preventing political parties independent of military control from developing. Simultaneously, militaries engaged in long-term rule have established their own political systems, supplanting democratic politics and creating military or official state parties that persisted through the eventual third wave transitions. Thus, the regime legacies of both a democratic era and a military era determine the nature of competition in the contemporary field.

The level of threat to ex-regime actors further divides the experience of different countries. Leaving power in a position of strength has allowed militaries in states such as Chile and Uruguay to exercise their power and ensure that their prerogatives are secured long after they turn the presidency over to civilian leaders. Meanwhile, militaries that faced the uncertainty of ongoing armed conflict (Guatemala, El Salvador) or the repercussion of outright defeat (Argentina, Panama) as an element of their transition from power have been vulnerable to transitional justice or to the possibility of drastic changes to their position in the country. The militaries of Guatemala and El Salvador allowed civilian administrations to assume the presidency in the 1980s, but that did not prevent varied factions in both countries from trying to reverse the process through the continued use of force. The same uncertainty and desire for
continued control drove participation in elections from figures such as Roberto d’Aubuisson and Efrain Rios Montt.

A Predictive Theory of Recycled Dictator Performance in Democratic Elections

Very few recycled dictator candidates win presidential elections. The majority of these candidacies end with the individual capturing only single-digit vote share. The conditions of democratic continuity structure competition as well as presence. It is exceedingly difficult for a recycled dictator to manage more than a nominal showing in a state of high democratic continuity, because these countries necessarily see the return of parties that dominated the political sphere in the past and return to do so again, relegating potential challengers of any background to fringe status.

A recycled dictator will achieve only minimal vote share in a presidential election unless he is running in a country of low democratic continuity as (1) the candidate of a pre-existing major party, (2) the heir to a successful departing regime, (3) a rebel officer who has turned his uprising into a political movement, or (4) following a more traditional political path of serving in lower public office before competing for the presidency. These four characteristics account for over 80% of recycled dictators who break out of the single-digits among recycled dictators in Latin America.

Generalizability

In ongoing transitions across the globe, states are facing the same issues with former regime officials entering politics that Latin America has experienced. In Egypt, after the ouster of the autocratic President Hosni Mubarak in February 2011, the Supreme Council of the Armed
Forces assumed control of the government and set the country on a path to democracy, which included the first meaningful presidential elections in the nation’s history on May 23-24, 2012. As with states in Latin America, members of the former authoritarian regime were not barred from seeking office on the basis of constitutional prohibitions or transitional justice measures. Former regime candidates quickly made their presence felt in the campaign. Egypt’s lack of prior experience with democracy and long-term authoritarian rule meant a high rate of participation from members of the departed government. The major political powers in the contest were those of the former regime and the religiously based organization, the Muslim Brotherhood. Of the 13 men in the running, five had held positions in Mubarak’s regime or in the security services during his rule. And, in keeping with the Latin American experience among states with lower levels of democratic continuity, two of these recycled dictators were front-runners in the campaign.

The conditions of the 2012 presidential election favored the rise of an ex-regime candidate. The instability caused by protests, Mubarak’s resignation, and the generals stepping into the breach made an already weak Egyptian economy suffer even more. Tourism collapsed and foreign direct investment made a nearly $700 billion swing to the negative from 2010 to 2011 among the uncertainty of the political situation. Voters quickly began to express

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697 The Mubarak regime drew its power from the armed forces, though it was not expressly a military government as I have defined those under consideration in this study of Latin America.

698 IFES 2012; After filing their papers, a number of potential candidates were rejected by the Higher Presidential Election Commission but not on the basis of their backgrounds: “Guide to Egyptian presidential election,” British Broadcast Corporation, 21 May, 2012.


dissatisfaction with the turn the uprising had taken. In the year after the regime’s collapse, the police state where “random, violent crime was almost unheard of” gave way to a climate of “pervasive lawlessness.” Thievery, kidnappings, carjackings, and other attacks reportedly soared, and citizens began taking matters into their own hands, resorting to vigilante justice. As seen in cases such as Guatemala, where crime has been a major campaign issue, the former regime officials sought to leverage their military personae in a unique promise to restore “law and order” and saw it resonate with the voting public.

Wanting stability after the tumultuous ouster of the former government made a significant portion of the population consider re-hiring them. As a regime heir, former Air Force General Ahmed Shafiq, a Mubarak loyalist who served as Prime Minister in the dying days of his rule, secured 24% of the vote, winning a place in the run-off against Muslim Brotherhood candidate, Mohammed Mursi. The second-round vote proved a very close contest, with Shafiq receiving 48.27% of the vote and Mursi going on to win with 51.73%. Military concern over Muslim Brotherhood government was clear from the start. Immediately prior to the presidential election, the armed forces dissolved parliament, whose membership was largely from the Brotherhood. Whether the results of the presidential election would be respected also seemed

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703 Ibid.


In the year after Mursi’s election, tensions mounted between the long-standing rivals of the military and Muslim Brotherhood. In August 2012, President Mursi tried to consolidate his power by dismissing top army commanders from their posts. He also accused his former electoral opponent, Ahmed Shafiq, of corruption and sought his arrest. On July 3, 2013, after days of protests and a military ultimatum for Mursi to resolve escalating violence, the Egyptian military overthrew the president. The armed forces is once again in charge and there is serious doubt over the democratic future of the country. Under the conditions of the 2012 election, Egypt’s competitive dynamic placed it in the low democratic continuity-high threat to ex-regime actors quadrant of the presence theory, predicting the persistence of former government candidates. Brief inquiry into the Egyptian transition and 2012 presidential campaign suggests the potential for broader applicability of the theory developed here in a country with both a different authoritarian regime type and new regional context.

Similarly, the ongoing transition in Burma involves democratic reform and continued military power, including the participation of recycled dictators. The opposition movement of Aung San Suu Kyi, the National League for Democracy (NLD), was founded in 1988 after a pro-democracy uprising was put down by force. Pressure for change led to a free contest in 1990, which was annulled by the military government because of the NLD’s successful showing at the polls. The military regime cracked down on the opposition. The NLD has survived decades of

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repression, however. As seen in the cases of Guatemala and El Salvador, the military government has not ruled through force alone but also through its own state party, which has been the vehicle for recycled dictator participation in contemporary elections. The Union Solidarity and Development Party is the successor to the Union Solidarity and Development Association, founded in 1993. The 2010 elections were widely considered fraudulent, which means there has yet to be a meaningful presidential contest. The former prime minister under the military government, Thein Sein, was elected with almost 80% of the vote. The 2012 parliamentary election was a more free and fair contest, and it potentially reveals the character of future recycled dictator competition. The military regime, while ceding the presidency to civilian leadership, has built institutional safeguards to ensure their continued influence in government. The constitution reserves 25% of seats in the parliament for active-duty military officers, and the president is elected by an electoral college with one-third of its members appointed by the armed forces. These conditions place Burma in the low democratic continuity-low threat to ex-regime actors quadrant, predicting mixed competition from former regime competitors and democratic actors.

**Directions for Future Research**

Examination of transitions around the world and their experience with former regime candidates in presidential elections would be a fruitful line of inquiry and an important test of the

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theories developed from the Latin American cases. As noted in the introduction, states in many regions have gone through military rule and transitional processes and have seen the return of their former leaders to democratic competition. Investigating other regions in comparative perspective may provide new insights into the phenomenon. The empirical experience may diverge from that of Latin American countries and require new interventions in understanding competition from these candidates. For example, religious tensions in the cases noted above, Egypt and Burma, have played an important role in political conflict in these countries. In sub-Saharan Africa, patterns of ethnic voting may change how recycled dictators run for office and their performance at the ballot box. These factors are not as salient in Latin American cases, and therefore consideration of a broader range of national experiences may be required to best understand the phenomenon. Along these lines, conducting studies of democracies coming out of non-military authoritarian regimes, such as the one-party states of the former Soviet Union could expand our understanding of potential variation born of differences in former regime type.

A second line of inquiry on the recycled dictator phenomenon concerns the historical experience in Latin America. Members of former military regimes returning to compete after the third wave of democratization are not the only ones to have done so. As noted in the Chilean case, Gen. Carlos Ibáñez del Campo won the presidency via election in 1952 after having been military dictator in the 1920s. Gen. Juan Perón in Argentina served as labor minister in the 1943-46 military regime before being elected president in 1946. Studying earlier regimes and transitions in the region in systematic fashion could shed light on the nature of this pattern of competition in previous democratic openings. It could answer an important question regarding the significance of recycled dictators for democratic consolidation in the contemporary era. If such former military leaders were running in earlier democratic periods and yet countries again
saw authoritarian reversal, are the contemporary recycled dictators an indication of elite acceptance of democracy or not?

Third, this study has focused exclusively on presidential contests. Investigating former regime contenders in legislative contests and at other levels of government would build an even more complete picture of the potential influence of recycled dictators in contemporary politics. The results could bear important modifications to our understanding of recycled dictators’ role in each country. For example, in Chile, there has been only the one presidential candidacy, from Hernán Büchi, who lost. In the legislature, however, large percentages of deputies elected on the UDI or RN tickets in the decade after the transition had a government position during the military regime. Similarly, the investigating sub-national executive contests in countries with elected governors, such as Argentina, may reveal greater nuance in the experience with recycled dictators. While at the presidential level, only carapintada candidates have stood for election—and they have not performed well—at the gubernatorial level, the country has seen notable cases of success such as the return of Gen. Antonio Bussi in Tucumán province, Capt. Roberto Ulloa in Salta, Leopoldo Bravo in San Juan, and Arnoldo Castillo in Catamarca. Given the collapse of the military regime, the use of transitional justice mechanisms to condemn the past, and the return of the Peronist and UCR parties, these victories (and unsuccessful candidacies in other provinces) are surprising. These figures and their campaigns were not without controversy, and their level of success contrasts sharply with the national experience. Further inquiry would

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711 Huneeus 2007, 443. Carlos Huneeus calculates that 37.5% of UDI/RN deputies were mayors and 23.7% were in other government positions during the Pinochet regime.

deepen our understanding of the national versus sub-national dynamic and provide another potential test of the theories presented here.

Finally, while this study has concentrated on investigating and explaining recycled dictator competition in the new democratic system, the question remains as to the nature of their rule when they are elected. Have these leaders moderated their views? Do they employ authoritarian solutions to policy challenges? Do they undermine their colleagues in government and chip away at horizontal and vertical accountability once in office? These are important questions for understanding the potential impact of former regime candidates in the new system and the relationship between these leaders and democratic consolidation. Regardless of the attitudes or preferences of ex-regime candidates, do democratic institutions constrain their behavior? The small number of recycled dictators who win the presidency creates a challenge in the breadth of conclusions to be drawn from the answers to the questions. Nevertheless, they are important to consider. The history of using the military to meet internal security challenges in states throughout the region lingers. Military forces are still deployed alongside national police in conducting patrols in states such as El Salvador and Guatemala.\(^{713}\) These tasks introduce problems, however, as security forces may take a heavy hand to protests and kill unarmed civilian demonstrators as in Guatemala in October 2012.\(^{714}\) The speed with which to use armed force in dangerous ways, however, is not limited to recycled dictators. Thus, as with the study of competition from ex-regime candidates, investigating recycled dictators in government must be done with consideration of their counterparts who have no military regime background. That is, are recycled dictators more authoritarian than other presidents or legislators in the country?

\(^{713}\) USDS 2013a; USDS 2013b.

\(^{714}\) British Broadcast Corporation. 2012. “Guatemala protest over price rises leaves six dead.” 5 October.
There are many potential avenues of research to enhance our grasp on the issues surrounding recycled dictators. This legacy of authoritarian rule has only rarely been explored in scholarship. Thus, explaining the presence and performance of ex-regime candidates in presidential elections is an important contribution to our understanding of their role in new democracies, but as the abundance of questions above demonstrates, this project is the first step not the last.
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Appendix A: Recycled Dictator Country Case Clarifications

Last Period of Military Rule

Bolivia, 1964-82

In 1979, following Gen. David Padilla Arancibia’s rule, the Bolivian Congress appointed a civilian, Walter Guevara Arce, to the presidency. Months later, he was overthrown by Col. Natusch Busch, who was, himself, ousted after fewer than three weeks in favor of another congressionally appointed civilian president, Sra. Lidia Gueiler Tejada. President Tejada was overthrown the following year by Gen. Garcia Meza. Thus, while there are civilian presidents in this time period, they came to power through appointments rather than elections and their rule was tenuous, short-lived, and existed only in the shadow of persistent military control of government and therefore do not constitute an independent democratic era.715

Brazil, 1964-85

Brazil experienced a lengthy and piecemeal transition to electoral democracy, with elections for governors and national legislators beginning in 1979, even as Gen. João Figueiredo, an active-duty military officer, held the presidency until 1985, when Tancredo Neves was elected via an electoral college vote. (Neves died before taking office, making José Sarney the first president of the post-military era). The first direct elections for a civilian president did not take place until

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Nov. 1989, which explains the divergent dates for the beginning of civilian rule and the period of
democratic elections for president.\textsuperscript{716}

Guatemala, 1954-86

Beginning in 1966, Guatemala technically held periodic presidential elections, but the victor
could not operate independent of military control (as in the case of Julio Cesar Mendez
Montenegro, elected in 1966), or the contests were dominated by active-duty military candidates,
or were subject to outright fraud (as in the election of Gen. Kjell Laugerud in 1974). Thus, these
elections do not signify a departure from military rule.\textsuperscript{717}

Honduras, 1963-82

Col. Oswaldo López Arellano took power in a coup on Oct. 3, 1963 and served as president until
1971 when the military called for elections. The March 28, 1971 elections were considered free
and fair, but the outcome had been decided before the vote was held through a pact among the
National Party, the Liberal Party, and the military that would divide both the congress and
内阁 minister appointments evenly between the parties, and leave Col. López Arellano in
command of the armed forces. Within a year of its inauguration, the coalition government was
failing and by the end of 1972, Col. López Arellano returned to the presidency via a coup. Thus,

\textsuperscript{716} “Presidential, Congressional, Gubernatorial and State Elections - Appointment of New Cabinet by
President-elect - Political Reforms and Constitutional Amendments,” Keesing’s Contemporary Archives,
6 April, 1979, 29547; “Continued controversy over presidential succession - Land disputes - Cabinet
changes - Economic performance - Relations with United States,” Keesing’s Contemporary Archives, July
1984, 32963; “Brazil: First round of presidential elections,” Keesing's Record of World Events, November
1989, 37040.

\textsuperscript{717} Pragnell 1975, 178; “New Constitution - Election of Dr. Méndez Montenegro as President - Return to
even in this brief interregnum, political power remained in the hands of Col. López Arellano, making the entire 1963-1982 era one of military rule.\textsuperscript{718}

Panama, 1968-89

In 1968, Gen. Omar Torrijos took power in Panama. He officially left the position of Head of Government in 1978 in favor of elected civilian presidents, but the 1972 constitution remained in effect, “designed to concentrate almost all political and economic power in the hands of one man… General Torrijos,” and he remained in command of the National Guard, the true source of power in the country.\textsuperscript{719} After his death in 1981, this system of rotating civilian presidents serving at the pleasure of the National Guard continued under other military leaders, including Gen. Rubén Darío Paredes (1982-83) and Gen. Manuel Noriega (1983-89), signifying that even with formal civilian presidents, the country was firmly under military rule in this era. This reading of the power structure in the country is in keeping with Dix (1994), which notes the potential for military rule “by a clear puppet thereof (as, at times, in Panama between 1968-1989)” (442).

Paraguay, 1954-93

In February 1989, Gen. Andrés Rodríguez Pedotti overthrew Gen. Alfredo Stroessner and held elections in May, becoming the democratically elected leader of the country. Nevertheless, he


\textsuperscript{719} “Newly-elected Assembly confirms Powers held by General Torrijos and elects President and Vice President - Proposed New Constitution,” Keesings Contemporary Archives. October 28-November 4, 1972, 25547.
retained his position as an active-duty officer, thus extending “military rule” until 1993 when Juan Carlos Wasmosy was elected.\textsuperscript{720} Additionally, Gen. Pedotti does not follow the model of a recycled dictator, because he was \textit{serving as president while running for the presidency}, thereby representing a separate phenomenon of dictators attempting to retain power during a transition to democracy or simply trying to legitimize their rule by holding an election.

\textbf{Uruguay, 1973-85}

For the first time in Uruguay’s history, the military carried out a coup d’etat on February 10, 1973. While President Juan Maria Bordaberry remained in office—he was not formally deposed until September 1, 1976—he no longer had independent decision-making authority as head of government. President Bordaberry “accepted all demands made by the armed forces’ leaders,” including the establishment of a National Security Council comprised of military officers who would govern the country.\textsuperscript{721} Additionally, Congress was formally dissolved on June 27, 1973, ending any semblance of broad civilian government in the country.\textsuperscript{722} Thus, from 1973 until the inauguration of the democratically elected Julio María Sanguinetti on March 1, 1985, Uruguay was under effective military rule.

\textsuperscript{720} CIDOB 2011c.


Inauguration of Uninterrupted Contemporary Civilian Rule

El Salvador, Dec. 22, 1980

In December 1980, José Napoleón Duarte became head of a new civil-military junta, and thus the appointed civilian president of El Salvador. Though active-duty officers remained in powerful positions (Col. Adolfo Arnoldo Majano retained the Vice Presidency, for example), this appointment marked the beginning of uninterrupted civilian government in the country. Jose Napoleon Duarte would later win the presidency through election in 1984.723

Appendix B: Party Development and Nature of Military Rule

Argentina

Party formation in the democratic era: High

Nature of military rule: Policide

Party formation in the military era: Low

The Unión Cívica Radical (UCR) formed in the early 1900s as a violent challenger to the one-party rule of the Partido Autonomista Nacional (PAN). The UCR successfully mobilized as a middle-class movement and organized citizens to press for change, which came in the form of the 1912 Sáenz Peña electoral reform—Argentina’s first democratic opening.\(^{724}\) Despite interruptions to democratic government, the UCR persisted as an electoral vehicle in the first half of the 20\(^{th}\) century and came to be challenged by the labor party under General Juan Perón, the Partido Justicialista (PJ). The Peronists and UCR were Argentina’s two major parties at the time of the final military takeover of government in 1976. They primarily represented and drew their strength from the labor movement and middle class interests, respectively.\(^{725}\) Meanwhile, elites on the political right had not successfully organized to compete for their interests within the electoral system, relying instead on the armed forces in the form of repeated military interventions in government during the 20\(^{th}\) century. Thus, the 1976-83 Proceso government employed a strategy of widespread repression of politics to destroy these political organizations and their place in the country. Only as the Proceso regime began to fail did it deviate from the

\(^{724}\) Remmer 1984; Rock 1975.

\(^{725}\) Lupu and Stokes 2009.
pattern of denying the very practice of politics by attempting to create political space for rightist actors to organize in preparation for democratic competition.\textsuperscript{726}

**Bolivia**

Party formation in the democratic era: High

Nature of military rule: Substitute

Party formation in the military era: Low

Bolivia’s competing political forces in the 19\textsuperscript{th} and 20\textsuperscript{th} centuries did not generally transfer power peacefully. Transition from the Conservatives to the Liberals (1899), Liberals to Republicans (1914), and Republicans to the armed forces (1930), each came through force. A short-lived consensus government was formed in 1931, but the disastrous Chaco War (1932-35) led the military to seize power again in 1936 to institute social reform and long-term control over the country. As in other cases of military rule, however, the armed forces were not united, and the political arena was very volatile. From 1936 to 1952, the country saw changes in leadership through popular uprisings, suicide of a military president, competing military factions taking power through force, and the election of military leaders to power.\textsuperscript{727} Non-military parties existed in this period, but neither were they able to come to power through elections. The leftist Movimiento Nacional Revolucionario (MNR) took power by force in 1952, and the country experienced a window of revolutionary democracy until 1964.\textsuperscript{728} Siles Zuazo and Paz Estenssoro served as MNR presidents, and both they and their party survived the final era of military rule.

\textsuperscript{726} Gibson 1996.

\textsuperscript{727} Hudson and Hanratty 1991.

\textsuperscript{728} Brill 1967.
(1964-1982) to return to the presidency in the 1980s. Military government in the 1964-82 period, in succession, took the form of substitution (Gen. René Barrientos, 1964-69), restructuring (Gen. Alfredo Ovando, 1969-70), and policide (Gen. Hugo Banzer, 1971-78). Gen. Barrientos, after taking power from the MNR revolutionary government via coup d’état in 1964, established the Movimiento Popular Cristiano (MPC) with which he won a presidential election, seeking to legitimate military authority. After Barrientos’ death in 1969, Gen. Ovando sought to implement corporatist revolution from above as seen the previous year in neighboring Peru. Gen. Banzer (particularly after a 1974 coup attempt) relied more explicitly on repression and economic growth to maintain power. Routine democracy was not an element of the political environment in pre-1982 Bolivia, yet the MNR organized effectively as a revolutionary force that challenged for power from the outside in 1943 and 1952 and transitioned into a capable political party under the leadership of Siles Zuazo and Paz Estenssoro during their decade of rule preceding the last round of military government.

Brazil

Party formation in the democratic era: Medium
Nature of military rule: Restructure
Party formation in the military era: High

The 1930-54 period in Brazil was dominated by Getulio Vargas. He held the presidency as an unelected dictator (1930-34, 1937-45), congressionally elected president (1934-37), and popularly elected president (1951-54). Brazil first democratized in 1946, though as with many other countries in the region, separating military and political power was challenging. President Eurico Gaspar Dutra was inaugurated in 1946 in military uniform and promoted to the rank of
general (though he had retired from active service). Parties developed in this era arrayed along pro and anti-Vargas lines. The Social Democratic Party (PSD) and Brazilian Labor Party (PTB) were closely aligned with Vargas and the labor movement while the National Democratic Union (UDN) coalesced in opposition to Vargas. The Communist Party of Brazil (PCB) grew in importance in this era and smaller parties such as the Social Progressive Party (PSP) also formed. Party factionalization and gridlock led to institutional breakdown and a politically unstable environment in which factions of the armed forces threatened coups or other intervention. The military took power in 1964 and sought to reorganize the parties into an artificial two party system. Rather than disallowing all politics through policide or substituting military politics for civilian democracy, the 1964-85 military regime created the official state party, the Aliança Renovadora Nacional (ARENA), and the official opposition party, Movimento Democrático Brasileiro (MDB) to compete in managed elections. In preparation for a return to democracy (and to divide the opposition), the military government ended the two-party system in 1979, and parties proliferated. The PSD, PTB, PCB, and others returned to the electoral scene. ARENA became the Partido Democrático Social (PDS) and the MDB became the PMDB, the Partido do Movimento Democrático Brasileiro. While these parties returned, the most important political force in the country was the new labor movement turned political party, the Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT), and the PDS essentially disappeared from presidential competition after the 1989 election.

729 Hudson 1998.

730 Bello 1966; Schneider 1991.


732 PDBA 2007a.
Chile

Party formation in the democratic era: High

Nature of military rule: Policide

Party formation in the military era: Low

Political parties began to form in earnest in Chile in 1857, with the founding of the Liberal, National, and Conservative parties, aligned along the primary political cleavage of the time, the clerical-anti-clerical divide.\footnote{Moreno 1969.} The franchise was still very limited in this era, but as industrialization and urbanization grew, political space opened on the left of the Liberal party, leading to splits that led to the creation of the Radical party, the Democrat party, the Socialist party, and by 1922, the Communist party of Chile. By the mid-20th century, the major parties competing for presidential power were the Socialists, Christian Democrats, and the National Party. The parties pursued hegemonic governing strategies, seeking to exclude rather than govern by coalition. Gridlock between the parties and between branches of government was common. Socialist victory in the 1970 presidential election and the Cold War environment led the military to step into power in an effort to depoliticize the country.\footnote{Stern 2010.} Party intransigence was an important motivator for military intervention.\footnote{Huneeus 2007.} The philosophical anti-party commitment of the military regime, however, diminished its interest in and ability to create its own vehicle to compete in a renewed democratic system. The political right effectively had disbanded with the 1973 military
takeover and faced difficulty reuniting as an electoral force. As the 1988 plebiscite and 1989 election revealed, the political right’s relationship to the military regime introduced further challenges in defining a political movement and competing against the unified *concertación* movement of center-left parties returning to the political arena.

**Ecuador**

Party formation in the democratic era: Low

Nature of military rule: Restructure

Party formation in the military era: Low

The armed forces intervened routinely in Ecuadoran politics throughout the 20th century. Traditionally, the military exercised a tutelary role and these interventions took the form of deposing one civilian leader in order to install another. Military rule was only institutional in character in 1925, 1963-66, and 1972-79. Ecuador maintained democratic government for only a brief window from 1948 to 1961, and the 1956 election was widely regarded as fraudulent. Party development during this era was limited, however, as elite commitment to democratic governance was minimal. The populist José María Velasco Ibarra—elected to the presidency on five times throughout his career—won the post in 1952 with the *Concentración de Fuerzas Populares* (CFP) but had the CFP boss “arrested and deported” along with other party leaders.

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737 Angell 2007.


739 Hanratty 1991.
after taking office.\(^{740}\) He also drew support from the anti-communist Acción Revolucionaria Nacionalista Ecuatoriana (ARNE) and the conservative Movimiento Social Cristiano (MSC). The CFP nonetheless remained an important party in the country and continued to compete in presidential elections in the post-1979 era.\(^{741}\) Given the history of frequent military intervention in government, the final period of military rule (1972-79) was not out of place. The armed forces took power under a reformist model, seeking to confront social and economic challenges such as poverty and inequality as they had in 1925 and 1963-66, and as neighboring Peru was attempting with the inauguration of their 1968 revolution from above.\(^{742}\) Thus, military rule was neither an effort to destroy parties altogether, nor was it an attempt to create military parties that could persist into the democratic era.

El Salvador

Party formation in the democratic era: Low

Nature of military rule: Substitute

Party formation in the military era: High

El Salvador experienced numerous short-lived political openings during the 20\(^{th}\) century, but the country remained under effective military control from 1931 to 1980. The attempted shift from rule by the oligarchic landed class to democracy in 1931 prompted a coup d’etat that brought in Gen. Maximiliano Hernández Martínez’s 13-year personalistic dictatorship. He was ousted in 1944, and the armed forces set on a path of institutionalized political control over the


\(^{741}\) PDBA 2005.

\(^{742}\) Fitch 1998.
country, with the formation of the *Partido Revolucionario de Unificación* (PRUD) and the installation of a managed electoral system. The army held elections for president and for a national legislature in which the PRUD won every seat and opposition parties were also composed of active-duty military officers.\(^{743}\) Thus, the army was a substitute for potential civilian democratic politics. The *Partido Conciliación Nacional* (PCN) replaced the PRUD as the official state-military party in 1961. It was not an exact continuation of the previous organization, though its outlook and personnel overlapped a great deal.\(^{744}\) At times, civilian politicians entered into this system but routinely faced intimidation, being barred from participation, or an election would simply be stolen if a challenger looked to be too likely to win.

Despite consistent military rule during the 1931-80 period, I consider democratic party formation “Low” (rather than simply being “not applicable”) due to the relatively free elections in the late 1960s that allowed for the development of the Christian Democratic Party as a political force independent of the military.

**Guatemala**

Party formation in the democratic era: Low

Nature of military rule: Substitute

Party formation in the military era: High

Guatemala experienced a brief window of democracy from 1944 to 1954 known as the “Ten Years of Spring.” The 1944 revolution saw the organization of parties such as the *Partido Acción Revolucionaria* (PAR) and the *Partido Guatemalteco del Trabajo* (PGT), which served

\(^{743}\) White 1973.

\(^{744}\) Janda 1980.
as the primary bases of political action for Presidents Juan José Arévalo and Jacobo Arbenz (Di Tella 2005). Though this period is known as a democratic opening, the military was still an important actor, having brought about the revolution and having maintained powerful positions in these administrations. The democratic era was cut short in 1954 through the United States-sponsored invasion/coup under Col. Castillo Armas. The ensuing decades saw the implementation of an army-managed democratic system that supplant potential democratic competition with their own political organizations such as the Movimiento de Liberación Nacional (MLN) and Partido Institucional Democrática (PID)—both of which survived the transition to compete in the post-1986 democratic era. And, while political parties such as the Guatemalan Christian Democrats did form, the armed forces effectively captured such organizations for their own active-duty officer candidates. The armed forces also employed widespread repression, including the targeted killing of political leaders. Thus, the limited historical experience with democracy gave way to military-dominated politics and the formation of numerous military parties that substituted for competitive elections.

Honduras

Party formation in the democratic era: High

Nature of military rule: Substitute

Party formation in the military era: Low

The Liberal Party (PLH) and National Party (PNH) have been the dominant electoral actors throughout Honduras’ history. In contrast to other states in Latin America, where Liberal-
Conservative competition of the pre-20\textsuperscript{th} century oligarchic era gave way to party systems being reformulated as new elites emerged and new popular sectors were activated, Honduras has maintained its traditional party system into the contemporary era.\textsuperscript{748} Thus, Honduras is exceptional among the countries in this study, as these dominant parties developed not in a period of popular democracy that was interrupted by military rule, but rather in an environment of oligarchy in which governance traditionally excluded political rivals.\textsuperscript{749} The Liberals ruled from the late 1800s to 1932 when Tiburcio Carias Andino of the PNH came to power. He served as president until 1949 by introducing a new constitution and then by extending his term in office. The Nationalists ruled until 1954 when Carias provoked a crisis by attempting to return to the presidency in new elections. A period of confusion ensued in which Vice President Julio Lozano (PNH) seized power and declared the Liberal party illegal and drew support from his faction of the Liberal Party. A military junta took power after two years and reinstated the traditional system.\textsuperscript{750} Military rule returned again in 1963 and persisted until 1982 under Col. Oswaldo López Arellano. This instance of military rule looked different from that in many other states, however. The armed forces essentially ruled in concert with civilians, leaving the party system intact. The military favored the conservative PNH, but both of the traditional parties were participants in government. The pacted nature of military-civilian rule was most evident with the brief attempt at a PNH-PLH coalition in 1971 that resulted instead in the return of Col. López Arellano to the presidency the following year.\textsuperscript{751} Military rule in this context is distinct from

\textsuperscript{748} PDBA 2007b.

\textsuperscript{749} Woodward 1999.

\textsuperscript{750} Morris 1984.

\textsuperscript{751} Congressional and Presidential Elections won by Ruling National Party, Keesing’s Contemporary Archives, Apr 24-May 1, 1971, 24562.
other states in the study. I categorize the regime as “substituting” for civilian politics on the basis of the military capturing the existing parties for their own governing ends. This process meant there was no concerted effort by Col. López Arellano or other military leaders to create their own electoral vehicles, and it explains the high rate of “recycled dictator” presence on the major parties of the PNH and PLH in presidential contests after the 1982 transition.

Panama

Party formation in the democratic era: Low

Nature of military rule: Substitute

Party formation in the military era: Low

Panama experienced a brief window of democracy from 1960 to 1967. Prior to this period, the National Police (before 1948) and subsequently the National Guard exercised control over politics in the country, ruling along with economic elites, as was common throughout Central America at the time. Seeking to legitimize his rule, the commander of the National Police, José Antonio Remón, held elections in 1952. He created an official party, the Coalición Patriótico Nacional (CPN), just as contemporaries were doing in El Salvador and Guatemala. He pursued reform and was assassinated in office, but the CPN survived to the restrictive 1956 election in which its sole competitor was the Partido Liberal Nacional (PLN). The CPN candidate won and successfully served out his term in office. The 1960 election marked the beginning of free and fair competition that brought in a PLN candidate under the Unión Nacional Opositora (UNO). Politics was still largely in the hands of the oligarchs at this time, however, and parties primarily “served to regulate competition for political power among the leading
Parties were growing but had little time in which to organize and compete before the National Guard took power in 1968. General Omar Torrijos disbanded these parties and closed the National Assembly. Gen. Torrijos attempted to consolidate his power under the New Panama Movement—meant to emulate the *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* (PRI) of Mexico. The effort failed by 1971 but the military government was already holding elections by 1970 that led Gen. Torrijos to build a following of rural workers, students, and the communist party. Thus, the government of the National Guard under Gen. Torrijos was substituting its own political organization for independent political movements, and by 1979, his coalition was formalized as the *Partido Revolucionario Democrático* (PRD). This party survived the transition to democracy in 1989 and continues to compete in presidential elections.

**Paraguay**

Party formation in the democratic era: n/a

Nature of military rule: Substitute

Party formation in the military era: High

Prior to the 1989 overthrow of General Alfredo Stroessner, Paraguay effectively had no time under meaningful democracy, and the subsequent election of Gen. Andres Rodriguez Pedotti did not deviate substantially from the manner in which Gen. Stroessner maintained power for over 30 years. Lack of competitive democracy, however, did not prevent Gen. Stroessner from turning the Colorado Party into an important vehicle for his own political ends under

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752 Meditz and Hanratty 1989.

753 PDBA 2008.

military rule, however. He supplanted any potential civilian democratic political system with his own form of restricted, managed, or fraudulent elections that ensured he would remain in power. The depth of control exercised by the Colorado Party meant that the hegemonic party system persisted after the transition.  

Not until 2008 would an opposition candidate win the presidency.

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Peru

Party formation in the democratic era: High

Nature of military rule: Restructure

Party formation in the military era: Low

Peru experienced multiple rounds of democratic openings (1939-48, 56-62, 63-68) and military interventions prior to the final period of military rule from 1968 to 1980. As in Argentina, democratic openings came with the formation of parties that activated new popular sectors. The major parties in the democratic periods were the Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana (APRA) on the left, beginning in the 1930s, and Acción Popular (AP) and the Christian Democrats (PDC) in the center, beginning in the 1950s. The populist impulses of democracy brought repeated military intervention—initially in defense of the oligarchic system—but increasingly in an effort to address national social and economic challenges such as poverty and inequality. In 1968, the military took power and ruled in a manner characterized as

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756 PDBA 2009.


“revolution from above.” The armed forces quickly occupied all top posts of government, giving every ministerial portfolio to an active-duty general or admiral. The military government pursued a clientelistic form of mass participation that would channel citizen mobilization through military-controlled corporatist institutions. The first phase of military rule under Gen. Juan Velasco Alvarado (1968-75) took the form of a “radical” regime to in keeping with long-standing rivalry between APRA and the military, rather than seeking to destroy all politics or to create military parties. The second phase under Gen. Francisco Morales Bermudez departed from the corporatist model and moved toward free market reform and eventual transition to democracy beginning in 1978 with elections to the Constituent Assembly and presidential elections in 1980. APRA and AP once again resumed their positions as the major parties in the early period of re-democratization.

Uruguay

Party formation in the democratic era: High
Nature of military rule: Policide
Party formation in the military era: Low

The two traditional political parties throughout Uruguayan history—Colorados and Blancos (or Liberals and Nationals)—were pre-democratic political groupings that persisted into

759 Trimberger 1978.
761 Dietz 1976.
the modern era. In the early decades of the 1900s, these two parties competed for power in elections with varying degrees of openness. As with many other states in the region, the worst of the Great Depression brought authoritarian reversal, which persisted until 1942 with the beginning of 30 years of modern democracy, still dominated by the traditional Liberal and National parties. The military coup in 1973 broke with the country’s democratic tradition and brought military government characterized by high levels of political repression that included dissolving the General Assembly, restricting party activity, and using widespread torture and political imprisonment. The military attempted to further its rule through popular referendum in 1980, but it was rejected by the voters, and the traditional parties began to return with the 1982 Political Parties Law. As the country re-democratized, the parties that pre-dated the 1973-85 military regime returned to dominate presidential elections, with the Colorados, Nationals, and Christian Democrats consistently splitting 90% or more of the vote among them in every contest since the transition.

765 Hudson and Meditz 1990.
## Appendix C: Recycled Dictator Candidacies in Latin America, 1979-2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Candidate Name</th>
<th>Political Party</th>
<th>Election Year</th>
<th>National Vote Share (%)</th>
<th>Role in Military Regime</th>
<th>Military/Civilian</th>
<th>Government/Non-Government</th>
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<td>Movimiento por la Dignidad y la Independencia (MODIN)</td>
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<td>Conferencia para que se vayan todos</td>
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