CHILE REINVENTS DEMOCRACY*

Paulo J. Krischke
Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, Brasil

LO SOCIAL Y LO POLITICO: UN DILEMA DEL MOVIMIENTO POPULAR. By Rodrigo Baño. (Santiago: FLACSO, 1985. Pp. 197.)
LA POLITICA COMO COMPROMISO DEMOCRATICO. By Angel Flisfisch. (Santiago: FLACSO, 1987. Pp. 371.)
UN ESPEJO TRIZADO: ENSAYOS SOBRE CULTURA Y POLITICAS CULTURALES. By José Joaquín Brunner. (Santiago: FLACSO, 1988. Pp. 470.)
LOS PATIOS INTERIORES DE LA DEMOCRACIA: SUBJETIVIDAD Y POLITICA. By Norbert Lechner. (Santiago: FLACSO, 1988. Pp. 189.)
LA POSIBILIDAD DEMOCRATICA EN CHILE. By Manuel Antonio Garretón. (Santiago: FLACSO, 1989. Pp. 72.)

The plebiscite that derailed the Pinochet regime in October 1988 and the elections of December 1989 have called attention to the antecedents of the process of democratization now occurring in Chile. Recent studies carried out by FLACSO researchers in Chile shed light on this issue by providing a wealth of information about the transformations in Chilean society during the past decade and also about the role and self-definition of intellectuals in the context of political democratization. This essay will discuss these two dimensions of Chilean democratization in the five books under review, recognizing in advance the impossibility of covering all aspects of the subject. Rather, my hope is to stimulate debate about aspects of democratization of special interest to readers and researchers in other countries.

The focus adopted here of distinguishing between social democratization and political democracy was suggested by the books themselves, which all differentiate the two dimensions carefully (although they consider various relations between the two). As will be shown, it makes sense to distinguish between democratization in the social sphere (in terms of values and orientations, modernization of behavior, access to socioeconomic equality, and related aspects) versus transformation of the political regime in the sense of democratic institutionalization. In the current

*This review essay was translated by Sharon Kellum, with support from the Tinker Foundation.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0023879100023657 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Chilean transition, this stage implies a genuine "reinvention" of democracy in the light of the country's particular history.

Before addressing the subject, it should be noted that these five authors are not representative of FLACSO research as a whole, much less the entire range (or even the leadership) of democratic intellectuals in Chile. While FLACSO-Chile's salience in promoting academic research and development throughout the country and Latin America as well is widely acknowledged, the social sciences in Chile in the last fifteen years have experienced a proliferation of groups and research centers that have produced countless studies, publications, and cultural programs. All these entities have greatly furthered understanding of the current Chilean democratization. Nevertheless, in presenting Chilean research to readers in other countries, it seemed appropriate to focus on FLACSO authors because their work evidences a clear comparative orientation within the Latin American context. I will first address the transformations in Chilean society during the 1980s and then consider the proposals for political democratization and the role of Chilean intellectuals.

Transformations in Chilean Society during the 1980s

As presented in these studies, Chile displays one facet of striking continuities with the past and another of great discontinuities generated under the military regime. One facet consists of the sociopolitical identities that have persisted remarkably (in terms of cultural traditions, party symbols, and collective memory) under repressive and clandestine conditions. They have nevertheless suffered progressive differentiation due to forced reorganization in the public arenas emerging as alternatives to the old institutional channels and also due to cultural influences. The discontinuities include divisions in social classes, sectoral and corporative struggles to appropriate income and property, and socioeconomic inequalities maintained and exacerbated under the exclusionary regime.

Rodrigo Baño's *Lo social y lo político: un dilema clave del movimiento popular* rigorously maps the evolution of urban popular movements in the unions and neighborhoods (*poblaciones*). He demonstrates how social and economic demands in the mid-1980s led to a rapid politicization of distributive conflicts in the absence of legitimate institutional channels under the military regime. Baño presents impressive data, like his figures on growth in unemployment and the decline in real salaries over the decade, and he also describes various strategies adopted by labor and other popular movements for confronting the problems of deteriorating living conditions. Baño believes that the "objective politicization" of the social movements vis-à-vis the state has not been accompanied by a "subjective politicization" that would have led these movements to unity of action and projects of transformation.

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0023879100023657 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Baño employs the classic dichotomy between community and society to highlight the differences between objective and subjective politicization of the union movements as compared with the neighborhood movements, on the one hand, and between the entire social movement and the political parties in an authoritarian context, on the other. He concludes that the "split between the social and the political spheres translates into a separation between parties and social movement" (p. 184). But according to Alain Touraine, historical reconstruction coming out of the trajectory of social movements centers around characterization of various conflicts that organize these actors into new "popular subjects" oriented toward an "alternative popular project," however incipient under the authoritarian regime. Baño explains, "A union movement [is] defined by the contradiction between capital and labor as manifested in the particular relations of production of any given firm [whereas] a movement encompassing neighborhoods is not defined by the capital-labor relationship. In the end, the issue is fundamentally political, which may not be obvious in an era of 'institutional normalcy' but reflects the characteristics of domination also present" (p. 186).

We will see subsequently how these outcomes relate to party politics and proposals for democratization. But the tasks of reorganizing the public sphere can be perceived here, from the beginning of the decade (and more dramatically with the "pot-bangings" and national protests of 1983), as demands emerging from changes in the course of Chilean society (mainly in terms of objective and subjective politicization). Or perhaps the socioeconomic and political problems left unresolved since the coup in 1973 led the popular sectors to demand real solutions unlike those proposed in the past.

José Joaquín Brunner, in *Un espejo trizado: ensayos sobre cultura y políticas culturales*, links these transformations to relations now existing between a heterogeneous culture and society:

> Cultural heterogeneity means, after all, something quite distinct from diverse cultures or subcultures of ethnic groups, classes, or regions, something more than the mere overlay of cultures, whether or not they have found a form of synthesis. Cultural heterogeneity actually means segmented and varying participation in an international market of messages that "penetrate" the local framework of culture from all sides in unexpected ways, leading to a veritable implosion of the meanings consumed, produced, or reproduced and to a consequent destructuring of collective representations, failures in identity, longings for identification, confusion of temporal horizons, paralysis of creative imagination, loss of utopias, fragmentation of local memory, and obsolescence of traditions. (P. 218)

Hence comes Brunner's metaphor of the "cracked mirror," in which the identifying-rationalist logic of modernity is negated by the "anomie" of actors constantly divided by the pre- and postmodern logics of their contradictory constitution. In the Chilean case (and with possible exten-

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sion to other democratization processes in Latin America), Brunner perceives in this heterogeneity the confrontation between what he describes as two communication modalities (*regímenes comunicativos*):

> One modality structured around the military government operates through the combined effect of repression, the market, and television. The other modality, which is weaker, more scattered, less institutionalized, and has a variable local range, is structured around opposition organizations and initiatives. The former develops from the top down and is controlled in a rather centralized manner. The latter rises from below, has multiple centers of articulation, and operates in the spaces it manages to create or in gaps in the official system. The official communication modality is necessarily antipolitical and abhors the tumult of collective voices, while the opposition communication modality stimulates politics and promotes representation of collective expressions. (P. 74)

In this context, Brunner observes, "daily reality is experienced as a strange amalgam of judgments and interpretations competing for individuals' attention and seeking to legitimize themselves according to their pertinence to opposing systems of communication. . . . The country survives on its own as an implosion of images, none of them having enough force to establish meaning that can be generalized and shared. A special kind of *anomie* rules day-to-day events" (p. 75).

Thus Baño's initial diagnosis of a split between the social and political spheres takes on more drastic overtones when Brunner incorporates the effects of cultural heterogeneity into the analysis. The issue transcends the impasses of the social movements' incomplete politicization when faced with the exclusionary political regime to consider the dilemmas faced by democratic sectors in trying to broaden the coherence and inclusiveness of their "communication modality."

Angel Flisfisch's *La política como compromiso democrático* makes normative and institutional proposals for fulfilling and consolidating the processes of democratization. He also retraces the emergence in authoritarian regimes of the Southern Cone of a "new democratic ideology," which he views as "defensive forms" of political action by contemporary social movements in Chile—the feminist movement, sectors of the Left, and the church (see pp. 98–100). Flisfisch perceives in these actions the rise of three "human models"—the "liberated person," the dissident, and the individual with human rights. He characterizes them as "three orienting figures" that "represent regulating principles, thus forming an ethics of politics" based on four dimensions: "First, the idea of self-government. Second, the idea of expanding the areas subject to personal control. Third, the idea of a necessary dispersing or socializing of power. Fourth, the idea of restoring to the collectivity (and simultaneously superseding) the personal capacities and potentials lost in the interplay of social structures, which had become autonomous of the women and men who endured them" (p. 100).

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This emerging democratic ideology embodies a "reinforcement of civil society" by valuing the ethical contents of democracy as well as expressive and participatory forms of political action—in "anti-statist" counterpoint to what Flisfisch characterizes as "the Napoleonic conception," which traditionally considers the state and the government as holding the monopoly on political rationality. Flisfisch does not minimize constitutionalist and democratic-institutional traditions as part of the political legacy to be restored (mainly in Chile). But in the context of authoritarian regimes, the combined violation of human rights, negation of public values of citizenship, and forced privatization in a fragmented daily life have all made the ethical contents of democracy a priority for countering the exclusionary logics of the state and the market.

Flisfisch's approach thus underlines the ethical-normative dimension as fundamental to appreciating the transformations of Chilean society under the Pinochet regime. To get beyond the socioeconomic and political dilemmas of the popular movements (as discussed by Baño) or even the "anomic" cultural fragmentation of the population (as outlined by Brunner), one must recognize the new values emerging in society in opposition to authoritarianism. Adding to the situation are the problems of overcoming "Napoleonic" forms of equating politics strictly with the state or political society in the narrow sense of the political party system. The democratization process that succeeds will be the one capable of including the new actors emerging—new social movements, sectors of the churches, and dissidents of various kinds who can verbalize the "voice of the voiceless" to defend values, individual and minority rights, and all those marginalized and dominated in Chilean society.

Of course, this antistatist orientation must be modified in a progressive proposal for building democratic institutions. But its ethical standards reveal a broad reformulation in Chilean daily life that is not necessarily antipolitical. This topic is the main focus of Norbert Lechner's essays in *Los patios interiores de la democracia: subjetividad y política*, which attempts to "look beyond [institutional] politics." Lechner asserts, "In order to carry out political reform, we must above all undertake a reform of politics" in which "the inquiry turns toward less tangible aspects generally neglected by democracy," such as "the daily experience of the people, their hopes and fears." According to Lechner, "democracy, which depends so much on public scrutiny for its development, also hides backyards," corners representing "the cognitive-affective substrate of democracy." Lechner proposes to explore these hidden areas in order to "get a different perspective on politics" (pp. 18–19).

In discussing daily life under the Pinochet regime, Lechner focuses on Chilean "discontent with the usual ways of conducting politics":

Even when the old party loyalties survive the military regime, the common people

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find it difficult to objectify in the parties the sense of social setting and collective belonging. To the extent that the political organizations, which are increasingly specialized (bureaucratized) and remote from the daily life of the common people, no longer believe in nor assure collective identities, such identities must reorganize around the edges and in opposition to the institutions. Also weakened are spheres of informal sociability (like the neighborhood, the soccer club, or the university itself), where emotions and passions, memories and dreams are shared and where collective referents are formed. (P. 52)

On this basis, Lechner considers the "culture of fear" generated under the military regime as deriving from the foundations of "a violated order": "Fear, above all, of a life without meaning, stripped of roots, deprived of any future. These kinds of hidden fears, the price every Chilean has had to pay to survive, support the exercise of authoritarian power" (p. 97). Lechner continues, "By producing the loss of collective referents, the deconstruction of future horizons, the erosion of social criteria about what is normal, possible, and desirable, authoritarianism whets the vital need for order and presents itself as the only solution" (p. 98). Dictatorships continually create new fears: "they profoundly disrupt routines and social habits by making even daily life untenable. As normalcy disappears, the sense of helplessness grows, [and] . . . a moral apathy develops. . . . Discontent with the existing state of things becomes narcissistic, self-complacent, and finally self-destructive. . . . Thus authoritarianism's tendency to disrupt collective identities ends up undermining its own basis for legitimacy. The promise to bring order turns out to be an excruciating experience of disorder" (pp. 100–101).

For this reason, according to Lechner, the democratic project must "assume our fears and insecurities" to prevent authoritarian manipulation and must contain them acceptably within the construct of a feasible future. Like Brunner, Lechner relates sociocultural heterogeneity to the emergence of "postmodernity" or "incomplete modernization" (to use Habermas's phrase). He also relates it to the need for collective referents offering a minimum of security and shared values assuring an emerging democratic ethos in society (as noted by Flisfisch). Without neglecting the institutional aspects of democratization's future, Lechner's diagnosis underscores the generalized nature of the search for collective referents, its strategic importance in confronting authoritarianism, and its extra-institutional relevance for creating a new democratic order: "In sum, to take on the uncertainty of a history without a subject or goals is a disillusioning experience, necessary but insufficient. We develop a disenchanted vision only if we take seriously the demands of enchantment. Political realism justly must make us see that uncertainty brings with it the search for certainty. *If democracy is born out of uncertainty, does it not arise precisely to respond to that uncertainty?*" (p. 137).[1]

Manuel Antonio Garretón's *La posibilidad democrática en Chile* (writ-

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ten after the opposition victory in 1988), diagnoses the decade's transformation by focusing mainly on the institutional sphere: "In Chile, . . . democratization has occurred only via political democracy" as a sine que non. Garretón therefore considers it appropriate to postpone the ethical-cultural and socioeconomic demands for democratization until the consolidation phase of the democratic transition because "in political democracies, the ones who create democratization are the political majorities" (pp. 14–15). This interpretation of the long-term Chilean experience explains for Garretón why the opposition transformed "its social majority into a political majority . . . and the latter into an electoral majority" in the plebiscite called by the military regime (p. 29).

In Garretón's view, this victory was only possible after overcoming "the obstacles that had held the opposition back since it gained access to the public arena in 1983 with the national protests" (p. 46). These obstacles resulted from the opposition's inability to formulate a proposal for "democratic transition from below": "this social force did not become a political force in a horizontal sense, or perhaps for historical or functional reasons did not envision a unifying formula for transition until February 1988," when an accord was reached on participating in the October plebiscite (pp. 23–24).

Moreover,

> this social force did not become a political force in a vertical sense. Basically, what developed was a social mobilization of multiple meanings that involved repairing the social fabric and favored agitation. Above all, this movement possessed symbolic and expressive value in its affirmation of identity, belonging, dignity, and rejection of subjugation. . . . The inability to transform the social force into the political force for transition is partly explained . . . by the transformations experienced over the past fifteen years, which gave rise to a type of society and a type of "mass situation." It was well expressed in the form of the protests, for example. They, however, were not tied to any political formula but rather to expressing a hope or positive wishes (like "Democracy Now"), which completely skipped over the institutional issue of *how to achieve that goal*. (Pp. 24–25)

According to Garretón, the passage from social mobilization to political transition (and on to "consolidation of democracy") involves creating new political actors: "If one factor can be associated with founding, restoring, and consolidating democracy, it is the *desirability* of democracy by the various significant actors. This desire for a democratic regime organizes the *democratic actors* by converting structural factors or conditions into categories of historical action" (p. 64).

The answer was not to discard preexisting political identities, even under repression, but to support their reorganization into democratic political actors that could inject themselves into the public arena in a unified manner with a transition project relevant to the historical moment.

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Proposals for Democratization and the Role of Chilean Intellectuals

The five works under review present a critical vision and varying proposals for transforming the Chilean political scene in a democratic direction. Baño, for example, devotes an entire section to discussing the "urban popular movement from the perspective of political tendencies," which leads him to emphasize "the split between the social and the political spheres, [which] translates into a separation between parties and social movement. Yet this schism implies not a lack of relations but relations between leaderships (which are interchangeable at times) because in circumstances where no individual space exists for citizens, the social movement seems to be the condition for the party's existence" (p. 184).

As we have seen, this statement represents Baño's critique in underlining the alternative character of the "popular project" emerging from the social movements and also denouncing the primarily "statist" orientation of party politics:

> The statist character of party politics impedes the development of sectoral politics and national politics. . . . The party invokes the abstract nation, the entire society, which it claims to represent or direct as a whole without integrating the existing social movements. . . . If we add the dominance of the intellectual as political subject, we have the bases for understanding why this splintering of political parties is accompanied by discourse as a style of conducting politics. Discourse is the mechanism for bringing together the anonymous and fragmented people. It reveals that the social situation is taken to be a "mass situation," before which the leader (the party) projects itself as a subject that the mass will begin to recognize as the start of its own identity. (Pp. 178–79)

Although Baño recognizes the historic precedent established by the "moment of party politics" beginning with the protests in 1983, he emphasizes its weaknesses, mainly the lack of incorporation or any solution to the main dilemma—the "split between the social and the political spheres." Baño attributes many of these weaknesses to the political and intellectual sectors of the Left (despite the renewal they were going through under the dictatorship):

> The most novel concept, which was formulated by "renovated" socialism in the 1970s, is closely linked to the modern preoccupation with social movements. This concept does not seem to have been developed far enough theoretically, nor has it been shaped effectively in the so-called sociopolitical movements. . . . Most of the intellectuals who subscribe to this tendency (strongly influenced by Touraine and the European critique of existing socialisms) ended up separating social movements from parties again, emphasizing the demand-making ability of social movements and the democratic institutional arena of parties. (P. 181)

Although Baño has probably reformulated his critique in light of recent developments (his book was published in 1985), the radical meaning of his diagnosis remains clear. In the mid-1980s, political democratization arose mainly as a threat of returning to the institutional problems

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existing before the coup in 1973, now swollen by social demands and an alternative "popular project" that did not seem compatible with a democratic transition. Implicit in Baño's diagnosis is the demand for a new kind of democratic political actor, one capable of overcoming the "split between the social and political spheres" and eventually representing the new "alternative popular project" emerging from the social movements.

Brunner's political appraisal takes another drastic step in proposing an institutional exit toward democratization. His "cracked mirror" reflects the social and party fragmentation of the "mass society." But it also reflects the cultural diversity achieved in Chile (and Latin America) as a pluralist value of the modern era (however stunted and incomplete in countries on the "periphery"), a value to be deepened and reoriented during political democratization. Brunner goes on to suggest, "It may be that democracy is effectively the only setting in which this cultural mix, this heterogeneity, these cognitive and affective dissonances of perceptions and languages can manifest themselves without each component demanding the others' elimination as a condition for existence, thus insisting on exclusion in one of its thousand contemporary forms" (p. 256).

Following an extensive discussion of the "models of cultural politics" and their application to party proposals in Chile, Brunner concludes that "*democratic* cultural policies should be considered and designed primarily according to a liberal or Toquevillean model, which features the combined presence of private and public agents regulated by the market, the government, and the community. And when attempting to implement these policies, they can be considered as issuing from *civil society* (not from the state) under a Gramscian model, or a model of hegemonic competition" (p. 377).

In the Latin American context, particularly during transitions to democracy, cultural politics will undoubtedly have to be revised, as will the role of intellectuals. According to Brunner,

> In a country like ours, after the experience of the last twenty years or so, intellectuals evidently find themselves deprived of certainties. . . . The theories they embraced, their "paradigms" or "grand pronouncements" on history have been cracked or hopelessly shattered. . . . It is late to be talking about the *responsibility of the intellectual*, but it surely has to do with the uncertainties of history—especially in a democracy, where decisions must be made in circumstances that render outcomes uncertain. Moreover, the very exercise of thinking and speaking, supposedly the irreducible core of the intellectual task, is subject to this uncertainty about effects, to the constant back and forth between inconclusive arguments, between words and things, between meanings that do not hold up—in short, subject to the natural uncertainty that follows when one never again claims to be in the position of having the last word. (Pp. 470–71)

Here Brunner criticizes the "statism" of the politics of democratization in terms of strategic analysis (or the "interdependent decision" of the

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actors, according to Adam Przeworski, whom he cites). Brunner is trying to "de-dramatize" politics by unburdening it of the "ideological inflation" (to employ Albert Hirschman's phrase) characteristic of traditional political actors. This approach assumes that it can be more faithful to the cultural heterogeneity of the modern "society of masses," respecting the differing contents and individual and sectoral values emerging in it while delimiting the range of feasible and necessary accords—from democratic institutionalization to a "cold" (uncontroversial) core of durable procedures of political coexistence, which is considered valuable in itself.

Of the five authors, Flisfisch takes this perspective to the greatest extreme (drawing mainly on the ideas of Jon Elster, another "analytic Marxist"). Because Flisfisch emphasizes the "reinforcement of civilian society" in light of the new "democratic ideology" emerging in social movements against authoritarianism, he can speak of "politics as a democratic compromise" that neither sacrifices nor trades off these values and ideals but rather protects and orients them:

> By definition, the style inherent in the contractual elaboration of order issuing from political society implies a modality of *deliberate* internalization of the crisis. . . . [A] reasonably authentic strategy is being unfolded here, not by a monolithic state actor but by a coalition of actors maintaining cooperative relations among themselves. . . . The style of conducting politics implied makes alliances and coalitions a major political issue. In this scenario, politics is viewed in terms of a coalitional arrangement: the political chances themselves (electoral or other), whose maximization is the basic goal of the parties' traditional behavior, is subordinated to the goal of achieving broadly inclusive sociopolitical alliances. Politics now attempts to maximize this goal. A related requirement is a political society completely open to civil society, with full representation of the *world of the excluded.* A political society run by an oligarchy, which would not make room for this world, would be identical to the model of unilateral imposition by the state and would therefore face all the insoluble problems already analyzed. (Pp. 324–25)

Clearly, it is impossible to retrace every step in the five analyses, but their points of convergence permit gradual clarifying of the strategies for overcoming authoritarianism and building democracy. Among their common emphases is the necessity of reexamining the formulas of traditional politics, Flisfisch's "Napoleonic conception of politics." In this traditional "statist" conception, the intellectual's role would be "advisor to the prince," according to the Machiavellian model. Flisfisch explains, "In the contemporary period, this idea has been associated with an equivalent social figure: the *technocrat*. Since the modernization model was displaced by the development paradigm, the relation between the social sciences and reality—civil and political society versus the state—has been interpreted according to this kind of instrumental logic" (p. 20).

Flisfisch's study criticizes this instrumental view of the "paradigm of the prince," which he associates with the "philosophy of history" and

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its legitimizing intellectual functions within the "Napoleonic" statist model of politics:

Its first and basic function lies in identifying several ends that are objectively assignable to the course of history. The supposition that one is dealing with genuine ends, besides reinforcing the expert's partial knowledge, allows one to resolve the general problem of legitimacy by seeking justification when employing the coercive resources of the state. This philosophy of history also identifies an agent or agents, historically privileged, who are summoned to fulfill the tasks of development implied by the identifiable ultimate ends in history. This historic privilege allows not only justifying fixed positions in society—property owners, the party and its functionaries, and so on—but devaluing society's resistance to state and governmental action: such resistance is wrongheaded and therefore irrational; furthermore, its protagonists are condemned by history itself. Consequently, to repress them is to act in harmony with history, clearing its path by eradicating useless outgrowths.

Finally, this philosophy of history claims to possess wisdom or knowledge of the future. Beyond its scientific pretensions or other kinds of guarantees (such as religious faith expressed in a wish for life after death), this supposed knowledge has the virtue of removing politics from the contemporary world where it is being wielded by displacing its meaning to a space and time that are definitely not worldly . . . , thus desecularizing politics by transcendentalizing it. (Pp. 284–85)

Flisfisch counters this model and paradigm with the idea of the institutional accord, but he distinguishes it carefully from the simple "compromise state" or the "political marketplace" because

the latter conceptualization rests on an image of society differing in no way from that of Hobbes. . . . Such a society basically consists of clashes of interests—not necessarily individual interests but perhaps group interests, corporate interests corresponding to various sectors, or more encompassing interests imputable to larger conglomerations like classes. Yet Hobbes's state of nature does not vary. Possessive individualism must yield to possessive corporativism and so on, with the main feature continuing to be the clash of interests. (P. 287)

According to Flisfisch, just as the Napoleonic model errs in desecularizing politics, the model of the political marketplace or the compromise state oversecularizes politics: "The risk of oversecularization derives from the essentially instrumental nature attributed to politics, a common characterization in these two conceptual models. To avoid this risk, this instrumental nature must be relegated to a secondary role in order to highlight the presence in political activity of certain values that only politics can consummate. This requirement involves seeking an ethical basis for politics that is inherent in it, some essential dimension of its definition that permits rejecting the legitimation of politics on any basis external to it, as happens when a philosophy of history is invoked" (pp. 291–92).

In reaching an accord on the values inherent in politics, the role of intellectuals is redefined as combining "critical reason with invention," "invention being understood as identifying the plausible or possible state

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of the facts on a rational basis. Then the social scientist is neither the academic nor the advisor to princes nor the prophet but the producer of inventions" (p. 23).

For such inventions to become effective social innovations during democratization, they must meet two general criteria according to Flisfisch:

> First, the path from invention to innovation should be a complex chain of mediations strongly anchored in civil and political society. If democracy means . . . the opportunity for the people and the lawful majorities to intervene, this complex demand for mediation is an obligation. Also central to this path is the idea that critical and positive knowledge must be transformed into mass common sense to be effective. From this perspective, the social scientist is also an educator, an intellectual functioning in the classic Gramscian sense, on behalf not of the individual or collective prince but of liberating critical reason and national mass culture. (P. 24)

Lechner, consistent with his appraisal of daily life and the extra-institutional dimension of politics, stresses the ethical-evaluative element (or "precontractual" element) of the democratic accord:

> I think of the possibility of pacifying our fears of the other, that strange and different being, and of assuming this uncertainty as a condition for the other's freedom. Because democracy means more than mere tolerance. It means recognizing the other as a participant in producing a shared future. A democratic process, unlike an authoritarian regime, allows—and demands—that we discover the future as an intersubjective elaboration and the otherness of the other as that of an "alter ego." Viewed thus, the other's freedom, his or her unfathomableness, ceases to be a threat to one's own identity and becomes the condition for one's own development. (P. 107)

Adopting this ethical referent (transcendent-processual, in John Rawls's approach) of a shared future breathes life into initiatives of interaction that can challenge the rest of society to establish mutual trust and overcome their fear and daily isolation. Lechner explains, "Trust is not something that can be demanded from another; it begins by being given to another. Trust is bestowed by signaling to the other certain expectations of oneself, with the promise of fulfilling them. . . . Trust is therefore a risky act of anticipation: one pledges oneself to specific future conduct without knowing whether the other person will respond to it. It is a voluntary offer; the other can accept the show of trust or not. . . . But once the other person responds to the trust offered, the other pledges himself or herself" (p. 83). Lechner admits the necessity of going beyond intersubjectivity in establishing the normative assumptions of legitimacy and democratic legality. But he insists that he will not focus on "the reciprocity of expectations based on legal order, although it is the most important. From the realist perspective, the prelegal field holds more interest as the diffuse sphere where social and moral obligations are created that allow hope that the other will fulfill legal prescriptions effectively. . . . Being

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realists, we refer more to what the other *can do* and not to what he or she should or should not do" (p. 80).

In this interactive context of ethical realism arises the significance of a new kind of secularized democratic intellectual. According to Lechner, "Today the complex social differentiation in South America no longer allows one to conceive of the struggle for liberty and equality in essentialist terms. . . . The use of Marx has lost its quasi-religious connotation . . . [in] a kind of settling of accounts with 'the Marxisms' and simultaneous efforts to actualize that tradition as *a point of departure* for thinking about the democratic transformation of society" (p. 31). He continues, "What would seem to demand a secularized conception [of politics] is renouncing utopia as an achievable goal, but without abandoning utopia as the referent by which we conceive of what is real and determine what is possible. A major task of democratization is thus established: changing the political culture" (p. 40).

In Lechner's view, this change has already been partially achieved: "Largely because of intellectuals of the Left, democracy has been determined to be the main task of society. Constructing the social order is [now] conceived of as the *democratic transformation of the society*" (p. 41). This outcome resulted partly from the new way in which intellectuals have reoriented their activities: "The analysis of the *social* scientist will always be an *interpretation* whose validity depends not only on the conventions within the scientific community but equally on the intersubjective recognition of those who were studied. . . . Society is not only the 'material' but simultaneously the 'interpreter' of that material" (p. 59). Lechner concludes, "To reform society is to discern the competing logics and reinforce those tendencies we think are best. The result will not be a pure and definitive social order. On the contrary, our societies will continue to be as contradictory and precarious as life itself—and for that very reason, they will be creative processes" (p. 189).

Certainly, the ethical intersubjectivity emerging in the new democratic political culture requires the institutionalization of a new political and legal order that can provide the historical referent of normative stability. This passage from "invention" to democratic "innovation" (using Flisfisch's terms) must penetrate to the core of the authoritarian regime, tipping the strategic significance of the November 1988 plebiscite in favor of democracy. Such a "moment of the political parties" (in Baño's anticipatory phrase) presupposed as a condition for democracy's success a "de-sacralization" of the traditional ideological "overload," allowing reentry into the political arena according to a strategic calculation and thus the meaningful reorganization of a competitive institutional setting as an end in itself.

Garretón's *La posibilidad democrática en Chile* describes the institutional emergence of democracy, which must take place within the space defined by the institutions of the Chilean military regime:

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0023879100023657 Published online by Cambridge University Press

> If the [institutional] space were neutral and provided equal guarantees to the regime and the opposition, we would not be living under a dictatorship. . . . Under a dictatorship, everyone always plays by the regime's rules of the game unless they are ignored, and then the most probable outcome is only a mobilized population or perhaps a revolution if an opposing military power exists, but there is no transition. A transition presumes a space for resolving conflict, and under a dictatorship, this space must be one defined by the regime. . . . In Chile, for example, no consensual formula was developed by the opposition for conducting a transition until 1988. The opposition never said in unison, "Look, either a constitutional reform or a plebiscite now," when the people were in the streets in 1983. . . . Now the opposition's problem is whether it can propose or impose its own space. (Pp. 18–19)

Garretón analyzes the impasses in legitimizing and institutionalizing the authoritarian regime in terms of its dual nature (unique in the Southern Cone) as a personal dictatorship and a military regime. The contradictions inherent in this situation, as well as the legality assumed in the 1980 plebiscite, opened opportunities in 1988 for the democratic opposition to confront Pinochet's attempts to legitimize his staying in power. Garretón maintains that in this context, the 1988 plebiscite "unleashed a dynamic of transition, regardless of the alternatives" (p. 28).

The government of transition elected in December 1989 will be charged with completing the institutional tasks of transition to democracy, trying to overcome the authoritarian enclaves. Garretón refers to these enclaves as "constitutional aspects, the political power of the armed forces, possible political exclusions, unresolved human rights problems, the absence of democratization of local and state power, etc." (p. 31). The second large undertaking of the transition government will be "to initiate the tasks of overall democratization that will assure . . . consolidation of a democratic regime" (p. 32). Garretón conceives of this democratization as "growing equalization of opportunities, incorporation into modern social life, participation and creation of collective subjects and actors, all of which implies envisioning a complete social change" (p. 36).

Undoubtedly, the breadth of these objectives will lead to setbacks and to difficult negotiations with the dominant political actors of the military regime. The democratic project will seek to involve many of them (mainly the political parties of the Right) in its institutionalization or to politically neutralize others (the armed forces and the business associations) via the majoritarian legitimacy of the democratic alternative. Garretón specifies step-by-step what the priorities of the transition government should be in moving toward democratic consolidation, and he discusses the institutions, actors, and symbols of the authoritarian enclaves in terms of overcoming them gradually by consensual means (pp. 51–63).

But the basic premise of the opposition project is the existence (and expansion) of the "democratic subject" that won in the 1988 plebiscite: the unity of democratic political forces that succeeded in transforming their

https://doi.org/10.1017/S0023879100023657 Published online by Cambridge University Press

"social majority" into a "political and electoral majority." As Garretón elaborates,

One condition for consolidating a successful transition is configuring a coalition of the Center and the Left, initially led by the Center but with the possibility of change in leadership. The problem here is the old theme of the relations of the Christian Democrats with the Communist party and of the Socialists with the Communists. In this regard, a unified and renewed Socialist force can play a significant role in organizing the coalition, which should maintain basic continuity with the one that won the plebiscite, thus changing the traditional balance within the Left. (Pp. 62–63)

It would be difficult for the outside observer to understand how much this proposal differs from previous attempts at democratic coalition-building in Chile without considering the sociocultural transformations and political settings analyzed by the other four authors. This capacity for strategic analysis also illustrates the repositioning of Chilean intellectuals during democratization, which is summarized perceptively by Garretón in defining the collective "democratic subject": "There are no social and political actors that are 'essentially' democratic. In other words, what can be called the 'democratic subject' is not incarnated unequivocally in any particular actor but contradictorily among diverse actors, who may change position constantly with regard to this subject. . . . Here I am discussing the democratic project in the sense of regime, as a subject or principle of historical action that requires actors to be implemented" (pp. 64, 72, n. 12).

If any further conclusion can be added, it is that democracy in Chile will be possible to the extent that the majority of Chileans want it and to the degree that important political and social leaders (the FLACSO researchers among them) begin to agree on the unconditional "desirability" of democracy. The encouraging aspect of these FLACSO studies is their demonstration that an authoritarian regime is undermined by its internal (or international) contradictions but also by new democratizing actors capable of reexamining their past experiences, mistakes, and divisions for the sake of building a common future.

NOTE

1. Emphasis in the original in this and all other citations.

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