

Segmented Party–Voter Linkages in Latin America: The Case of the UDI*

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Abstract. By analysing the socially segmented party–voter linkages deployed by the *Unión Demócrata Independiente* (Independent Democratic Union, UDI), a Chilean conservative party, this article demonstrates the usefulness of combining Kitschelt’s party–voter linkage framework with Gibson’s conceptual approach to conservative party electoral coalition-making. In Latin America, parties take advantage of social fragmentation and the availability of non-state campaign financing to combine multiple linkage types and thus attract socially diverse constituencies. Although it is an opposition party, UDI’s historical trajectory and organisation have enabled it to receive private funds from its traditional and party-identified core constituency (business and conservative sectors), whose programmatic preferences and interests it represents, and then use these resources in a ‘charismatic’ mobilisation approach and particularistic exchanges with a non-core constituency (low-income, non-traditional voters of the radical right), in a segmented, but nationally integrated, electoral strategy.

Keywords: Chile, UDI, conservative parties, party–voter linkages, clientelism

Introduction

This article explains why the rightist *Unión Demócrata Independiente* (Independent Democratic Union, UDI), a relatively new party with strong ties to the former military regime headed by General Augusto Pinochet, is today the party with the most seats in the Chilean Congress. I argue that the UDI’s involvement with Pinochet’s regime and its ties to business and socially conservative groups such as Opus Dei and the Legionnaires of Christ help explain its electoral performance since 1989 in its core constituency: the

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upper socio-economic segments of Chilean society.¹ However, the UDI has also become more successful than other parties at recruiting voters amongst the poorest segments of Chilean society, including some historical strongholds of the left. This strategy has enabled the Chilean right to show a ‘new face’, downplaying factors such as its authoritarian past that still hinder its electoral growth in other social groups.²

In explaining the UDI’s electoral growth I argue that this party has pursued a dual representational strategy by extracting economic resources in exchange for ideological and interest representation from its ‘vote-poor, resource-rich’ core constituency in order to capture the votes of its non-core ‘vote-rich, resource-poor’ constituency.³ This was accomplished by developing a powerful grassroots network that structures non-programmatic linkages with poor constituents. During the dictatorship, the UDI was able to penetrate local politics and build its clientelistic machine using state resources.⁴ However, after the transition to democracy the UDI relied on private donations to feed its local networks. The party’s electoral growth in its non-core constituency was also triggered by the emergence of an innovative leader. Joaquín Lavín, who ran as a presidential candidate in 1999–2000 and 2005, mobilised supporters with an ‘anti-politics’ strategy that differentiated his political style from that of traditional politicians.⁵

¹ Arturo Fontaine Talavera, ‘Chile’s Elections: The New Face of the New Right’, *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 11, no. 2 (2000), pp. 70–7.

² Manuel Antonio Garretón, ‘Atavism and Democratic Ambiguity in the Chilean Right’, in Kevin J. Middlebrook (ed.), *Conservative Parties, the Right, and Democracy in Latin America* (Baltimore, 2000), p. 79.

³ For a theoretical discussion of ‘dual-representation strategies’ see Herbert Kitschelt, ‘Linkages between Citizens and Politicians in Democratic Polities’, *Comparative Political Studies*, vol. 33, no. 5/6 (2000), pp. 845–79.

⁴ Marcelo Pollack, *The New Right in Chile 1973–1997* (London, 1999); Carlos Huneeus, *El régimen de Pinochet* (Santiago, 2000); Mauricio Morales and Rodrigo Bugeño, ‘La UDI como expresión de la nueva derecha en Chile’, *Estudios Sociales*, no. 107 (2001), pp. 215–48; Markus Klein, ‘The Unión Demócrata Independiente and the Poor (1983–1992): The Survival of Clientelistic Traditions in Chilean Politics’, *Jahrbuch für Geschichte Lateinamerikas*, vol. 41 (2004), pp. 301–24.

⁵ The effects of the binominal electoral system (along with other ‘authoritarian enclaves’) are frequently treated as a contributing factor to the UDI’s electoral development. Although these cannot be discounted, the primary focus of this article is the strategy developed by the UDI vis-à-vis other parties. After all, the electoral system itself cannot explain why parties competing under it adapt to it in different ways. Even if systematic biases favouring the *Alianza por Chile* (the rightist electoral pact, commonly known as ‘the Alianza’) were present, the electoral system would still not explain why until recently the UDI was rapidly superseding *Renovación Nacional* (National Renewal, RN) as the more electorally successful right-wing party. See Middlebrook (ed.), *Conservative Parties*, p. 33. On the binominal electoral system see César Zucco, ‘Where’s the Bias? A Reassessment of the Chilean Electoral System’, *Electoral Studies*, vol. 26 (2007), pp. 303–14; Patricio Navia, ‘La transformación de votos en escaños: leyes electorales en Chile, 1833–2004’, *Política y Gobierno*, vol. XII, no. 2 (2005), pp. 233–76.

Recent comparative research on Latin American conservative and rightist parties has been in short supply in the literature on parties and party systems in the region.⁶ The case study of the UDI contributes to this literature by identifying the social bases of the party, and by outlining how the UDI relates to its core and non-core constituencies. Moreover, the article explains how the party's historical trajectory and organisational features enabled the UDI to combine segmented electoral appeals to distinct social bases. In comparative terms, the case of the UDI contributes evidence that confirms existing empirical generalisations about Latin America's contemporary rightist parties. As in other cases, the UDI has benefited from privileged access and positive exposure in the media and has embraced an anti-politics rhetoric.⁷ Chile is also one of those cases where favourable preconditions exist for the development of conservative parties, given its long history of conservative party strength.⁸ The recent growth of the UDI confirms this expectation. However, the party broke with the mobilisation strategies historically pursued by the Chilean right, engaging in an innovative dual-representation strategy. By doing so, it successfully adapted to contextual changes that were expected to be detrimental to the growth of right-wing parties elsewhere in Latin America.⁹

The UDI's pattern of strategic adaptation also departs from some of the more general party trends observed elsewhere in the region. First, the party developed a strong partisan organisation at the grassroots, through which cadres of party activists, usually upper-class youngsters, sought to reach its non-core supporters. This has been a powerful supplement to more

⁶ However, Douglas Chalmers, Maria do Carmo Campello de Souza and Atilio Borón (eds.), *The Right and Democracy in Latin America* (New York, 1992), Edward Gibson, *Class and Conservative Parties: Argentina in Comparative Perspective* (Baltimore, 1996) and Middlebrook (ed.), *Conservative Parties* are notable exceptions. In the remainder of this article I address their theoretical contributions and seek to contribute to the research agenda they outlined.

⁷ Both Middlebrook and Gibson highlight this comparative commonality in contemporary rightist mobilisation strategies. In Chile, mainstream newspapers are under the hegemonic control of economic groups tied to conservative and business interests. See Carlos Huneeus, *The Pinochet Regime* (Boulder CO: Lynne Rienner, 2007), pp. 434–5.

⁸ Middlebrook (ed.), *Conservative Parties*, p. 49. The importance of the *Partido Conservador* (Conservative Party, 1851–1949), the *Partido Nacional* (National Party, formed by the merger of the Conservative Party and the Liberal Party in 1966), and the presence of a sizeable group of Social-Christian Conservatives in the founding of the *Partido Demócrata Cristiano* (Christian Democratic Party, PDC) in 1957 illustrate the historical strength of conservative forces in the country.

⁹ The literature has highlighted factors such as the erosion of rural clientelism, the presence of a strong Christian left, and a reduced ideological convergence between religious conservatism and upper-class interests. See Edward Gibson, 'Conservative Electoral Movements and Democratic Politics: Core Constituencies, Coalition Building, and the Latin American Right', in Chalmers et al. (eds.), *The Right and Democracy*, pp. 13–42; and Middlebrook (ed.), *Conservative Parties*.

commonly observed mass media mobilisation strategies. Second, that grass-roots organisation has been financed with resources provided by the UDI's core constituency, in which business and socially conservative sectors are equally prominent. Therefore, this case differs from others where business groups have preferred corporatist strategies rather than party building as a means of pursuing their interests, and have not easily coalesced with religious conservatism.¹⁰ Both features are central to understanding the UDI's electoral trajectory and relate directly to the party's historical and organisational development.

To substantiate these claims, this article complements and integrates available research on the UDI.¹¹ It also presents original research evidence based on periodic field observations conducted in five districts and twelve municipalities of metropolitan Santiago in 2002, 2003, 2006 and 2008.¹² In addition to contributing to the literature on conservative parties, this case study suggests a series of theoretical implications for future analyses of electoral coalition-making in Latin America. When competing in increasingly decentralised polities for the votes of highly fragmented civil societies, parties are required to appeal to different electoral segments. To do so, parties usually develop district-specific or segment-specific strategies, which subsequently need to be vertically integrated into a consistent national strategy in order to avoid internal conflicts and electoral trade-offs. The parties' organisational features and historical trajectories in the party system provide symbolic, institutional and material endowments (or liabilities) that facilitate

¹⁰ Gibson, 'Conservative Electoral Movements and Democratic Politics', pp. 31–2; Middlebrook (ed.), *Conservative Parties*, pp. 286–9.

¹¹ Pollack, *The New Right in Chile*; Huneeus, *El régimen de Pinochet*; Morales and Bugueño, 'La UDI como expresión de la nueva derecha en Chile'; Patricia Hipsher, 'The New Electoral Right in Chile and the Poor: Strange Bedfellows', *South Eastern Latin Americanist*, vol. 39, no. 3/4 (1996), pp. 17–34; Angel Soto, 'La irrupción de la UDI en las poblaciones, 1983–1987', paper presented at the Conference of the Latin American Studies Association (Washington DC, 2001); Emmanuelle Barozet, 'Movilización de recursos y redes sociales en los neopopulismos: hipótesis de trabajo para el caso chileno', *Revista de Ciencia Política*, vol. 23, no. 1 (2003), pp. 39–54; Alfredo Joignant and Patricio Navia, 'De la política de individuos a los hombres del partido. Socialización, competencia política y penetración electoral de la UDI (1989–2001)', *Estudios Públicos*, no. 89 (2003), pp. 129–71; Klein, 'The Unión Demócrata Independiente and the Poor'.

¹² Districts 18 (Cerro Navia, Lo Prado and Quinta Normal), 23 (Las Condes, Vitacura and Lo Barnechea), 24 (Peñalolén and La Reina), 26 (La Florida), and 27 (El Bosque, San Ramón and La Cisterna). The district sample maximises the range of electoral divergence within Santiago's metropolitan area, containing districts with significantly different socio-structural conditions and electoral results. Although the districts were selected in 2000, when considered together the weighted average vote obtained by each coalition in this sample in the congressional elections of 2005 closely approximates that of the entire Metropolitan Region, overestimating the Alianza's share by 1.5 per cent. In 2008, an additional in-depth interview with a long-time party leader was conducted to test the argument's underlying logic and validity.

(or hinder) the required integration for any given opportunity structure. The UDI demonstrates a relatively successful adaptation to these challenges, which are faced by parties of all political stripes to lesser or greater degrees. Therefore, lessons learned from this case might illuminate, beyond the conservative and right-wing camp, effective partisan strategies for building a winning electoral coalition.

In theoretical terms, the analysis of the UDI presented in this article illustrates the potential usefulness of Kitschelt's party–voter linkage framework for putting into operation Gibson's conceptual distinction between core and non-core constituencies. However, the case also suggests the need to adjust the party–voter linkage framework to fit Latin American particularities. The next section suggests how a unified framework could be developed to analyse contemporary electoral coalition-making in the region.

Party–voter Linkages and Segmented Constituencies

I combine Gibson's conceptual discussion on parties' electoral bases and coalition-making strategies with Kitschelt's approach on party–voter linkages because unifying the two ideas yields a useful framework for analysing the interaction between the socio-structural changes occurring in Latin America and the nature of parties' contemporary electoral strategising. This unified approach should also be useful for analysing non-conservative parties.¹³ According to Gibson, an analysis of conservative party strategies should begin by distinguishing between the party's core and non-core constituencies.¹⁴ The core constituency provides ideological and financial resources to the party, and is the most important group in defining its identity. However, the core constituency does not provide enough votes to turn the party into an electorally viable one, a special problem for conservative parties. Therefore, they need to make significant electoral inroads into non-core constituencies. The electoral strategy to attract non-core constituents is necessarily different from that directed at core supporters, and it usually entails a de-emphasising of ideological (class-based) appeals. Therefore, parties face the challenge of harmonising segmented electoral strategies to craft a polyclass social base. Analysis of instances of electoral coalition-making requires a mapping of the relationship between the party and its different electoral bases, paying attention to non-ideological factors and to parties' ability to simultaneously sustain and combine socially

¹³ For an application of this approach to the analysis of a leftist party, see Juan Pablo Luna, 'Frente Amplio and the Crafting of a Social-Democratic Alternative in Uruguay', *Latin American Politics and Society*, vol. 49, no. 4 (2007), pp. 1–30.

¹⁴ Gibson, 'Conservative Electoral Movements and Democratic Politics'.

segmented appeals. Gibson's conceptual approach needs to be appropriately operationalised, and in this article I propose to apply Kitschelt's framework for the analysis of party–voter linkages to that end. This approach provides a useful complement to Gibson's theory on Latin American (conservative) parties' coalition-making strategies.

In his seminal 2000 article, Kitschelt discusses three overarching party–voter linkage strategies: programmatic linkages by which parties and voters share a similar stance regarding the provision of public goods; charismatic and personality-based linkages involving irrational adherence to a leader; and non-programmatic exchanges with individual voters or specific groups that receive targeted side-payments in exchange for their electoral allegiance.¹⁵ According to Kitschelt, those parties that seek to diversify their linkage strategy by actively pursuing more than one of these linkage types simultaneously will face increasing trade-offs:

the incompatibilities between charismatic, clientelist, and programmatic linkages are not absolute. At low doses, all linkage mechanisms may be compatible. As politicians intensify their cultivation of a particular type of linkage, however, they reach a production possibility frontier at which further intensifications of one linkage mechanism can occur only at the expense of toning down other linkage mechanisms.¹⁶

Latin American societies are well known by their levels of social inequality. In recent years, however, increased residential segregation and the pursuit of political decentralisation in most countries has contributed to the consolidation of even more socially fragmented political districts.¹⁷ Particularly in cases where political decentralisation is implemented in civil societies that are simultaneously segmented along territorial and socio-economic lines, electoral districts become internally homogeneous and distinct from others in terms of their socio-structural configurations.¹⁸ The decline of nationally organised interest groups with historical linkages to political parties observed in the aftermath of market reforms has also contributed to the localisation of politics in socially fragmented districts, by weakening

¹⁵ Kitschelt, 'Linkages between Citizens and Politicians'.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 855.

¹⁷ On the recent socio-structural transformation of Latin American societies, including Chile, see Rubén Kaztman and Guillermo Wormald (eds.), *Trabajo y ciudadanía: los cambiantes rostros de la integración y exclusión social en cuatro áreas metropolitanas de América Latina* (Montevideo, 2002). On recent decentralising reforms see Joseph S. Tulchin and Andrew Selee, *Decentralization and Democratic Governance in Latin America* (Washington DC, 2004).

¹⁸ For a comparative analysis of the effects of decentralisation and structural reforms on the nature of party–voter linkages in Chile and Uruguay see Juan Pablo Luna, 'A Lost Battle? Building Programmatic Party–voter Linkages in Contemporary Latin America: A Comparative Analysis of Chile and Uruguay', in Guillermo O'Donnell, Joseph S. Tulchin and August Varas (eds.), *New Voices in the Study of Democracy in Latin America* (Washington, DC, 2008), pp. 153–218.

cross-district organisations that were able to mobilise sizeable social groups transversally.¹⁹

In this structural context, it becomes feasible and necessary for parties to attempt to diversify their linkage strategies to expand their electoral base.²⁰ Indeed, successful candidates do combine different linkage strategies in their campaigns, while (at least under specific conjunctures) minimising the theoretical trade-offs attributed to linkage segmentation in less fragmented civil societies. The feasibility and empirical frequency of linkage segmentation defies a generalised trade-off assumption that is still present in Kitschelt and Wilkinson's framework, albeit more implicitly.²¹ When linkage segmentation is present, parties face the challenge of how to integrate their territorially decentralised and socially segmented electoral appeals into a consistent electoral strategy. However, this is an analytically different challenge than those implied by Kitschelt's trade-off assumption.

Nonetheless, the compatibility between segmented linkage strategies is problematic, as certain combinations are more feasible than others. Whereas a party such as the UDI is able to avoid a significant trade-off in the pursuit of its dual representation strategy, a leftist party with a strong labour base can pursue a strategy of electoral moderation to maximise its electoral return. Moderation, and the need to develop new programmatic stances to attract other constituencies such as the informal sector or the middle classes, will generate conflicts with its original social base, leading to salient trade-offs, particularly if the party relates to both constituencies only on the basis of differentiated programmatic appeals, thereby avoiding non-programmatic linkages. However, here it is not linkage segmentation but the reliance on only one type of linkage, albeit targeted at socially diverse constituencies, that becomes problematic.

Additionally, the trade-off assumption holds when non-programmatic linkages are financed through state resources that are transformed into subsidies, clientelistic side-payments, or pork barrel. To be sure, Kitschelt's framework does recognise the presence of private-sector donations in campaign finance. However, regarding donations from asset-rich private contributors, extant theories link these to voter-seeking exchanges between

¹⁹ See Marcus J. Kurtz, 'The Dilemmas of Democracy in the Open Economy: Lessons from Latin America', *World Politics*, vol. 56, no. 2 (2004), pp. 262–302.

²⁰ Within my district sample in the Metropolitan Region of Santiago, district 23 had an average poverty rate of 4.9 per cent (with a standard deviation of 2.9). District 18, also comprising three municipalities, had an average poverty rate of 15.3 per cent (with a standard deviation of 3.5). See Rodrigo Mardones, 'Descentralización y transición en Chile', *Revista de Ciencia Política*, vol. 26, no. 1 (2006), pp. 3–26.

²¹ Herbert Kitschelt and Steven Wilkinson (eds.), *Patrons, Clients, and Policies: Patterns of Democratic Accountability and Political Competition* (Cambridge, 2007).

business interests and the state.²² One possible explanation for this is that the bulk of theory and research dealing with clientelistic linkages is based on strategic analyses of incumbent parties or candidates. It follows that a party cannot sustain high levels of programmatic linkages with constituents (based on the provision of collective goods such as economic welfare or efficient regulation) while simultaneously structuring clientelistic linkages financed through state resources. This is because such linkages will ultimately lead to fiscal imbalances or corruption, eroding governing parties' capacity to provide public goods.²³ In short, access to privately donated funds is conceptually underestimated, making the trade-off assumption too strong.²⁴ My claim is that integrating these critiques into a unified Gibson/Kitschelt framework for analysing parties' electoral strategies yields a better understanding of electoral coalition-making in contemporary Latin America. The following narrative on the UDI illustrates the usefulness of the proposed unified framework.

The UDI: Origins and Social Base

Ironically, the development of the UDI as a successful political party is tied to the emergence of an 'anti-party' and 'anti-political' movement in the late 1960s. The UDI originated as the political expression of the *Movimiento Gremial* founded under the strong influence of Spanish corporatism (*Franquismo*) in the mid-1960s by Jaime Guzmán in the Law School of the *Pontificia Universidad Católica*.²⁵ The *Movimiento Gremial* aimed to eradicate Marxism from Chile by creating a mechanism of comprehensive vertical representation that could blur class and functional-organisational divides while depoliticising society. Thus, *gremialismo* sought to re-craft politics by promoting the organisation of specific interests in society while weakening (traditional) political parties, especially those of the Left.²⁶

The first nationally visible and explicitly political activities of the proto-party occurred in 1983, when the social network built by *gremialismo* in

²² See also Mona Lyne, *The Voter's Dilemma and Democratic Accountability: Explaining the Democracy–Development Paradox* (Pennsylvania, 2008).

²³ Features of policymaking under 'charismatic' leaderships would also erode the provision of public goods.

²⁴ Private funding could also be provided by illegal organisations seeking judicial immunity. While the electoral funding provided by mafia organisations might undermine the provision of some public goods by eroding transparency, justice and public security, it is less socially visible, and might not immediately translate into the same types of trade-off envisaged when state-financed linkages are presumed.

²⁵ Renato Cristi, *El pensamiento político de Jaime Guzmán* (Santiago, 2000), pp. 7–13.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 23–44.

Chile's shanty-towns organised a series of counter-protests in favour of the dictatorship, reacting to popular mobilisation against the military regime. However, it was only in 1987, under the *Ley de Partidos Políticos*, that gremialismo brought together the *Frente Nacional del Trabajo* (National Front for Work, FNT) and the *Unión Nacional* (National Union, UN) to form the *Renovación Nacional* party (National Renewal, RN). As early as 1988, however, internal strains within RN led to the expulsion of gremialistas from the party. In 1989, the UDI finally participated in elections as an autonomous party.²⁷

Organisationally the UDI originated as a homogeneous, hierarchically structured movement of urban university students who were personally attached to Guzmán's leadership and to the gremialista vision.²⁸ When Pinochet came to power, Jaime Guzmán and a significant number of gremialistas became close collaborators of his authoritarian regime. State retrenchment under neoliberal reforms created certain affinities between the 'Chicago Boys', who collaborated with Pinochet, and the proto-party, which advocated restricting state involvement in society except to promote moral and religious values. Although initially conflictive, the relationship between gremialismo and the pro-market reformers grew stronger and solidified under Pinochet, especially because of the presence of highly influential technocrats who were both gremialistas and Chicago Boys.²⁹ As a result of this particular configuration, the gremialista movement came to represent the dictatorship's economic and political legacy, thus receiving special allegiance from both business interests and socially conservative groups such as Opus Dei and the Legionnaires of Christ.³⁰ UDI's characteristics and trajectory explain its 'unique' ideological positioning in Chile's party system. In the words of a former congressional candidate, 'It is a grassroots party, it is a Christian party, and it is an economic [pro-market liberalism] party. And those three conditions together are lacking in the rest of the parties.'³¹

Through their involvement in the authoritarian government, the gremialistas pursued two central objectives. First, they sought to guarantee the success of the authoritarian regime, directly participating in attempts to institutionalise the legacy of Pinochet's rule, most notably through Guzmán's

²⁷ Guzmán had nonetheless given birth to the party ('UDI por el Sí') in 1983. Carlos Huneeus, 'La derecha en el Chile después de Pinochet: el caso de la Unión Demócrata Independiente', *The Kellogg Institute Working Papers* (South Bend IN, 2001), p. 35.

²⁸ Joignant and Navia, 'De la política de individuos a los hombres del partido', p. 158.

²⁹ Miguel Kast, chair of the National Planning Office (ODEPLAN) and gremialista, was very influential in bridging both groups. See Huneeus, 'La derecha en el Chile después de Pinochet', p. 9.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ Personal interview (2003) with José Uriarte, UDI's 2001 congressional candidate in Peñalolén.

authorship of crucial segments of the 1980 Constitution. Second, they worked to construct a new party that could become the main political force in the country in the event of democratisation. This would be facilitated by institutional incentives introduced into the 1980 Constitution and by the binominal electoral law drawn up by Guzmán and his group, and would be a crucial safeguard for Pinochet's legacy after the inevitable, although ideally limited, process of democratisation that the UDI's leaders were anticipating.³²

Although Guzmán was murdered in 1991 by activists of the radical leftist group *Frente Patriótico Manuel Rodríguez*, the UDI managed to survive and prosper by following the lead and inspiration of its founder. Table 1 depicts the electoral trajectory of the party since re-democratisation and until 2005, a period in which UDI's support base in elections for the lower chamber doubled. Since the presidential runoff of 2000, when the party's presidential candidate obtained 47.7 per cent of the vote – the highest percentage obtained by any right-wing candidate to date, surpassing the pro-Pinochet vote in the 1988 plebiscite – the UDI has significantly expanded its electoral share. As a corollary to this, in the 2001 lower chamber elections the party became Chile's most-voted-for party that year, garnering 25.2 per cent of the popular vote. In both 2000 and 2001, this electoral advance was crucial in reducing the historical gap that favoured the Concertación over the Alianza. Despite a slight decline from its peak in 2001, the UDI remained the strongest party in the lower chamber in 2005, with 22.3 per cent of the vote. In terms of lower chamber seats the UDI jumped from 11 seats in 1990 (when RN obtained 29) to 33 in 2005, being trailed by the *Partido por la Democracia* (Party for Democracy, PPD), which won 21 seats.³³ At the municipal level the UDI has also witnessed a steady electoral development, reaching almost 20 per cent of the vote in 2004. Thus, since its emergence from within the authoritarian regime, the UDI has pursued a strategy that gradually crystallised into the creation of an efficient vehicle for electoral competition, enabling the diffusion of gremialismo after democratisation.

³² For a more thorough and systematic account of the historical development of the party and its doctrine see Pollack, *The New Right in Chile*; Cristi, *El pensamiento político de Jaime Guzmán*; Huneeus, *El régimen de Pinochet*; Huneeus, 'La derecha en el Chile después de Pinochet', and 'Technocrats and Politicians in an Authoritarian Regime. The "Odeplan Boys" and the "Gremialists" in Pinochet's Chile', *Journal of Latin American Studies*, vol. 32, no. 2 (2000), pp. 461–501; Morales and Bugeño, 'La UDI como expresión de la nueva derecha en Chile'; Joignant and Navia, 'De la política de individuos a los hombres del partido'; Alejandro San Francisco, 'Political Parties and Democracy Transition in Chile 1989–2001: The Case of the Unión Demócrata Independiente (UDI)', paper presented at the European Consortium for Political Research (Edinburgh, 2003).

³³ These estimates do not include pro-UDI, but independent, congressional representatives. Based on data from the *Servicio Electoral*.

Table 1. *Lower Chamber (1989–2005) and Municipal (1992–2004) Election Results by Electoral Pact and Major Party (per cent)*

	Lower chamber elections				Municipal elections				
	1989	1993	1997	2001	2005	1992	1996	2000	2004*
Main electoral pacts									
Concertación	51.50	55.40	50.51	47.90	51.77	53.30	52.13	52.13	46.35
Alianza	34.18	36.68	36.26	44.27	38.7	29.67	32.47	40.09	38.12
Main political parties									
Concertación									
PDC	25.99	27.12	22.98	18.92	20.78	28.93	26.03	21.62	20.90
PS (<i>Partido Socialista</i>)	10.40	11.93	11.05	10.00	10.02	8.53	10.70	11.28	11.41
PPD		11.84	12.55	12.73	15.44	9.21	11.71	11.41	8.23
Alianza									
UDI	9.82	12.11	14.45	25.18	22.34	10.19	3.36 ³⁴	15.97	19
RN	18.28	16.31	16.77	13.77	14.12	13.44	13.60	15.54	14.97
Other parties									
PCC (<i>Partido Comunista</i>)	4.38	4.99	6.88	5.22	5.14	6.55	5.09	3.24	3.93

Source: www.elecciones.gov.cl. * Average of electoral support in municipal council and mayoral elections, which were held separately for the first time in 2004.

According to Hipsher's³⁵ and Altman's³⁶ reconstruction of each coalition's electoral base, those who vote for the Alianza (and for the UDI as the most-voted-for party within this pact) are located in the upper and lower socio-economic strata, while the Concertación obtains votes overwhelmingly from the middle classes. Evidence from recent lower chamber elections (1997–2005) confirms this. Figure 1 displays lower chamber electoral support for Concertación parties in three sets of districts, classified into three levels of poverty that reflect a decile distribution. Bars for each election year represent the difference between the Concertación's average national electoral support and support obtained in each social stratum. As the graph shows, the Concertación overperforms in the middle segment and underperforms in both the top and bottom poverty deciles.

As Figure 2 shows, the Alianza and the UDI display a more complex pattern in which electoral surpluses over the national average are observed only in the top 10 per cent, with deficits in both the middle and lower segments (with the marginal exception of the UDI in 2005). However, the UDI displays a sharp electoral growth in the poorest 10 per cent of districts,

³⁴ In the municipal election of 1996, a significant number of later UDI members ran as 'independents'. Therefore, this percentage is deflated and underestimates the relative electoral presence of the party.

³⁵ Hipsher, 'The New Electoral Right in Chile and the Poor'.

³⁶ David Altman, 'Redibujando el mapa electoral chileno: incidencia de factores socio-económicos y género en las urnas', *Revista de Ciencia Política*, vol. 24, no. 2 (2004), pp. 49–66.

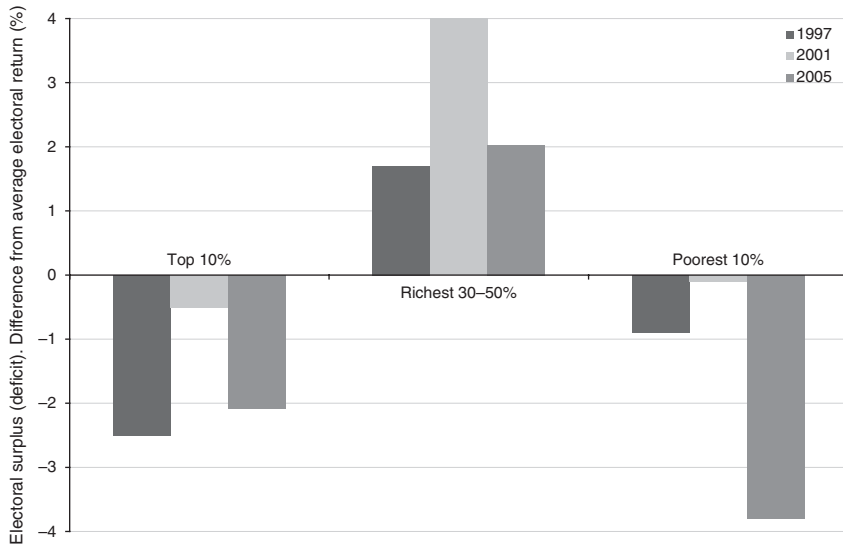


Fig. 1. The social bases of the Concertación in lower chamber elections, 1997–2005.

Source: Author, based on data from the Observatorio Electoral of the Universidad Diego Portales.³⁷

which decreases the gap in its national electoral return (from approximately –6 per cent in 1997 to –2 per cent in 2005). In short, while it still obtained less than its national average in that social segment, the UDI is the fastest growing political party among the country's poorest districts.

To illustrate this point further, Figure 3 displays the UDI's electoral growth in six poverty deciles, taking its electoral return in 1997 as base 100. Although electoral growth (particularly in 2001) is evident across the board, the party's biggest electoral increase is observed in the poorest two strata. Modest increases are also present in the historical base of the party (top 10 per cent) where previous RN support has migrated to the UDI; the party has improved less in the middle strata, however.

Finally, Figure 4 displays the UDI's performance in the 1999 and 2005 presidential campaigns, when the party performed much better in popular sectors than in its historical stronghold, suggesting that Lavín's charismatic leadership greatly helped the party capture the popular vote. To sum up, the UDI performs electorally better at both extremes of the social ladder, maintaining a solid base in its core constituency (the upper segments of Chilean society) while making steady inroads into a non-core electoral base (the popular sectors). The following sections explain this electoral trajectory and social base configuration.

³⁷ I thank Mauricio Morales for facilitating access to this dataset.

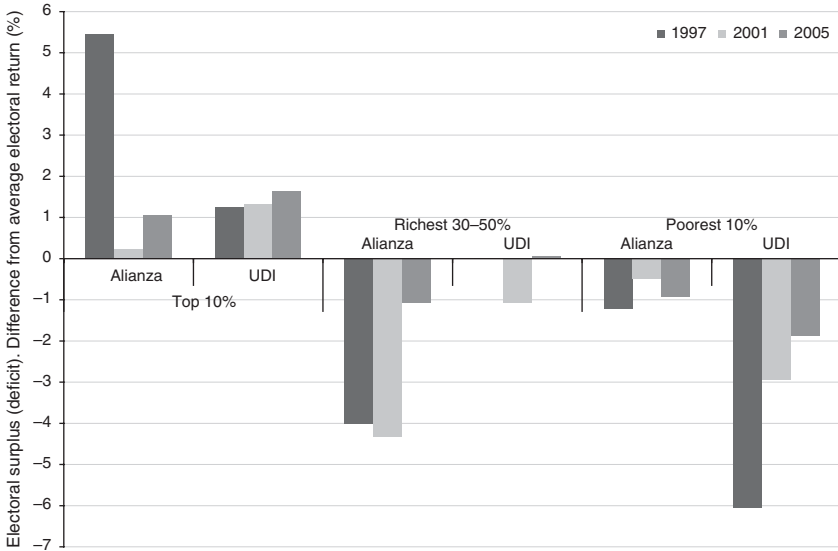


Fig. 2. The social bases of the Alianza and the UDI in lower chamber elections, 1997–2005. *Source:* Author, based on data from the Observatorio Electoral of the Universidad Diego Portales.

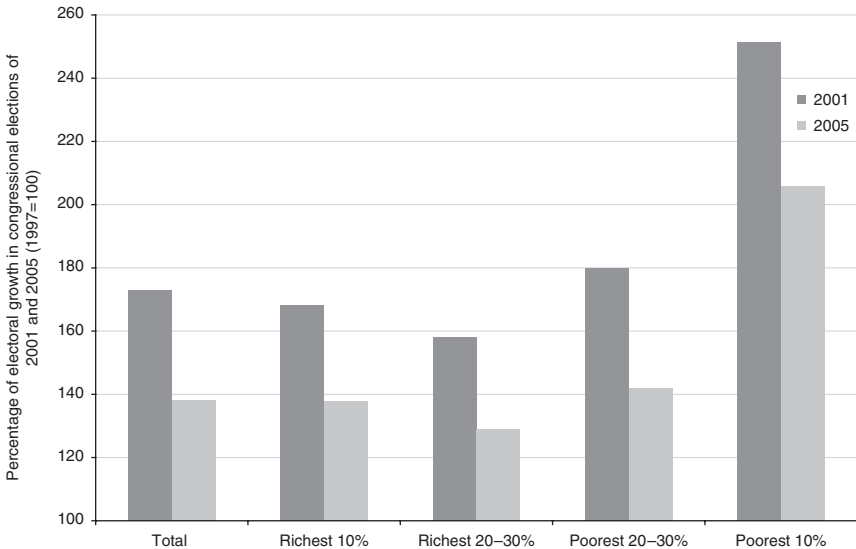


Fig. 3. Electoral evolution of the UDI across social strata in lower chamber elections (1997 = 100). *Source:* Author, based on data from the Observatorio Electoral of the Universidad Diego Portales.

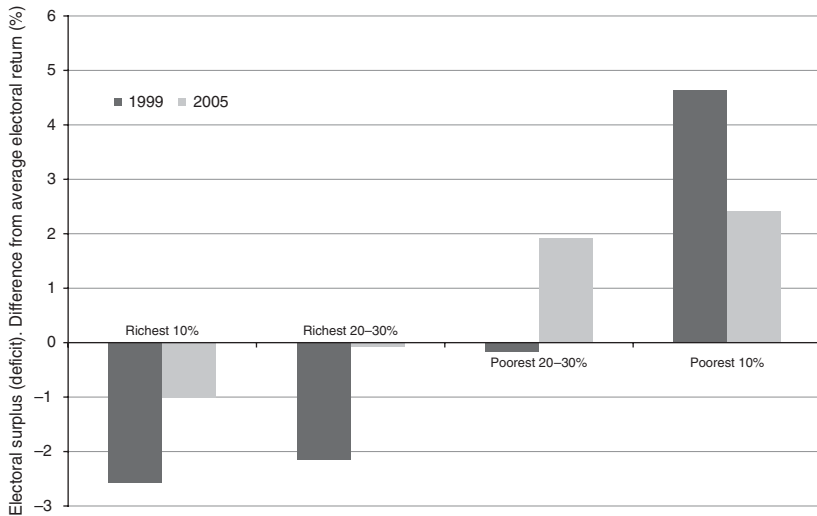


Fig. 4. Votes for the UDI in presidential elections, 1999 and 2005. *Source:* Author, based on data from the Observatorio Electoral of the Universidad Diego Portales.

The Core Constituency

The UDI's linkage to upper segments of society derives from the party's historical trajectory as the perpetuator of Pinochet's legacy of economic reform, social conservatism and anti-Marxism. This translates into a solid vote based on strong partisan and programmatic identification that is frequently reinforced through media addresses by Congress members and national candidates. The following statement by an UDI Deputy summarises the linkage dynamics present in upper social segments:

This district [23] is likely the one in the country that is most heavily influenced by public opinion. That is, 90 per cent of the people who live there are not expecting me to solve a specific problem for them. Nor are they expecting me to visit their home, give them something, or solve a social issue for them. What they expect me to do is represent their opinions in the media. And to vote in Congress as they would if they were in my seat ... and the rest comes from their identification with the UDI, which represents the hard core of the Pinochet supporters vote ... I am fortunate that in my district rightist supporters are very numerous and I don't have to convince them.³⁸

The UDI's linkage to upper segments of Chilean society is also based on actual interest representation in Congress, which party strategists see as a fundamental selling point for business elites which not only support the party electorally but also contribute resources to fund partisan activities

³⁸ Personal interview (2003) with Julio Dittborn, UDI Congress member.

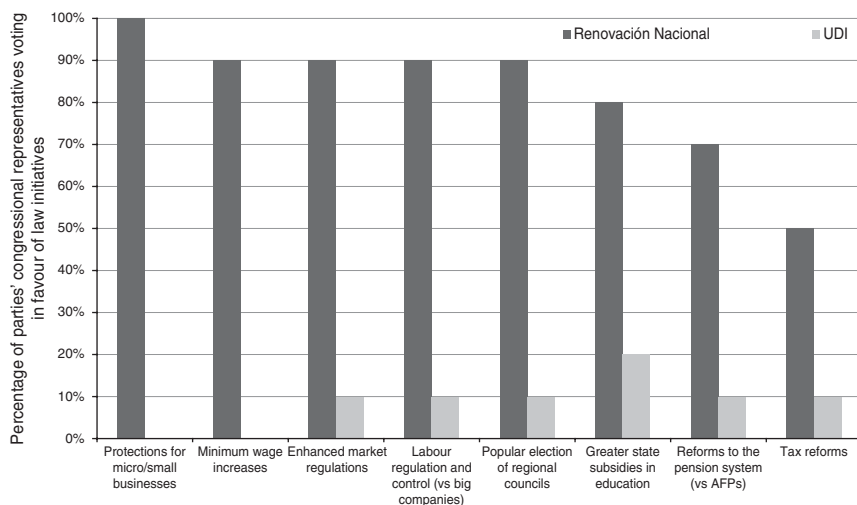


Fig. 5. Dissident roll-call votes in the Alianza (2006–2008). *Source:* Author, based on data and coding from Visconti.⁴⁰

elsewhere. This begs the question as to why business elites should contribute disproportionately to the UDI, particularly back in a time when the party commanded a very small congressional contingent. According to a senior party leader:

Our leaders convinced business elites that the party would be able to protect the market-oriented model introduced under Pinochet, aided by the special majority requirements that Jaime [Guzmán] included in the 1980 Constitution.³⁹

Available roll-call voting evidence portrays the UDI as the most systematic defender of market-oriented reforms introduced under the dictatorship. An analysis of the 2006–2008 period shows very high levels of internal discipline in 93 per cent of the Alianza's registered congressional votes. However, each party's congressional voting record in the remaining 7 per cent (encompassing approximately 90 bills) shows that the UDI is even more responsive to business interests than its partner, RN.

Using Visconti's coding scheme and analysis, Figure 5 presents the mean partisan vote in favour (coded as 1) of a series of legislative bills, divided into eight categories, comprising approximately five bills each. As Figure 5 shows, the UDI opposed, much more systematically than did RN,

³⁹ Personal interview (2008) with anonymous UDI national officer.

⁴⁰ I thank Giancarlo Visconti for sharing this data and results. See Giancarlo Visconti, 'Conducta legislativa de la Alianza por Chile: las diferencias entre RN y la UDI', Santiago de Chile, Taller Continuo de Investigación, Instituto de Ciencia Política, PUC-Chile, manuscript (December 2008).

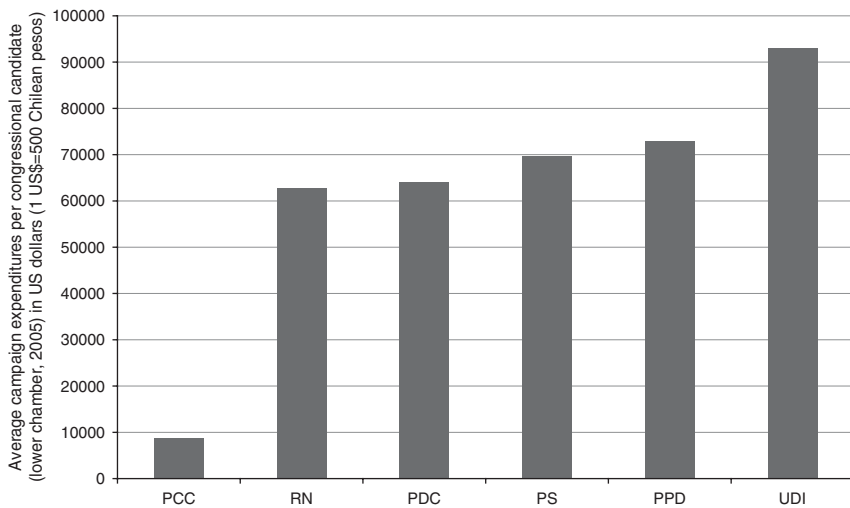


Fig. 6. Average self-reported campaign expenditures by each party's lower chamber candidates (2005). *Source:* Author, based on Piñeiro's dataset and Servicio Electoral reports.⁴¹

different legislative packages that could hurt business interests or potentially redistribute resources to lower social strata, through policies such as minimum wage increases, tighter market and labour regulation, state education subsidies, and tax and pension system reforms. The party also opposed the popular election of regional governments and the introduction of legislation favourable to small and microenterprises. In short, the UDI seems to have fulfilled its promise to protect business elites, safeguarding the legacy of the authoritarian regime.

Campaign spending evidence suggests that the relationship between the party and business interests has been mutually beneficial. Figure 6 displays self-reported campaign spending averages for all lower chamber candidates competing in the 2005 elections, under each party's banner. The UDI spent an average of US\$ 90,000 per campaign, US\$ 20,000 more than the PPD, which ranked second in spending. The UDI outspent its Alianza partner, RN, by an average of US\$ 30,000 per campaign.

Campaign finance legislation, which began to be implemented in the country in 2004, distinguishes between private (anonymous and reserved) and public contributions. Therefore, there is no publicly available information on the private sources that financed each party's campaign. However, the available information does allow some informed speculation. Whereas anonymous contributions cannot exceed a maximum of US\$ 800 and are therefore appropriate for individual contributions, reserved funds range

⁴¹ I thank Rafael Piñeiro for providing access to his database on campaign spending.

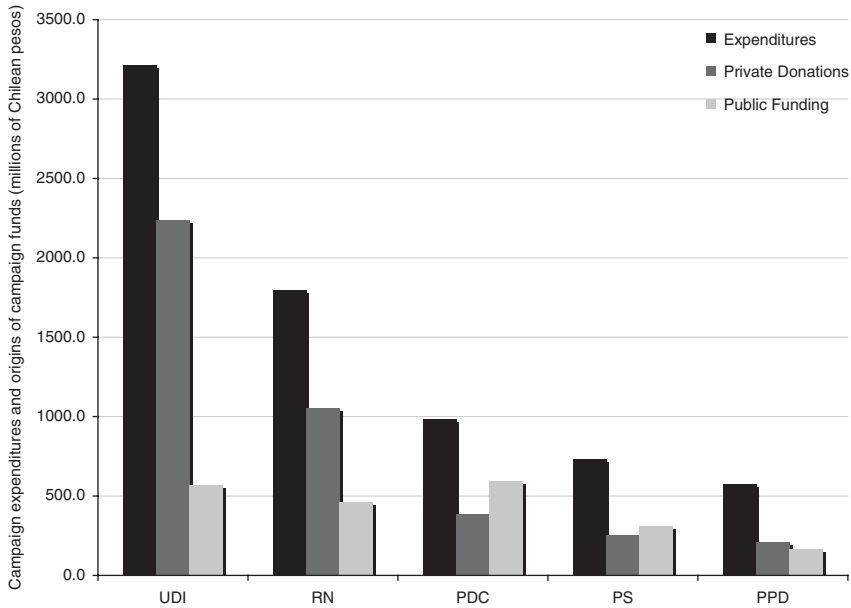


Fig. 7. Total campaign expenditures and origins of campaign financing reported by each party (2005). *Source*: Author, based on data supplied by Proyecto Probidad, 2009.⁴⁵

from US\$ 800 to US\$ 22,500. A party financed by business interests and wealthy donors should therefore receive relatively more reserved donations, as these types of donor are likely to have a bigger disposable income that could be contributed to campaigns.

According to a report on expenditure in the 2004 municipal elections, the UDI was the party that spent the most, outdoing the second biggest spender (RN) by more than 100 per cent.⁴² Furthermore, whereas reserved donations accounted for approximately 40 per cent of the campaign expenditures by parties of the Concertación, in the case of the UDI reserved donations exceeded 60 per cent.⁴³ Available evidence for the 2008 municipal campaign highlights once again the relative centrality of private donations in the financing of the UDI.⁴⁴ As Figure 7 illustrates, the UDI reported larger

⁴² Instituto Interamericano de Derechos Humanos, ‘Seminario: evaluación de la puesta en marcha de la Ley sobre Transparencia, Control, y Límite al Gasto Electoral’ (Santiago, April 2005), p. 56, fig. 4.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

⁴⁴ Unfortunately, systematic analyses of campaign funding in congressional races are not yet available. However, in the case of the UDI, spending figures for congressional and municipal campaigns coincide. Therefore, there are unlikely to be significant discrepancies between types of campaign regarding the proportion of private donations.

⁴⁵ *Proyecto Probidad, Financiamiento Político en Chile*, funded by the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) and currently in execution by *Chile Transparente*.

campaign expenditures, which were funded to a much greater degree by private donations than was the case with the other parties.

In short, the UDI has developed a financial edge over its competitors by extracting financial resources from its core constituency. Those resources are then strategically invested in crafting different types of linkage in poor communities, where the party has developed a non-core electoral base. In the words of a top party leader:

We tell our friends: ‘To represent you we need more votes in the popular sectors, not at the elite level, where we cannot get more.’ So we ask them for their financial support, but we also ask them to refrain from showing up with us; in the snapshot, we will always be with the poor, not with them ... It was hard for them to understand that we needed to appeal to the poor, but that’s where there are more votes for the taking. One of the obstacles we currently face is that today there are fewer poor people in Chile.⁴⁶

The UDI’s unique ability to secure and administer financial resources through its private sector links has given the party a major competitive advantage. This is particularly relevant since rival parties can no longer rely so heavily on the state apparatus to sustain patronage and clientelistic networks, due to retrenchment and reform pursued during the dictatorship. According to a Christian Democratic Congress member, the greater financial clout of the UDI puts the Concertación’s elected representatives under considerable competitive pressure:

Their advantage is based on money. Once, he [the UDI Congress member] complained to me: ‘I got them used to this and now they are costing me a lot.’ If he has to give out a reward for a lottery he does not send a set of kitchen utensils, as I would do. He sends a brand new brand-named bicycle. And therefore every organisation wants him to be their godfather because he gives people better stuff. But that is not paid for out of his pocket. That’s paid for by his friend’s donations, by businessmen, by people who benefited while he was the mayor.⁴⁷

Indeed, according to one former President of the PPD, the Alianza’s clear competitive edge led Concertación leaders to justify an ‘ideology of corruption’ whereby public resources were used to finance the Concertación’s campaign activities.⁴⁸ This justification was also applied at the local level, with municipal governments used either directly as political machines or indirectly to generate campaign funds by irregularly awarding municipal contracts to private companies.⁴⁹ However, despite the Concertación’s strategic ‘contagion’, according to campaign spending data the UDI’s

⁴⁶ Personal interview (2008) with anonymous UDI national leader.

⁴⁷ Personal interview (2003) with Eliana Caravall, PDC Congress member in District 27.

⁴⁸ Jorge Schaulsohn, ‘Letter to the Supreme Court from the Partido Por la Democracia’ (Santiago, 2006).

⁴⁹ Personal interviews with Osvaldo Silva (2003) and with two officers of the *División Municipalidades* of the *Contraloría General de la Nación* (2003). This rationale was confirmed to

competitive edge was still significant in the most recent lower chamber elections. This gave the UDI a double advantage. On the one hand, as an opposition party it was able to draw support from public discontent with both the economic slow-down that lasted until 2002 and the first corruption scandals that erupted at the time. On the other hand, better access to private financing allowed the UDI to develop and ‘feed’ an increasingly encompassing social network that operated as a political machine to attract non-core constituents. The following sections provide evidence on this latter point.

*Expanding the UDI to the Popular Sectors: Authoritarian Clientelism*⁵⁰

Immediately after the military coup, the dictatorship headed by Pinochet began implementing a municipal reform with lasting implications for local politics in Chile.⁵¹ These reforms created a hierarchical, authoritarian structure in which mayors acted as the dictatorship’s local agents in an effort to control what were the most dynamic loci of political mobilisation under the *Unidad Popular* government.⁵² At the same time, however, these appointed mayors gained significant autonomy from their local communities while receiving increasing amounts of public resources channeled through targeted social policy funds such as those for housing, family subsidies, and employment schemes.

At a time of poverty and economic malaise, those funds represented an opportunity at the local level to resurrect patronage and clientelism, features of the traditional party system that both the military regime and the gremialistas rhetorically opposed.⁵³ The emerging scenario at the local level enabled gremialistas to create a political stronghold in Chile’s shanty-towns. To implement their political strategy, Guzmán and his group created an ‘apolitical’ public service organisation committed to stripping the left of its electoral base in the shanty-towns. That organisation worked successfully within the authoritarian regime to appropriate state resources that were then

me by several city councillors and by representatives of the Concertación in Congress who invariably complained about UDI’s greater economic capacity.

⁵⁰ Although crucial for understanding subsequent developments, I refer only briefly to the origins of UDI’s electoral strategy under Pinochet. For a comprehensive account see Huneus, *El régimen de Pinochet* and ‘Technocrats and Politicians in an Authoritarian Regime’, and Klein, ‘The Unión Demócrata Independiente and the Poor’.

⁵¹ See Alfredo Rehren, ‘Clientelismo político, corrupción y ética en la nueva democracia chilena’, in Paul Drake and Iván Jaksic (eds.), *El modelo chileno. Democracia y desarrollo en los noventa* (Santiago, 1999), pp. 465–84.

⁵² For a description of local politics before 1973, see Arturo Valenzuela, *Political Brokers in Chile: Local Government in a Centralized Polity* (Durham NC, 1977).

⁵³ Klein, ‘The Unión Demócrata Independiente and the Poor’, p. 303.

used to build support among popular sectors.⁵⁴ This strategy allowed UDI activists to craft an image differentiating them from ‘traditional politicians’ while at the same time creating a political structure that other political parties (banned and repressed at the time) lacked.

The UDI’s work in the *Secretaría Nacional de la Juventud* (National Youth Secretariat, SNJ), in the *Oficina de Planificación Nacional* (Office for National Planning, ODEPLAN), and in the mayoral offices of numerous local governments came to be essential for funding a powerful network that helped to expand gremialismo among Chile’s poor.⁵⁵ The UDI’s progressive insertion into *poblaciones* (shanty-towns) was also achieved through the organisation of independent youth centres in each locality that collaborated with the SNJ and through the appointed mayors running social activities through which gremialismo promoted its values and ideology while selectively distributing much-needed social assistance.⁵⁶

Although at first the UDI’s arrival into the *poblaciones* was resisted by *pobladores* previously mobilised by leftist groups, this resistance decreased steadily over time. Indeed, former local leaders of the PDC and even some prominent leftist ones were attracted to the party’s *Departamento Poblacional*.⁵⁷ The UDI’s social activist network therefore relied heavily on clientelistic transactions with poor constituencies, frequently organising social assistance *Operativos de Terreno*.⁵⁸ After democratisation, the payoffs of this strategy became evident. Ten UDI deputies elected in 1989 had been appointed mayors under Pinochet in municipalities of the same congressional districts in which they ran for office.⁵⁹ I now describe the factors that enabled the UDI to consolidate its grip in its non-core constituency.

Seducing the ‘Soft Vote’

In this section I describe the competitive context in which the UDI competed after democratisation. Subsequently, I analyse two tactics that allowed the party to profit from the political opportunity structure it faced while pursuing the party’s overarching strategy.

⁵⁴ Huneus, ‘La derecha en el Chile después de Pinochet’, p. 8; Klein, ‘The Unión Demócrata Independiente and the Poor’, p. 306.

⁵⁵ Pollack, *The New Right in Chile*; Huneus, ‘La derecha en el Chile después de Pinochet’; Morales and Bugueño, ‘La UDI como expresión de la nueva derecha en Chile’; Soto, ‘La irrupción de la UDI en las poblaciones, 1983–1987’; Klein, ‘The Unión Demócrata Independiente and the Poor’.

⁵⁶ Soto, ‘La irrupción de la UDI en las poblaciones’, pp. 13–17. ⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ Hipsher, ‘The New Electoral Right in Chile and the Poor’; Morales and Bugueño, ‘La UDI como expresión de la nueva derecha en Chile’; Barozet, ‘Movilización de recursos y redes sociales en los neopopulismos’.

⁵⁹ Morales and Bugueño, ‘La UDI como expresión de la nueva derecha en Chile’, p. 235.

The political opportunity structure

In spite of Chile's preauthoritarian tradition of comparatively strong class-based patterns of competition and partisan identifications, the declining mobilisation of the class cleavage in the post-transitional system,⁶⁰ the ideological renovation of leftist parties,⁶¹ and the progressive detachment of these from civil society⁶² have all led to partisan dealignment, if not to political alienation and disaffection with traditional parties.⁶³ As a result, both partisan identities and political apparatuses lost strength, partially rendering traditional parties unable to mobilise support in grassroots communities.⁶⁴ In addition, RN is a party of cadres that lacks a well-developed and competitive partisan apparatus at the local level.⁶⁵

However, in contrast to the linkage dynamic observed in wealthy neighbourhoods, grassroots activities, constituency service and particularistic transactions remained central elements for competing in poor districts. Successful politicians tend to be those who are regularly able to pay a household's utility bill during the campaign period, to offer legal or medical assistance, or to distribute TV sets, food boxes, pairs of glasses, equipment for a neighbourhood soccer club, or a cake for a Bingo game organised by community groups.⁶⁶ In sum, those politicians that develop personal contact with members of poor communities – structuring efficient problem-solving networks or distributing clientelistic side-payments – enjoy a competitive advantage over more distant candidates without personal contact. Given the decline of partisan identities and national partisan apparatuses, local networks have become structured around individual candidates, incumbent Congress members and mayors who strategically choose to downplay their partisan identity. The following statement by an UDI congressional

⁶⁰ See Timothy Scully, *Rethinking the Center: Cleavages, Critical Junctures, and Party Evolution in Chile* (Stanford, 1992); Samuel J. Valenzuela, 'Reflexiones sobre el presente y futuro del paisaje político chileno a la luz de su pasado: respuesta a Eugenio Tironi y Felipe Agüero', *Estudios Públicos*, no. 75 (1999), pp. 275–90.

⁶¹ Kenneth M. Roberts, *Deepening Democracy? The Modern Left and Social Movements in Chile and Peru* (Stanford, 1998).

⁶² Paul Posner, 'Popular Representation and Political Dissatisfaction in Chile's New Democracy', *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs*, vol. 41, no. 1 (1999), pp. 59–85.

⁶³ Although this might be seen as a global phenomenon, it is particularly strong in Chile, especially among youth. See Carlos Huneeus, 'Malestar y desencanto en Chile: legados del autoritarismo y costos de la transición', *Papeles de Trabajo – Programa de Estudios Prospectivos*, 54 (Santiago, 1998); Sergio Toro, 'De lo épico a lo cotidiano: jóvenes y generaciones políticas en Chile', *Revista de Ciencia Política*, vol. 28, no. 2 (2008), pp. 143–60.

⁶⁴ Roberts, *Deepening Democracy?*; Posner, 'Popular Representation and Political Dissatisfaction in Chile's New Democracy'.

⁶⁵ Emmanuelle Barozet and Marcel Aubry, 'De las reformas internas a la candidatura presidencial autónoma: los nuevos caminos institucionales de Renovación Nacional', *Política*, vol. 45 (2005), pp. 165–96.

⁶⁶ Based on author's interviews.

representative who competes in a very socially heterogeneous district that includes both a wealthy municipality (La Reina) and a less affluent one (Peñalolén) illustrates the difference between the two types of district:

Poor people need you all the time. They need you to survive, because they have all doors closed to them. They don't know where to go, how to do things. They can't get the paperwork done; they need medical exams, they need to get a child into a given school ... In La Reina, we don't attract anybody's attention.⁶⁷

Operating in this context, the pursuit of two interrelated tactics proved important for reaching what UDI's strategists describe as the 'soft vote' (non-partisan and non-ideological voters) in Chile's low-income sectors: the progressive expansion of a disciplined party organisation that combines the capacity to capture more campaign resources than its competitors with the ability to deploy those resources strategically through a pervasive grassroots political machine; and the consolidation of a national leadership able to moderate the party's image while creating empathy among disillusioned voters.

The 'Popular Party' and Lavín's national leadership

The crafting of a newer, more moderate image for the party and the successful development of a strong national structure centred on Joaquín Lavín, the UDI's presidential candidate, were crucial factors in UDI's electoral growth around 2000. The UDI's image improved as its leadership progressively detached themselves from the 'dark side' of Pinochet's regime, with Lavín – especially after Pinochet's 1998 detention in London – being a precursor in this regard.⁶⁸ This meant refraining from publicly justifying the human rights violations committed by the dictatorship, while continuing to recognise '[Pinochet's] success in transforming the Chilean economy and putting a halt to Marxism'.⁶⁹ One of the central claims that I heard while attending UDI's youth recruitment workshops was that the gremialistas' participation in that regime had been crucial not only for enabling successful economic reform but also for 'moderating' the human rights violations that took place.⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Personal interview (2003) with María Angélica Cristi, former mayor of Peñalolén and RN Congress member, UDI Congress member.

⁶⁸ Patricio Silva, 'Toward Technocratic Mass Politics in Chile? The 1999–2000 Elections and the Lavín Phenomenon', *European Review of Latin American and Caribbean Studies*, no. 70 (2001), pp. 25–39.

⁶⁹ Memo: '20 preguntas a un gremialista', and participant observation of a youth education seminar in La Florida, July 2003.

⁷⁰ The gremialistas have provided no evidence for such a claim. See Huneeus, *El régimen de Pinochet*, pp. 345–53.

Additionally, after the economic crisis hit in 1998, the UDI's more moderate stance also involved media addresses regarding social policy. At this particular conjuncture, party leaders insistently demanded that the government provide better social protection for the poor and unemployed. The UDI's rhetorical swing in this respect was symbolised by its self-proclamation as 'The People's Party' (*El Partido Popular*).⁷¹ At the same time, Joaquín Lavín was gaining centre stage. His leadership, which has been characterised alternately as neo-populist and technocratic,⁷² was developed around an 'anti-politics' campaign built upon the premise of 'sorting out ordinary people's everyday problems' by devising concrete solutions, instead of discussing more far-reaching issues. While this was a traditional stance of gremialismo, it gained further strength and visibility under his tutelage. Meanwhile, the political style of the Concertación, and of RN, was characterised by the UDI as elitist and therefore distant from people's everyday lives, needs and realities. This strategy meshed well with the peaking of mass social alienation from the Concertación's governments due to public discontent with the emergence of several corruption scandals and the social impact of the economic slowdown.

Operationally, the development of Lavín's leadership was favoured by his high visibility as the 'innovative' mayor of Las Condes, an affluent municipality in Chile's capital city.⁷³ Lavín was proclaimed the author of a new model of pragmatic and participatory political management. 'People's real problems' was a very broad definition that ranged from putting in place a private municipal security service and programmes for youth to fighting environmental pollution in Las Condes by 'punching' clouds with an aeroplane to produce rain. Lavín's 'participatory style' refers to the large-scale use of public opinion studies to survey public preferences and devise policies and media addresses based on them. In his most recent political endeavour as mayor of Santiago municipality, Lavín had less success using the same approach in a downtown area that faced greater fiscal constraints and more pressing and diverse problems. Given the relatively deeper social problems of this municipality, Lavín devised some policies aimed specifically at highlighting UDI's response to less well-off citizens, including a municipal programme to provide daycare to poor families. However, the range of actions in this respect was once again wide. During the summer, Lavín built a beach (popularly named 'La Playa de Lavín') to provide poor people staying in Santiago with the opportunity to enjoy the summer. During the winter, he

⁷¹ UDI adopted this new slogan in July 2002. See www.udi.cl.

⁷² Silva, 'Toward Technocratic Mass Politics in Chile?'

⁷³ Joaquín Lavín was elected mayor of Las Condes in 1992 with 31 per cent of the vote and re-elected in 1996 with 78 per cent. In 2000 he ran for the mayoralty of Santiago, obtaining 61 per cent of the vote.

replicated this experience by bringing snow from the Andes to create an artificial ski slope. The snow melted in a matter of hours, but the media coverage of Lavín's initiative was long-lasting. Indeed, despite the general disdain shown by Concertación politicians, the 'innovative' and 'close to the people' style embodied by Lavín and replicated across the country by UDI's municipal governments garnered extensive media attention and publicity at a time when corruption scandals involving Concertación leaders were breaking. UDI's privileged relationship with the media provided greater exposure to both series of events.

For the presidential campaign of 1999–2000 the UDI took their campaign message on the road, touring town by town in each Chilean province. This tour was intensively supported by modern marketing techniques, including targeted radio addresses and telephone calls in advance of Lavín's visit to each town. The day before the UDI caravan was scheduled to visit, Lavín would make 'personal' phone calls inviting locals to the central square to meet him in person to discuss their problems. Those addresses tackled specific issues pertinent to that community, according to surveys and key informants, that is, party activists in the district. Operationally, Lavín's crew created a registry of 3,000 local radio stations to implement this strategy in a 'segmented' and 'low-cost' way. Meanwhile, Lavín recorded 300 different audiotapes and shot and autographed an average of 2,000 Polaroid snapshots a day.⁷⁴

Lavín's rising popularity helped the UDI to develop a national leadership to support congressional campaigns. This was crucial to promoting new candidates in congressional districts and municipalities where the UDI lacked a significant presence.⁷⁵ Furthermore, the value of Lavín's endorsement was used to increase the party's legislative share by attracting non-UDI candidates to its ranks. Henceforth, the 'photo opportunity with Lavín' also became critical in developing a competitive edge over RN. Indeed, former members of RN who wanted to enjoy the 'advantages of being in UDI' without being subject to the internal strains that UDI's growing hegemony generated within RN defected to gremialismo.⁷⁶

The importance of Lavín's national leadership for the overall strategy of his party is illustrated by the electoral decline in both 2004 and 2005. The economic recovery and the rising popularity of President Lagos, along with the national government's massive investments in targeted social policies and

⁷⁴ Personal interviews with Eugenio González (2003) and José Luis Uriarte (2003).

⁷⁵ The municipal elections of La Florida and Nuñoa are a case in point, as well as UDI's expansion through the south, traditionally dominated by RN.

⁷⁶ Personal interview, María Angélica Cristi, 2003. The internal strains between *transfugas*, rightist hardliners sympathetic to UDI, and RN's liberal wing, represented by the party's national leadership, sparked an internal crisis in RN.

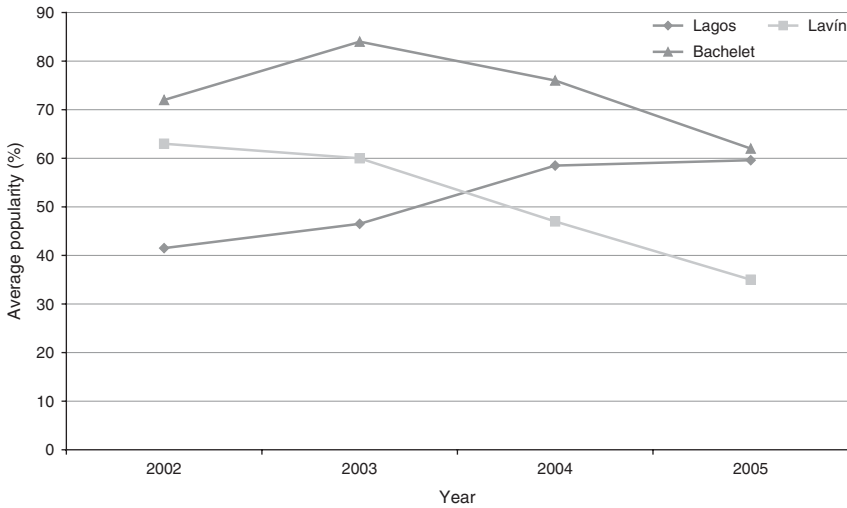


Fig. 8. Popular support for selected presidential leaders (2002–2005). *Source:* Author, based on the CEP survey. Average popularity ratings by year.

infrastructure, were all factors in Lavín's declining popularity. In short, a changing context and the erosion of his image after six years of tenaciously opposing an increasingly popular government hindered his electoral bid. Meanwhile, the emergence within the Concertación of a 'renewing' female leader in Socialist Michelle Bachelet, who profited from Lagos' popularity while signaling a shift within the Concertación in favour of non-traditional politicians, also reduced Lavín's chances. Bachelet's successful presidential candidacy attracted politically disillusioned voters, including segments of the electorate that had previously supported the extreme right, such as poor women voters.⁷⁷ As Figure 8 shows, the popularity ratings of President Lagos and Joaquín Lavín acted as 'mirror images' in the 2002–2005 period, with the latter becoming less popular as the election of 2005 drew near. Meanwhile, although her support did diminish once she began to be perceived as a serious presidential contender, Michelle Bachelet still boasted more support than either Lagos or Lavín.

Nevertheless, in 2005 the UDI was able to remain Chile's most-voted-for party, resisting the arguably strong coattail effects of the candidacies of Bachelet and RN's Sebastián Piñera in the concurrent presidential election. This fact signals the presence of additional factors that could balance the explanatory role assigned to national leadership and presidential coattails

⁷⁷ Mauricio Morales, 'La primera mujer Presidenta de Chile: ¿qué explicó el triunfo de Michelle Bachelet en las elecciones de 2005–2006?', *Latin American Research Review*, vol. 43, no. 1 (2008), pp. 7–32.

in explaining the UDI's electoral fortune. The next section explores those factors.

Political organisation and UDI's partisan apparatus

After democratisation, the UDI was able to expand its organisational penetration of society, attracting new activists, usually elite youngsters recruited from Catholic universities, while preserving higher levels of internal discipline. The latter enabled party leaders to allocate strategically the resources that the party obtained from wealthy donors to specific congressional and municipal campaigns identified by survey research and centralised political marketing technology. In the context of Chile's post-transitional system, these unique organisational features increased the efficiency of UDI's efforts to reach the 'soft vote', while successfully achieving vertical integration.

First, the UDI developed this organisation by persisting in the party's tradition of promoting the engagement of young people in the social activities organised by gremialismo. In this respect, the UDI approached youth formation in a distinctive way that was consistent with gremialismo's aim of depoliticising interest groups and was also in line with the anti-partisan climate of the late 1990s:

We already had too much politics in Chile, look what happened in the 1970s. Politics should be kept at a minimum ... we do not want to be filled up with politicised masses, because then you have internal problems, people fight. What we want to create is an environment in which youth who want to participate in society solving problems for the people can do so, and that is also a way in which you can attract young people who are not interested in party politics ... We send those interested to live with a host family in a given shanty-town for two or three months. It is a way for them to see how poor people live in Chile and to understand the problems.⁷⁸

Applying this tactic, the UDI started to attract young people from other parties, especially the RN, incorporating them as 'social activists.' These frequently non-partisan social activists engaged in systematic fieldwork organised by independent youth groups that worked indirectly for the party.⁷⁹ This strategy, coupled with religious appeals encouraging youth to volunteer in social service operations, made the party relatively more successful than others in a context of general apathy towards parties, by incorporating the youth segment into its activities.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ Personal interview (2003) with José Jara, UDI's 2001 congressional candidate in La Florida.

⁷⁹ Social operatives organised by gremialista student organisations (particularly at the Universidad Católica) during summer and winter holidays also work towards this goal.

⁸⁰ The involvement of Catholic networks in these social operatives might also explain the greater enthusiasm, energy and mysticism that characterises the *operativos de terreno* implemented by UDI youth.

Now we are getting lots of young people from RN. Do you know how they teach young people about poverty in RN? They show them movies ... We go and just get our feet in the mud ... If there is flooding, they [RN] usually donate mattresses. But we actually help to put those mattresses on the floor. And it is different, it feels different, and creates a different relationship with the people. Building a playground for poor children is great. You know that it will get destroyed in two days ... but the human relationship you create is worth it.⁸¹

At the same time, the UDI handpicked a small group of individuals for essentially political activity. The young activists selected by the party to play a political role share similar profiles and experiences and whenever possible run for Congress soon after turning 21 (the minimum age required to run for this office) in districts where they are highly likely to lose and with virtually no financial help from the party.⁸² This practice has produced two outcomes for the UDI. First, these leaders were then expected to move on and either run with party support in more competitive districts or to take a staff position in one of UDI's municipal governments and eventually the national government. Second, following many of these campaigns youth groups were created and are now engaging in leadership development activities and social service, expanding the activist base of the party:

I started working with Jarita when he ran for Congress. We supported him, but we knew it was a lost cause. Now he has gone, but we created a youth group, the 'Corporación Jóvenes de la Florida', through which we try to help Mayor Zalaquet and get more support for the party here ... We are now preparing fieldwork with university students who are in medical, dental and law schools. We get together, ask our families and some friends who work in different companies to help us in getting food or medicine stocks, and then we organise an operation in a shanty-town ... As they do not identify us as a political group we were even able to use the political structure of Carlos Montes [a very popular Socialist deputy] for the logistics ... On the back of the medical receipt or the legal file we just have a photograph of the mayor and the logo of our organisation.⁸³

This 'commitment to public service' not only differentiates the UDI's young activists but is also central to the day-to-day work of incumbent deputies, city councillors and mayors, who receive and process a wide range of demands on a regular basis:

In the popular sectors we expect our city councillors and mayors to go where the problems are. They need to keep getting their hands dirty. And in terms of territorial structure, we realised that we needed at least one activist in each zone to keep track

⁸¹ Personal interview (2003) with Rodrigo Bordachar, UDI's youth leader in La Florida.

⁸² They are recruited from top private and Catholic universities (usually from law faculties) and have been sent to pursue internships both at the Leadership Institute in Washington DC and at the Universidad de Navarra in Spain (personal interviews with José Jara and José Uriarte, 2003).

⁸³ Personal interview, Rodrigo Bordachar, 2003.

of the problems and sort out solutions. Then, when election time comes, you have a structure that you can mobilise very easily.⁸⁴

Although it is true that all councillors handle many demands a day, UDI councillors usually receive the most and are viewed by the community as the ones who are most responsive and who ‘give away more’.⁸⁵ In sum, the UDI’s ability to involve young activists has significantly helped the party to extend its electoral appeal and organisational penetration of society to districts in which it previously lacked influence. This has also strengthened the party’s capacity to service the community, creating – beyond electoral clientelism – a broad menu of social welfare initiatives.⁸⁶ At the same time, the UDI’s most intensive and systematic work in the field in the popular districts synergises with the party’s attempt to develop a national leadership through the media.

Internal discipline is also key to the UDI’s success. The party is much more internally disciplined and hierarchically organised than other Chilean political parties, a quality that can be explained by the cultural homogeneity and personal ties that bind the UDI’s national leadership.⁸⁷ Furthermore, the party’s religious commitment, which is also linked to Guzmán’s apostolic vision, provides party activists and leaders with a mysticism and unity that are instrumental in the pursuit of its ‘crusade’ and its adherence to a strict internal hierarchy. In the words of one young UDI member and congressional candidate:

Within UDI we do not have factions ... we have a democratic orientation, but we do not have elections. We trust our leaders: Guzmán, who was an exceptional human being and an exemplary Catholic, personally trained them.⁸⁸

This degree of internal discipline provides party leaders with mechanisms to centralise decision making, usually assisted by survey analysis, thereby avoiding internal conflicts and achieving vertical integration. As one party activist put it:

My wife worked as a congressional candidate for six months and then she was removed as the result of the pact with Angélica Cristi [a former RN Congress member who joined the UDI in 2001]. It was obviously good for the party, so my wife just came home silently, without making any public statements, as would be the case in other parties. Here, if you have to head home you just say: ‘It is not my moment, I will go home.’ If they call you: ‘It is my moment, I will go to work.’ We

⁸⁴ Personal interview (2003), with Eugenio González, Lavín’s 2000 campaign strategist.

⁸⁵ Participant observation in congressional districts and author’s interviews with Margarita Cofre (2003) and Osvaldo Silva (2003).

⁸⁶ Hipsher, ‘The New Electoral Right in Chile and the Poor’.

⁸⁷ Joignant and Navia, ‘De la política de individuos a los hombres del partido’, p. 161.

⁸⁸ Personal interview, José Uriarte, 2003.

are extremely disciplined because we know that those who are at the top know their job and we should trust them.⁸⁹

This top-down decision-making style allowed the party to allocate campaign resources more efficiently than its rivals. Unlike in other parties, in which candidates seek their own campaign resources through personal networking with public officials, party leaders and private donors, the UDI national leadership decides where to allocate captured resources by strategically analysing each candidate's situation. This greater coordination also helps to unify and align local campaigns with national ones, harmonising tactics, issues and marketing material.⁹⁰ The higher degree of commitment that exists within the UDI's rank-and-file has also allowed the party to avoid the increasing split between local and national leaders that has weakened other Chilean parties. Indeed, UDI city councillors are frequently found working closely with their district's Congress member, which in turn enables the party to maintain an ongoing, firm grasp at the grassroots level.

Conclusion

In this article I pursued two objectives. First, I sought to contribute to the literature on conservative parties, by analysing a relatively successful instance of conservative mobilisation in contemporary Chile. Second, I sought to demonstrate the usefulness of a unified (and adapted) Gibson/Kitschelt framework for the analysis of contemporary electoral coalition-making in Latin America. I now conclude on both accounts. Although in 2005 the UDI still won the most votes in the lower house, its presidential candidate came in third as the country elected a Socialist president, and the party continued to be viewed with hostility and suspicion by major segments of Chilean society.⁹¹ Indeed, in view of such levels of hostility and suspicion, the UDI's carving out of a sizeable non-core constituency is analytically interesting. In comparative terms, the UDI's strategic adaptation in a context that should have been detrimental to conservative party fortunes in general, and to the UDI in particular, shares some features with other successful instances of conservative mobilisation in the region. These include a reliance on

⁸⁹ Personal interview, Eugenio González, 2003.

⁹⁰ Independently of this centralised allocation, each candidate is free to seek and spend his or her own resources.

⁹¹ This is due both to the party's historical relationship to the Pinochet regime and to more recent events such as the party's handling of the Spiniak affair in 2003. In that scandal, one historic leader of the UDI (Senator Jovino Novoa) was accused of frequent participation in a network involved in sexual abuse against children and drug use. The party's initial handling of this slander case weakened Lavín's presidential candidacy in 2005, as well as the unity of the Alianza, which ended up presenting two separate presidential candidacies that year. Hostility against the UDI is also present in important segments of RN.

media-based appeals and the development of a strong anti-establishment and anti-politics leadership. The presence of strong conservative parties historically is thought to be a favourable condition for the contemporary strength of rightist parties in Latin America. While the Chilean case also confirms this expectation, it should be noted that conservative parties' recent electoral strength in Chile was pursued through a break with traditional rightist mobilisation strategies after the transition to democracy. In this regard, the UDI developed an innovative dual-representation strategy. The maintenance of its core constituency and the expansion of its non-core constituency were pursued through segmented party–voter linkage strategies. Against conventional wisdom, this segmentation did not lead to trade-offs, but rather to significant complementarities.⁹² Let me now draw the theoretical implications of this finding.

Parties can, in some circumstances, combine programmatic and non-programmatic linkages in an electorally efficient way, especially in competitive contexts formed by socially segmented electoral districts. Therefore, the presence of trade-offs is likely to be case-specific and contingent on the political economy of each party system, and on parties' specific endowments (symbolic, material, and organisational). It is thus more useful to treat trade-offs as variables than to assume them as a constant. Furthermore, political decentralisation makes linkage segmentation more feasible, especially where socio-economic inequality is reinforced by territorial segregation. Therefore, significant variance regarding the types of representative linkage that predominate in each locality should be observed. Analytically, the focus should thus shift from the national to the district and municipal levels, lending subsequent attention to the institutional and organisational features that enable parties to aggregate and vertically integrate segmented strategies. Parties' failure to do so might lead to de-nationalised systems.

Finally, current theoretical approaches to clientelism in the region assume an incumbent who disproportionately crafts clientelistic linkages drawing on their privileged access to state resources, while excluding non-incumbents from pursuing those linkage strategies.⁹³ This assumption is also inherent in Kitschelt's trade-off notion. However, state retrenchment, weak state regulation of electoral campaign spending and the presence of organised crime in

⁹² Kitschelt, 'Linkages between Citizens and Politicians in Democratic Polities'; Kitschelt and Wilkinson (eds.), *Patrons, Clients, and Policies*.

⁹³ See Beatriz Magaloni, Alberto Díaz-Cayeros and Federico Estévez, 'The Erosion of Party Hegemony, Clientelism, and Portfolio Diversification: The Programa Nacional De Solidaridad (Pronasol) in Mexico', in Kitschelt and Wilkinson (eds.), *Patrons, Clients, and Policies*, pp 182–205; Ernesto Calvo and Victoria Murillo, 'Who Delivers? Partisan Clients in the Argentine Electoral Market', *American Journal of Political Science*, vol. 48, no. 4 (2004), 742–57.

some Latin American societies make non-state funding of party–voter linkages potentially salient. They also facilitate access by non-incumbents to material resources that could be deployed in crafting non-programmatic linkages.

The case of the UDI illustrates one empirical instance in which an opposition party has enjoyed privileged access to non-state funding, which in turn was crucial for the crafting of non-programmatic linkages with poor constituents. Massive non-state funding of linkages also translated into socially skewed access to political representation, providing increasing interest representation to those who provide the funds, while creating more room for buying the votes of less-well-off citizens. Through this type of mechanism, social inequality translates more directly into political inequality, further eroding equal access to political representation and the quality of democracy.

Spanish and Portuguese abstracts

Spanish abstract. Mediante el análisis de los vínculos segmentados partido–votante desarrollados por la Unión Demócrata Independiente (UDI), un partido conservador chileno, este artículo demuestra la utilidad de combinar el esquema de vínculos partido–votante de Kitschelt con el enfoque conceptual de Gibson sobre las características de las coaliciones electorales conservadoras. En Latinoamérica los partidos aprovechan la fragmentación social y la disponibilidad de financiamiento no estatal de campañas electorales para desarrollar múltiples tipos de vínculos con bases sociales diversas y segmentadas. Aunque la UDI es un partido de oposición, su trayectoria histórica y organización le han permitido recibir fondos privados de su electorado tradicional (sectores empresariales y conservadores), identificado con el partido y cuyas preferencias programáticas e intereses representa en el congreso. Dichos fondos fueron utilizados para desarrollar una estrategia de movilización carismática y la implementación de intercambios particularistas con una nueva base electoral (votantes no tradicionales de la derecha radical, en sectores de bajo ingreso), dando lugar a una estrategia electoral segmentada pero nacionalmente integrada.

Spanish keywords: Chile, UDI, partidos conservadores, vínculos entre votaciones partidistas, clientelismo

Portuguese abstract. Ao analisar as conexões socialmente segmentadas entre partido e eleitor empregadas pela *Unión Demócrata Independiente* (UDI), um partido chileno conservador, este artigo demonstra a utilidade de unir a estrutura das conexões partido-eleitor de Kitschelt com a abordagem conceitual de Gibson para analisar o processo de coalizão eleitoral dos partidos conservadores. Na América Latina, partidos aproveitam a fragmentação social e a disponibilidade de financiamento de fontes privadas para campanhas para realizarem múltiplas espécies de ligações, atraindo, dessa forma, um eleitorado socialmente diverso. Embora seja um partido de oposição, a trajetória e organização da UDI possibilitaram com que recebesse

fundos privados de seu eleitorado tradicional e fiel (setores empresariais e conservadores), cujas preferências e interesses programáticos são representados pela UDI. Em uma estratégia eleitoral segmentada, mas nacionalmente integrada, em seguida utilizou-se desses recursos em abordagem ‘carismática’ de mobilização e em intercâmbios clientelísticos com o eleitorado ‘flutuante’, eleitores de baixa renda que tradicionalmente não elegem a direita radical.

Portuguese keywords: Chile, UDI, partidos conservadores, conexões partido-eleitor, clientelismo