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## **Ideología y clivajes partidarios en la conformación del socialismo como expresión política en Chile (1891-1938)**

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## Summary

The case of the Chilean left in the twentieth century stands out because of its specific political goal of setting up a revolutionary socialist alternative using the legal means offered by democratic institutionalism at the time. This project, known as the 'Chilean way to socialism' reached its apogee between 1970 and 1973 with the Unidad Popular government led by Salvador Allende. This coalition was mainly formed by two Marxist-based parties – the Communist Party and the Socialist Party – both of which were fully integrated into the Chilean party system. This was a unique case of a potentially peaceful transition to socialism which, until then, had only been conceived as a theoretical possibility. Comparing this to other regions that may have similar cases means this specific situation can be more clearly identified. On one hand, in the Latin American context, socialist or communist-type parties were both scarce and weak. In their place, national-popular parties with differing ideologies predominated. On the other hand, although socialism in Western Europe was more similar to that of the Chilean left, its revolutionary scope was considerably more limited. There, the fact that social democracy had made certain inroads tended to limit the possibility of profound revolutionary change of the type the Chilean left was aiming for.

To analyse this case, this study examines the ideological creation of socialism as a form of political expression within the party system in Chile. To do so, it uses the cleavage model as an explanatory framework for the political-party development of Chilean socialism. Given its similarities to cases in Europe, the cleavage model has been widely used in the analysis of the local party system. Both in Chile and in Europe, political parties were traditionally based on two main areas of conflict – religion and class. From the latter came parties with a socialist ideology, which successfully managed to channel working-class and popular interests into the political system. However, the main focus of cleavage studies has not managed to transmit an understanding of class cleavage's specific configuration in Chile. Above all, based on quantitative and electoral analysis, these approaches say little about ideological trajectories within party cleavages. In contrast, this study's analytical proposal maintains that cleavages' ideological dimension is relevant to helping us understand the forms adopted by party-structuring processes.

In this study, analysis is concentrated on four ideological aspects: a more general one associated with the phenomenon of ideology in itself, as well as three specific dimensions regarding how does ideology function. The first is related to the content of ideologies, based on their conceptual and logical setup. This level is made up of the group of ideas, diagnoses, solutions and programme features that political groups set out, based on the social conflicts underlying the formation of a cleavage. The second aspect refers to ideologies' operational realm, outlining three specific dimensions. Firstly, there is the strategic one, related to defining aims, as well as the means, practices and tactics needed to carry them out. Secondly, there is what this study calls ideologies' organisational dimension. This refers to how ideologies shape

a group's identity, cohesion and coordination, as well as their understanding of the organisational structures that are most adequate, depending on their ideological principles. Finally, there is the analysis of ideologies' adaptability, based on the correlation between their content, strategies and forms of organisation. Above all, this aspect deals with the way in which ideologies cope in their specific contexts and how their members manage to create or take advantage of political opportunities in periods of profound political change.

Given this analytical framework, what explains the fact that class cleavage established itself as an institutional-type revolutionary socialist alternative in Chile? The answer given in this study maintains that this can be explained – in the previously-described dimensions – by the ideological trajectory of the different political movements belonging to socialism during the development of class cleavage in Chile. This period ran from 1891 – the year in which the so-called Chilean Parliamentary Republic was inaugurated – to 1938, when the centre-left Frente Popular coalition won the presidential elections. This timeframe was the scene for important political, social and ideological transformations, which led to the decline of the previous clerical cleavage and to an upsurge of class conflict as the new basis for the party system. It was during these years that socialism emerged as a new ideological movement in Chile, helping to politicise class conflict and channelling it within the political reorganisation the country was undergoing.

It is said that Chilean socialism as a revolutionary project that was channelled institutionally and organised into two different main parties – the Communist Party and the Socialist Party – can be explained by two different ideological dynamics. On one hand, there was different socialist groups' ability to elaborate an ideological setup that effectively articulated its content, strategies and organisational ideas. On the other, there was these groups' ability to adapt to the different moments of class cleavage formation and institutionalisation in Chile. Considering these ideological dimensions, the theory behind this study is that the institutional means elaborated within the field of socialism were more viable during the structuring of class cleavage than those opposed to participation in the existing democracy. The socialist movement – strategically articulated through projects imbedded in institutionality and organised in models external to the party system – was ideologically more effective and adaptable than other alternatives. The most important model was the anarchist movement, an extra-institutional strategic channel with a non-party organisational model. In some key aspects however, it had a very weak ideology and less capacity to adapt, which made it impossible for it to channel class cleavage in the long-term.

In methodological terms, this study is made up of a qualitative historical analysis, backed up mainly by primary sources. Its approach to ideology according to the terms proposed is supported by different disciplinary approaches associated with political thought. These are mainly the result of the conceptual and discursive approaches connected to intellectual and conceptual history, as well as the analysis of discourse and, to a lesser extent, political sociology and collective action.

The book is organised into five chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the theoretical and methodological hypotheses for an ideological analysis of political cleavages. The first part takes a look at the main approaches to and debates on the political cleavage model in Western Europe, Latin America in general and Chile in particular. As a result of this revision, the different regions' and countries' main characteristics can be identified. It is seen that the consolidation of European cleavages is different to that of Latin American party systems, whose institutionalisation and ideological organisation is weaker. The case of Chile specifically stands out because of the existence of a clearly-defined left-right axis, similar to European ones and based on two cleavages – religion and class. This revision also allows the main characteristics of the cleavage model that justify the incorporation of ideology to be identified. First, the majority of studies concentrate on evaluating cleavages' electoral continuity, paying little attention to how they were formed historically. Secondly, quantitative approaches predominate, which limit the ideological factor to binary variables that say little about its content and role in how cleavages are structured.

The rest of the chapter lays out the conceptual elements and analytical categories used to examine cleavages' ideological dimension. The second part of the chapter includes a definition of ideology based on the conceptual and discursive approaches the phenomenon has tackled. In this study, ideology is understood as a specific form of political thinking that encapsulates a group's collection of beliefs and social representations and whose content can be examined through its linguistic manifestation. Likewise, the general characteristics of ideologies are stated: their aim to define and outline the meaning of the political concepts in dispute, as well as to be directed towards political action by their members. Using this definition as a conceptual basis, the last part of the chapter defines the three specific dimensions of the already mentioned ideologies: strategy, organisation and adaptability. Conceptual and discursive approaches are complemented by contributions from diverse disciplines, such as historical sociology, frame analysis and studies on political parties. Together, these definitions and categories make up the general analytical framework used to examine the ideological trajectory of socialism during class cleavage in Chile.

The other chapters describe this process by referring to four specific periods associated with the development of Chilean cleavage and socialism.

Chapter 2 tackles what is known as the period when socialism originally emerged in Chile – during the 1890s – which coincides with the institutionalisation of the Parliamentary Republic after the civil war in 1891. The first part of this chapter describes the main political, social, and intellectual characteristics of this period, which lasted until the 1920s. It had three traits that coincided significantly with the development of class cleavage in Chile. First, there was the creation of a selective type of state, characterised by the social and political predominance of the nineteenth-century oligarchic elite. A distinctive trait of this kind of state was the co-optation of the political system by the elite's political parties, organised around clerical cleavage. Secondly, there was the emergence of the so-called 'social question',

a category that encompassed a group of problems that were the result of the extreme poverty the majority of the population lived in. Before being categorised economically, the social question was emphasised as one of the key concepts of the political debates of the period from an intellectual perspective. Thirdly, new kinds of working-class political mobilisation were developed. On one hand, there were the electoral practices of the period and, on the other, the emergence of a working-class movement that was both politicised and autonomous. Both forms of mobilisation provided a repertoire of practices and means for the first socialist groups.

Chapter 2 also tackles the history of socialism in Chile, with its characteristics initially influenced by the context. In general, socialism emerged as a way of thinking about social and political emancipation, aimed at putting an end to the root causes of the social issue and pitted against the oligarchic political order. Towards the end of the 1890s, this fledgling ideology led to the creation of the first socialist political groups in Chile. On one hand, two organisations made up of sympathisers and members of the Partido Democrático; the Unión Socialista (1897) and the Partido Obrero Francisco Bilbao (1898) – set themselves up as one of the first socialist parties in the country's history. On the other, two socialist trends emerged within the party system: one in the aforementioned Partido Democrático and the other in the Chilean Partido Radical. Although these organisations and trends were marginalised from Chilean politics in these years, their relevance lies in the fact that they were the direct predecessors of the country's main early twentieth-century socialist movements. At the same time, the first international ideological sources contributing to their formation were identified: Argentine socialism and, as a result, social democracy and European revolutionary socialism, as well as the so-called state socialism from Germany.

Chapter 3 examines the ideological development of the socialist thought in Chile in the period 1900-1920. It is stated that this development involved three processes. Firstly, there was an ideological differentiation that led to the formation of three predominant movements in Chilean socialism at the time: anarchic or libertarian socialism, social democracy, and socialist radicalism. Secondly, there was a process that defined their respective conceptual conventions and reinforced their distinctive features. Finally, there was a process of identity-based, strategic and organisational consolidation of the socialist ideological traditions, which were clearly distinguishable among themselves. Regarding cleavage, these three processes outlined two major ways of channelling class conflict: extra-institutionally and institutionally. Although the two differed in their degrees of intensity, the first was developed by social organisations and movements outside the political system, while the second mainly occurred in party organisational models.

The analysis of these ideological processes and dimensions deals specifically with each one of the three already mentioned movements. To begin with, anarchy differentiated itself as a movement in the socialist field at the beginning of the twentieth century. Anarchy was based on a revolutionary and anti-authoritarian ideological identity using trade unions and direct action. This positioned it as the

main extra-institutional class cleavage alternative in Chile. Secondly, socialist radicalism, towards the 1910s, established itself as a trend for ideological renovation within the Chilean Partido Radical. As part of a traditional, nineteenth-century party, this movement was kept on the margins of the socialist field and was only an alternative within the party system itself. Thirdly, the social democratic movement was formed as a result of the socialist and working-class trends in the Chilean Partido Democrático. Although it was lacking organisation in the 1910s, it emerged as an autonomous movement in 1912 with the founding of the Partido Obrero Socialista (POS), led by Luis Emilio Recabarren. Under the European social democratic party model, the POS was a socialist party alternative for the masses, external to the party system itself. Towards the 1920s, only anarchy and the POS managed to consolidate themselves as ideological conventions out of these three alternatives.

Chapter 4 deals with the time the party system was in a critical condition, beginning in 1920 with the election of Arturo Alessandri as President and lasting until 1927, when the authoritarian regime of Colonel Carlos Ibáñez del Campo began. The 'critical situation' concept refers to a process of political reorganisation and political party realignment, based on the class conflict that emerged during those years. The first part of the chapter examines this process during the main political events of the period, from the 1920 election and Alessandri's government to the military coups of 1924-1925, culminating in a new Constitution in 1925 that put an end to the Parliamentary Republic. It maintains that the 'critical situation' in Chile was characterised by full recognition of the 'social question' and by politics opening up to working-class sectors. This began as mere discourse and then became institutionalised through the 1925 political regime, which provided the socialist field with a new range of opportunities for political incorporation.

Based on an analysis of socialism, this chapter concentrates on the two conventions consolidated at that time: anarchy and social democracy as represented by the POS. In this period, both movements underwent important internal changes based on international ideological factors. On one hand, anarchy was reorganised into a new trade union model, based on that of the 'Industrial Workers of the World' movement, originating in the United States. In the meantime, in 1922, the POS became the Chilean Communist Party (PCCh), adhering to the Communist International (Comintern), as a result, to the soviet socialist model. Nevertheless, these changes did not lead to drastic strategic about-turns. Quite to the contrary, they tended to reinforce the key aspects of their respective policies, based on incorporating or rejecting institutionality. An important part of this analysis is based on anarchists' and communists' ability to adapt to the political opportunities that arose in the period. In this sense, it is said that the 'critical situation' as a period of profound political change was a kind of test of their respective conceptual, strategic and organisational conventions. That is why their trajectory over these years is crucial to explaining the different results they experienced in subsequent years.

Finally, Chapter 5 examines the period of class cleavage consolidation in the Chilean party system between 1932 and 1938. The first part of the chapter briefly contextualises these years from an historical perspective, including a general characterisation of Ibáñez del Campo's 1927 term in government and the country's political reformation after his fall in 1931. The period beginning with the 1930s was initially marked by a consolidation of the state's social and working institutionality under Ibáñez' government and by the failed political co-optation of the working-class movement. Then, from 1931 onwards, it was characterised by a broad discursive expansion of socialism and the emergence of the political left. Since then, both have occupied an important place in the politicisation of the period's class conflict, which led to its incorporation into political parties.

In this context, the chapter analyses the trajectory of the two main socialist movements during these years. On one hand, there was the Chilean Communist Party (PCCh), which underwent a massive internal reorganisation after a time spent operating underground. On the other, there was the new socialism represented by the Chilean Socialist Party (PS), which was founded in 1933 and grouped together a large sector of the socialist movement opposed to Communism. Based on their conceptual, strategic and organisational conventions, both parties' adaptation processes – which allowed them to be incorporated into the party system – are explained, with a focus on the ideological flexibility they showed as they moved from a revolutionary stance to a new institutional-type approach. In the case of the PCCh, this journey was marked by their strict application of soviet guidelines, which made their doctrine, strategies and organisation more inflexible. The PS, on the other hand, was marked by its foundational milestone – the short-lived Socialist Republic in 1932 – and had important revolutionary, anti-imperialist and anti-liberal traits. For different reasons – relating to their historical trajectories, their conceptual solidity and their political performance – the PCCh and the PS ended up agreeing to participate in the democratic regime when the Frente Popular coalition came to power in 1938. However, their reasons for doing so differed. The PS's decision to participate was pragmatic, in order to give the existing democracy a circumstantial and transitory value. The PCCh, on the other hand, fully incorporated democratic means into their ideology, to the detriment of their own immediate revolutionary aims.

The analysis of the historical process of the formation of socialism as a type of political expression during class cleavage in Chile leads to important conclusions being drawn about the importance of the ideological dimension. A first set of conclusions is related to the effectiveness demanded of the contents, strategy and organisation of any ideology. As far as the conceptual and discursive content of an ideology is concerned, its effectiveness depends both on a group's ability to define a minimum set of fundamental beliefs and to differentiate itself ideologically from other political movements. As far as strategy is concerned, expressing an ideology effectively depends on the ability to translate aims into defined and viable plans of action – in other words, how the implementation of an ideology is conceived so that

it is both coherent with its principles and feasible from a practical point of view. Finally, as far as organisation is concerned, effectiveness depends on a group's ability to find common ideological ground and create an internal structure that manages to coordinate members' actions.

Historical follow-up of the socialist field's trajectory in Chile generally shows that the different socialist trends and groups successfully managed to consolidate a specific set of defining beliefs. This content allowed them to position themselves as an autonomous ideology within the Chilean political spectrum and to differentiate themselves from pre-existing ideological frameworks. It also allowed them to differentiate themselves within socialism's general ideological family. In this regard, the socialist field was mainly based on a set of concepts relative to the state's role and political authority. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of the different movements' strategic and organisational deployment at institutional and extra-institutional levels varied. Extra-institutional alternatives – mainly anarchy – faced major difficulties when trying to implement viable and realistic strategic programmes. Despite their strong ideological identity, their organisation was fragmented, unstable and lacked the means to fulfil their aims. On the other hand, the strategies of the institutional alternatives within the party model – mainly the PCCh and the PS – were more suitable for the context and their organisation was more stable and better coordinated. Although following the institutional path meant putting off socialism indefinitely, it also provided strategic and organisational guidelines that had greater levels of certainty and whose results, although gradual, were more obvious in the short and mid-term.

This summary also draws a second conclusion regarding socialist groups' ability to adapt and insert themselves into the system during class cleavage. In general, academic debate considers that, to a great extent, the insertion of new groups into the political system depends on their degree of openness to or exclusion from this. Going against this however, this analysis shows that the ideological factor is important in this process, since institutional insertion is also a political decision interceded by the strategic principles and organisational conventions of a determined political setup. In this sense, the ability to adapt to the opportunities presented by the political system has been key to Chilean socialism, since this was an area in which the institutional pathway was more flexible and viable than the extra-institutional one.

In conclusion, political-institutional conditions and the extent to which the political system opened up do not sufficiently explain the ideological trajectory of a cleavage. In this sense, ideologies cannot be understood as variables that depend on the political and institutional context. Quite to the contrary, ideologies have the interpretative tools needed to position themselves in a certain context. That is why they are an active element within political processes, allowing agents to act and exert an influence over the political system, even in adverse situations or when faced with limitations. From this perspective, the extent to which institutional context determines the development of an ideology depends more on how consolidated the

latter is. What is seen in class cleavage in Chile is that the ideological development of socialist groups was extremely conditioned by the context when they had a lesser degree of conceptual, strategic and organisational consolidation. As the different socialist movements consolidated their ideological conventions, they revealed a greater capacity for action within the political system and, as a result, had more chances to take advantage of political opportunities or to create new ones.