

FROM AUTHORITARIAN CRISES TO DEMOCRATIC TRANSITIONS*

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- APERTURA Y CONCERTACION*. By CESAR AGUIAR, DARIO SARACHAGA, JUAN PABLO TERRA, and ISRAEL WONSEWER. (Montevideo: Ediciones de la Banda Oriental, 1985. Pp. 105.)
- FUERZAS ARMADAS, PARTIDOS POLITICOS Y TRANSICION A LA DEMOCRACIA EN LA ARGENTINA*. By ANDRES FONTANA. Estudios CEDES. (Buenos Aires: Centro de Estudios de Estado y Sociedad, 1984. Pp. 40.)
- DICTADURAS Y DEMOCRATIZACION*. By MANUEL ANTONIO GARRETON. (Santiago: FLACSO, 1984. Pp. 109.)
- TRANSICION Y RESTAURACION DEMOCRATICA*. By LUIS EDUARDO GONZALEZ. CIESU Working Paper no. 105. (Montevideo: Centro de Informaciones y Estudios del Uruguay, 1985. Pp. 27.)
- TRANSICION Y PARTIDOS EN CHILE Y URUGUAY*. By LUIS EDUARDO GONZALEZ. CIESU Working Paper no. 93. (Montevideo: Centro de Informaciones y Estudios del Uruguay, 1985. Pp. 40.)
- GENERALS IN RETREAT: THE CRISIS OF MILITARY RULE IN LATIN AMERICA*. Edited by PHILIP O'BRIEN and PAUL CAMMACK. (Manchester, Engl., and Dover, N.H.: Manchester University Press, 1985. Pp. 208. \$32.50.)

Democratization in Latin America has proceeded in cycles, most recently at twenty-year intervals since World War II (roughly, during the 1940s, 1960s, and 1980s). With the inauguration of Presidents José Sarney in Brazil and Julio María Sanguinetti in Uruguay in March 1985, the latest wave of democratization and redemocratization reached maturity. South America's remaining authoritarian regimes (especially Chile and Paraguay) appear increasingly beleaguered and isolated. Recent events offer one explanation for the surge of interest in democratization in the field of comparative politics, but an intellectual sea-change has also occurred among Latin American scholars and leaders. Contra-

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dicting the prevailing attitudes during the radical days of the late sixties and early seventies, they have fundamentally reappraised the value of liberal democracy as a system worthy of protection. This change has coincided with a complementary shift in comparative political inquiry toward renewed concern about political processes and institutional forms, a shift accompanied by a corresponding turn away from simple economic reductionism and crude social determinism.

Unfortunately, however, writers on comparative politics in Latin America are sometimes accused of falling prey to fads, seizing upon a new idea or issue en masse, only to discard it later with scant ceremony in favor of the next premature "paradigm." Bureaucratic authoritarianism became the key concept of the 1970s, but as the 1980s have progressed, attention has shifted to the problem of redemocratization. With undisguisable *schadenfreude*, political scientists have demonstrated that after all, bureaucratic-authoritarian regimes lacked superior technocratic efficiency and faced the difficulties of exchanging the naked coercion that originally brought them to power for a more regularized form of rule. Yet it would clearly be premature to close the book on authoritarianism. For this reason, a pressing need exists to develop theories that can account for cases of nontransition and nonconsolidation of democracy as well as for the successful emergence of polyarchy.

The new literature on democratization subsumes at least three different theoretical problems: Why do authoritarian regimes break down? What are the different paths of transition to which they may give rise? What factors determine the success of democratic consolidation? Given the limited space available, I will concentrate here on the first two questions, reluctantly leaving the question of democratic consolidation for a future essay. Ideally, the study of democratization should also begin with the study of authoritarianism, but here I can do little more than mention the critique of Guillermo O'Donnell's bureaucratic-authoritarian model by Paul Cammack and Philip O'Brien. The following discussion will center on the four case studies in their book—Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Uruguay. Yet, unlike the contributors to *Generals in Retreat*, who focus to a greater extent on the maturing of authoritarian regimes than the title might suggest, this essay will devote primary attention to the actual causes and modes of transitions from authoritarianism.

The growing debate on democratization has begun to unleash an avalanche of publications, one of the most important of which will probably be the long-awaited multivolume study from the Wilson Center conferences begun in 1979.¹ Many case studies of varying depth and sophistication have already appeared, but the complexity of the issues involved in an event as multifaceted as a change of political regime remains daunting. Given the great differences among authoritarian re-

gimes, the rather small number of cases of democratization for study, and the wide variety of paths by which this process has been achieved, no single theory of democratic transitions has emerged.² But the major issues debated cluster in five broad areas. The first concerns the crises of authoritarian regimes brought on by failure to find mechanisms that can legitimate their rule. This difficulty is in turn bound up with the problem of agreeing on a stable formula for interest representation in decision-making. Even when every last channel of consultation (let alone influence) between the state and civil society has been closed off, the question still remains as to how the inevitable policy disputes that are heightened by the scale of modern government will be resolved.

A second cluster of issues relates to the role of political economy in regime changes. Here debate rages over the breakdown of the exclusionary alliances originally constituted to demobilize and exclude popular sectors in the interests of capitalists. Often discussed in this connection are international factors, particularly the economic constraints and shocks administered by the world economy. The political economy of advanced states and the policies of their governments or multilateral institutions limit the options open to other nations. While evidence is increasing that state power can be mobilized to regulate a country's international economic relations in the interests of specific developmental objectives, such policies may be strenuously opposed by those interests affected, creating a possible constituency for business opposition to the regime.

A third debate focuses on the role of opposition groups, particularly popular movements. Controversy surrounds the question of the conditions under which organized resistance by civil society can weaken an authoritarian regime. Complete democratic rupture (whether as a result of revolution or of abdication by powerholders) is unlikely, barring cases of external military defeat (which have a peculiarly potent role in paralyzing the coercive capacities of governments). Given the rarity of such ruptures, democratization is more often achieved through formal negotiations, transitional phases, or controlled reform initiated "from above."

Two particularly important clusters of variables therefore emerge from the works under review below on the conditions for such transitions and the factors that may "block" them. The fourth concerns the corporate interests of powerholders, captured in Robert Dahl's famous dictum that authoritarian regimes will yield power only when the costs of repression exceed the costs of toleration.³ The succession problem is the perennial Achilles heel of all regimes that banish parties and elections. In the case of military bureaucratic-authoritarian regimes, an important factor is the extent to which continuation in office risks undermining military professionalism by giving rise to factionalism or (even

worse) by threatening vertical hierarchies of command.⁴ For civilian authoritarians, a major issue is whether they can survive freely competitive elections. Finally, powerholders' interests affect and are affected by a fifth set of variables: the opposition's alliance and negotiating strategies. Which concessions may smooth the transition is a matter of frequent polemic, as is the prior matter of the conditions under which oppositions can coalesce around a united and flexible negotiating position.

The remainder of this essay probes the application of these kinds of analysis to recent explanations of the regime changes in Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay—their strengths and weaknesses. It also considers the stalemate in Chile as a crucial "control" for purposes of comparison. The conclusion highlights some of the theoretically relevant questions that the current gaps in available empirical evidence prevent analysts from answering and suggests a strategy of future research that may help to fill them.

The Crisis of Military Regimes in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Uruguay and the Critique of Bureaucratic-Authoritarian Theory

Cammack's dissection of O'Donnell's theories in his introduction to *Generals in Retreat* ranges widely over a minefield of methodological issues, such as the perennial problems of the use and abuse of "ideal type" theories. But for purposes of this discussion, the relevant question is whether this critique and Cammack and O'Brien's alternative approach to understanding the regimes in these four countries, which they term "capitalist restructuring," improves our ability to explain the erosion and demise of bureaucratic authoritarianism. For instance, Cammack takes issue with O'Donnell's emphasis on technocratic "rationality," which Cammack believes leads to a "failure to address the question of conflict between the state itself and its allies" (p. 10). Thus he argues that the bureaucratic-authoritarian model "rules out any sustained consideration of the 'relative autonomy' of the state. If the task facing the BA state is not simply to crush the political power of the popular sectors . . . but to reform and restructure the bourgeoisie itself in order to reproduce its domination as a class, it will depend upon the ability to constitute and defend an autonomous project which goes against the immediate interests of even its close allies among the bourgeoisie" (p. 11).

In this apparently Poulantzian formulation, Cammack comes close to substituting his own teleological "rationality"—the imperatives of "restructuring"—for that of O'Donnell. Although it is right to de-emphasize the rationality of bureaucratic-authoritarian regimes, surely a more fitting characterization would emphasize their technocrats' ide-

ology (neoliberalism), which for all its scientific pretensions was fundamentally colored by a normative agenda. Nor should too much be made of the power of technocrats. As the conclusion by the coeditors of the collection points out, “the ability to resist the claims of special interest groups fails where the corporate interests of the armed forces is concerned” (p. 192). For this and other reasons, “the military make poor allies where projects for economic restructuring are concerned” (p. 193).

Cammack’s critique of O’Donnell’s work is sometimes well taken, as when he “steers our attention away from stages of economic development towards the capacity of the bourgeoisie as a ruling class” (p. 19)—and the capacities of the state, one might add. The critique is often original, too, as when Cammack argues that the dynamics of bureaucratic authoritarianism may be determined more by relations between the state and the traditional export sector than by the national bourgeoisie (p. 29). It is also true that much of the debate about bureaucratic authoritarianism led to a neglect of issues such as the long-term cycles of class alliances in Argentina (which O’Donnell himself identified),⁵ or the maintenance of an electoral façade and the cultivation of clientelist networks in Brazil. As Cammack points out (without attempting to remedy the situation), pure bureaucratic-authoritarian theory reveals little about the “political options open to those regimes” (p. 24).

Cammack and O’Brien imply that Brazil’s emphasis on “deepening” did not constitute a form of “restructuring” (p. 188). The possibility of alternative projects for restructuring accumulation seems to have been overlooked by viewing neoliberalism as the only available recipe. In fact, Brazil’s state-guided development model was undoubtedly a successful attempt at restructuring by Cammack and O’Brien’s definition: a program that “did not respond to the interests of fractions of capital which enjoyed or were vigorously challenging for hegemony, but sought to force the creation, often to the detriment of existing spheres of activity, of new sectors which would allow the economy as a whole to advance on a new footing within the international economy” (p. 189).

In general, precision is needed in defining the linkages between economies and politics, for if imprecision exists about how such linkages led to the birth of bureaucratic-authoritarian regimes, how can understanding of their role in the bureaucratic-authoritarian erosion and transitions be any better? Regarding the origins of Brazilian bureaucratic authoritarianism, Cammack and O’Brien clearly argue that a particular pattern of economic development caused a shift in class alliances, “adjusting the political regime to a prior shift that had taken place within the economy” (p. 189). In the later regimes, however, the authors of *Generals in Retreat* and many others have stressed the prior

“need” for a certain type of regime in order to initiate a new economic project. The distinction has potential ramifications for regime crises insofar as in the first case the regime may be able to maintain broader class alliances without “pushing its relative autonomy too far” while (conversely) the possibility that authoritarianism will eventually become “dispensable” is also presumably greater.

Argentina, 1976–1983: From Peronist Crisis to Military Crisis

William Smith’s essay in *Generals in Retreat*, “Reflections on the Political Economy of Authoritarian Rule and Capitalist Reorganization in Contemporary Argentina,” centers on the second cluster of issues identified above, namely the political economy of class alliances. It provides a good synthesis of the phases of neoliberal policies inflicted on the Argentines by José Martínez de Hoz, and especially the disastrous consequences, but description tends to exceed explanation. Smith is aware that policies were not determined only by the forces of class alliances and the world system, as is shown by his mentioning the different “strategies of integration with transnational capitalism” chosen by Brazil and Mexico (p. 71); and yet the reader is left eager to know what does determine the choices made by military and technocratic policymakers. Smith’s conclusion slips too easily from showing that Argentina’s second bureaucratic-authoritarian regime was a disaster even in its own terms to assuming that he has explained why it had to fail. In his closing lines, Smith blames the pressure of popular movements, but the reader remains puzzled as to why these forces allowed an authoritarian regime to be installed in the first place. If civil society could “resist and defeat” the Proceso by 1983, why not before?⁶

David Pion-Berlin’s “The Fall of Military Rule in Argentina: 1976–1983” centers on the internal crisis of the regime.⁷ The first five years of Argentina’s second bureaucratic-authoritarian regime were marked by an absence of working-class protest and far less resistance by the Peronist movement than under Onganía. Furthermore, “the regime successfully insulated itself from a troubled capitalist class . . . , shielding itself from pressure groups through an exclusionary, secretive policy-making style” (p. 56). Popular movements thus were not the primary source of the bureaucratic-authoritarian regime’s crisis. What mattered was that by 1980 top generals were openly criticizing the conduct of economic policy because of the wave of industrial bankruptcies, runs on banks, and capital flight gripping the country. This year also saw a difficult struggle for succession, and the general who replaced Jorge Videla the following year, Roberto Viola, lasted only nine months. Pion-Berlin describes Viola’s predicament as president, caught between Army Commander Leopoldo Galtieri, who opposed a restoration of party activity

and elections, and the *Multipartidaria* (the all-party opposition alliance). This explanation for Viola's failure to achieve liberalization and prevent his own ouster by Galtieri in December 1981 revolves around the problem of the military's perceived corporate interests. Opposition tactics also explain why Viola could not generate "a popular base of support as a counter-weight to the right-wing opposition" (p. 66). Once Galtieri had been ruthlessly installed in power, his absurd ambition to create a new political movement and his secret talks with the Peronists about a pact with the unions (held while defending his ultraorthodox minister of economics) exacerbated military divisions. The final gamble in the Malvinas led to a collapse of the regime in 1983. In this sense, no transition took place—merely a lame-duck president left in office after Galtieri's ignominious departure.

Nevertheless, Scott Mainwaring and Eduardo Viola have argued that the military was "relatively successful" in controlling the transition for the remainder of 1982 after their external military defeat.⁸ This temporary reprieve was due to "a state of political passivity and social confusion" only gradually overcome by the Buenos Aires tax-revolt and the first successful general strike since the 1976 coup (p. 207). But the military's attempt to secure immunity from prosecution for violations of human rights was a total failure. Mainwaring and Viola correctly argue that the military's sole remaining bargaining chip, the threat of another coup, lacked credibility. Comparison with Uruguay, however, might lead one to question their assertion that an "important sign of the military's declining ability to control the transition was its manifest inability to create a party which could compete in elections" (p. 208). No such party existed or could have existed in Uruguay, where the military retained greater control. The differing factor was that the Uruguayan regime was not in such an advanced state of decomposition and thus could still secure (limited) concessions. As Andrés Fontana suggests in *Fuerzas armadas, partidos políticos y transición a la democracia en la Argentina*, the secret of the "unconditional transition" was that the political parties neither mobilized against the regime (so as to avoid fueling the social chaos that would have given the military hard-liners an excuse for a crackdown) nor agreed to any kind of negotiated pact (p. 36).⁹

Fontana admits that his essay is "not directed toward explaining the genesis of the military regime crisis" (pp. 5–6) but toward elucidating the subtle patterns of alliances and nonalliances that determined Argentina's specific mode of military extrication. Interestingly, he observes that the stillbirth of the potential "liberalizing coalition" ran counter to O'Donnell's model for negotiated transition (p. 25).¹⁰ But Fontana's explanation as to why military "Blandos" and political moderates could not become allies is rather sketchy. Continuing the emphasis of those who (unlike William Smith) downplay the strength of Argen-

tine civil society by the late 1970s, Fontana argues that the decision to occupy the Falklands was not precipitated by social protests but by the internal logic of the military regime (p. 30). Once in power, Galtieri's position resembled that of Viola: he needed rapid success. Although Galtieri remained army commander, new hard-liners sprang up and war—whether internal or external—might have united them (unlike the bitterly divisive economic policy). The military thus experienced what Fontana describes as a crisis of self-government (*autogobierno*) (p. 31). Unlike Pion-Berlin, Fontana believes that victory in the South Atlantic War could have postponed the transition for a long time by restoring unity to the armed forces.

Uruguay: Negotiated Withdrawal and Democratic Restoration

M. H. J. Finch contributed the chapter on Uruguay in the Cammack and O'Brien collection, "The Military Regime and Dominant Class Interests in Uruguay, 1973–1982." This kind of material on Uruguay is rare, and Finch's contribution is original in delving into the reasons why particular economic decisions were made (pp. 108–10). He argues that because the Uruguayan military are recruited from poor and petit bourgeois rural strata to a greater extent than in Argentina, they experienced "greater concern . . . about the social cost of the economic model than among the *técnicos* of the Ministry of the Economy and the Central Bank" (pp. 102–3). But Finch does not offer an analysis of the regime's crisis and assumes too readily that the hostility of the big ranchers to the military was a fair indicator of their objectively less-favored position. If one allows that conflicts of status as well as of class may have produced their discontent (certainly the ranchers were scarcely the only sector to have much to complain about), then this assumption becomes problematic. Industry, too, suffered a shattering debt crisis as a result of the collapse of the regime's exchange-rate overvaluation policy, but it did not mobilize politically.

Luis Eduardo González's *Transición y restauración democrática* discusses the reasons why the military relinquished power, effectively allowing a restoration of the status quo ante.¹¹ He correctly argues that the crisis of the authoritarian regime began as an unintended consequence of its own failed project to found a *democradura*—that is, a democracy limited in accordance with national security doctrine.¹² But in contrast with the new Chilean constitution (also submitted to plebiscite in 1980), the blueprint for a *democradura* was rejected by Uruguayan voters. González's explanations, unlike those of the previous authors, center on legitimacy rather than on political economy: the greater resistance of democratic political culture in Uruguay (even within the military), the comparatively low prestige of the armed forces, and their

collegial leadership that caused them to appeal to the electorate as arbiters.¹³ They “shot themselves in the foot” again by holding the 1982 party primaries, which weakened the position of their civilian allies to the point of marginality.¹⁴

César Aguiar’s “*Perspectivas de democratización en el Uruguay actual*” in *Apertura y concertación* restores a limited role to political economy by stressing the long-term failure of the Uruguayan military regime to solve any of the structural problems that brought it to power or the eventually acute financial crisis. González argues that external political factors were secondary, however: the United States reduced pressure for liberalization after Reagan was elected, and the collapse of Argentina’s military government was as much a disincentive to the Uruguayan military as a source of courage for the opposition. The fact that Uruguay’s neighbors underwent democratic transitions at closely spaced intervals was due to “common structural problems, not mechanisms such as the presumed domino effect.” The external component of the economic crisis did accelerate the transition by eroding regime support at mass and elite levels, but not until 1982.

The domestic factors that González stresses as the motor of Uruguay’s transition “formed a triangle” of forces similar to my third, fourth, and fifth clusters: popular movements, opposition parties, and the military. Although the military claimed to have ceded power, and the hard-line opposition to have conquered it, González argues that none of the three factions predominated. Popular pressure in terms of votes was overwhelming, but mobilization through demonstrations and strikes served its purpose “as an instrument of pressure on the Armed Forces because it was always under control, and kept within certain limits” (p. 22). Uruguay’s transition, which was determined by the *Acuerdo del Club Naval* of August 1984 between the commanders in chief of the three armed forces, the Colorado party, and the Left, involved an incomplete pact among elites.¹⁵ The Blanco party, whose leader Wilson Ferreira was in jail until after the elections, bitterly opposed the pact,¹⁶ but in González’s view, the Blancos strengthened the other parties’ negotiating positions. Apart from the exclusion of Ferreira (arguably the most popular politician) and some transitory provisions regarding military promotions, the military were forced to abandon their demands.

One way of highlighting the determinants of Uruguay’s military extrication via a pact is to compare it with other cases. In *Transición y partidos en Uruguay y Chile*, González again emphasizes the greater support and legitimacy of the Pinochet regime shown in the 1978 and 1980 plebiscites. Although fraud occurred in Chile, the key leaders of the opposition accepted defeat. In González’s view, the reasons incorporate mediated effects of the political economy: public support for the new

constitution was provided by business groups in Chile, where a far higher level of "threat" to the capitalist order had preceded the coup and a continuing potential existed for a return to power by the Left (p. 19). He suggests that the leaders of the center (who had welcomed the coup) abandoned their electorate as much as the other way round by joining the intransigent opposition to Pinochet.

González explains the difficulties faced by opposition forces in Chile in developing a successful strategy within its historically polarized party system.¹⁷ These difficulties resulted from Chile's more stratified social structure but also from its having expanded the franchise somewhat later than did Uruguay (p. 23). Just as the early adoption of universal suffrage before industrialization and the emergence of organized labor blocked the emergence of strong leftist parties in the United States, the Colorados and Blancos managed to survive in Uruguay precisely because of the country's uniquely successful transition from oligarchic to mass democracy at the beginning of the twentieth century. In Chile the cleavage between Center and Right has hampered efforts to create a united opposition front to the regime, whereas in Uruguay, right-wing Colorados (who had been close to the military) did not constitute such a "bottleneck" and provided votes and even ministers for the democratic government of Julio María Sanguinetti.

Brazil: The Inescapable Momentum of Transitions Initiated from Above

Thomas Skidmore's "The Political Economy of Policy-Making in Authoritarian Brazil, 1967–70" in *Generals in Retreat* offers a useful synthesis of the interaction between the most repressive phase of Brazil's bureaucratic authoritarianism and the developmentalist programs implemented by its technocrats. Yet the essay deliberately stops a decade and a half before the transition. It is actually an essay about generals on the offensive, and retreat by civil and political society. Consequently, one must look elsewhere for analysis of the transition. Bolívar Lamounier, for example, has rightly emphasized that the salient difference between Brazil's bureaucratic-authoritarian regime and those in the Southern Cone was the Brazilian decision to maintain the congress and a more or less regular (if manipulated) electoral process.¹⁸ Brazilian politicians and representative institutions were thus able to retain more credibility than in Argentina, with beneficial consequences for democratization (p. 177). Like González, Lamounier emphasizes that the military lacked a legitimization formula to replace representative elections and had to contend with the weight of liberal traditions. Although these factors were much stronger in Uruguay, Brazilians shared an aversion to personalized power (*caudilhismo*) and a recognition of elite diversity (p. 171). Pressure for liberalization came as a result of a reac-

tion against the extreme concentration of technocratic decision-making that had created a "black hole effect," meaning "a loss of flexibility, rationality and efficiency because of the absence of proper channels of support and feedback" (p. 172).

In an essay entitled "Apontamentos sobre a Questão Democrática Brasileira," Lamounier has extended his analysis of the gradual liberalization that required a decade before culminating in a transfer of power.¹⁹ Like the previous authors discussing Argentina and Uruguay, he discounts the importance of societal pressure in the decision to liberalize. In Brazil, however, the liberalization was more willingly promoted "from above" by prestigious senior officers occupying governmental positions. Only later did electoral pressures demonstrate the scale of opposition to the military: "Between the impossibility of a lasting 'Mexicanization' and simple dictatorial immobility, the Geisel government opted . . . for a third way, which would be 'gradual and safe' relaxation" (p. 130). Although "relaxation" gave way to "opening" between 1974 and 1982, the summits of power, particularly the federal executive branch, remained closed. The government also constantly intervened to alter electoral rules to its advantage. Lamounier argues that this period can be seen as "an implicit negotiation, in the sense that both sides, government and opposition, found the space to redefine successively their respective roles, visualizing the gains that they would derive from the continuation of the process itself" (Lamounier, "Apontamentos," p. 135). One should not forget, however, the far greater initiative retained by the regime in Brazil when compared with the Uruguayan case.

Also distinguishing the Brazilian process from the Uruguayan were "the political benefits of progressive normalization." Parliamentary immunities were reestablished, civil liberties restored, and amnesty granted to exiles. In Uruguay, however, such amnesty had to wait until after democracy was restored (although some exiles returned and some prisoners were released during the last year of the regime). Paradoxically, the erosion of authoritarian legitimacy revitalized the authority of Brazil's government because of its commitment to change (p. 135). Writing on the eve of the transition's dénouement, Lamounier argued that the dyarchic situation created by the 1982 election of opposition governors in Brazil's most important states amounted to a kind of "perverse polyarchy" (p. 136). The authoritarian executive had contributed to what Mannheim calls "fundamental democratization" by promoting mass communication and consumption, as well as by increasingly affording major political spaces to opposition movements, including parties, participatory associations, new social movements, and unions (pp. 138–40).

With regard to Brazil's political economy, Lamounier downplays

the significance of the economic crisis and offers a reasoned critique of those who find Brazilian authoritarianism rooted in the country's economic structures, whether in extreme postcolonial inequality and underdevelopment in the Northeast or in burgeoning industrialization, urbanization, and social mobilization leading to uncontrollable social tensions in the South. Others analyzing Brazil's transition have stressed the role of the industrial bourgeoisie in their campaign against encroaching state enterprise,²⁰ and in "Transitions to Democracy," Viola and Mainwaring suggest that this factor was important in the early phase of abertura, as was the growth of popular mobilization between 1977 and 1980 (p. 202). As Francisco Weffort has pointed out, the question of why the liberalization began is separable from the question of why it continued, with the pressure from civil society presumably increasing in the later phases.²¹ Viola and Mainwaring emphasize not merely the pressure of popular movements but the fact that in the face of protests, the government "responded with notable sagacity and success, using a pattern of cooptation where possible and repression where necessary" (p. 204).

Finally, Mainwaring and Donald Share have provided a comparative analysis of the Spanish and Brazilian paths to democracy that emphasizes the interaction of the interests of powerholders and opposition strategies.²² The essential features of what they call "transitions through transaction" are fivefold: government control over the timing of reform; exclusion of certain sectors; a "taboo" regarding structural economic change or punishment of former regime actors; the ability of some leaders to survive open elections, which causes divisions in the regime; and a high degree of continuity in elites, institutions, and policies, as well as continued military autonomy. Ultimately, however, the electoral process creates a dynamic of its own. In Brazil it became unstoppable during 1983, when the official party, the Partido Democrático Social (PDS), refused to endorse the government's wage policies and the president refused to intervene in the struggle to name his successor.

Some may wonder whether the faster and more thorough democratization of Spain adds up to a qualitatively different kind of process. Certainly, the emphasis on excluding extreme actors was scarcely present, and "demilitarization" was far more complete than in Brazil, even at the time of Franco's death. Rather than draw too sharp a line between transitions due to transaction, extrication, or collapse, perhaps it would be fruitful to separate the two dimensions of the military's calculus—power and interests, which may not move in tandem. Share and Mainwaring's discussion of the requirements for "transaction" rightly emphasizes the acceptance of limits by the opposition, little mass mobilization, and highly skilled leaders. Perhaps as important as

limited mobilization is the insulation of the regime from such pressure. The *Diretas Já!* campaign in Brazil was enormous, but it failed to achieve its goal of immediate direct elections. Its impact was the unforeseen one of splitting the ruling PDS, thus allowing the victory of moderate opposition leader Tancredo Neves in the electoral college.

Chile: Authoritarian Regression and the "Bunker"

The Chilean regime is currently the polar opposite of the earlier situation in Spain: an authoritarian regime with no interest in withdrawal that can withstand violent popular pressure and ensure that the costs of repression are borne by its opponents.²² Philip O'Brien's "Authoritarianism and the New Economic Orthodoxy: The Political Economy of the Chilean Regime, 1975–1983" makes the most serious attempt to apply the "capitalist restructuring" analysis in *Generals in Retreat*, portraying "international capitalist crisis" and "international finance capital requirements" as the major explanations for events (p. 145). More convincing is the argument that the Chilean regime corresponded to a "particular class strategy of accumulation and domination" (p. 145). Yet the exhaustion of import substitution was a problem for which technocratic advisers of the military and business elites had a policy response—international opening. The question as to what degree technocrats act independently of dominant classes is raised, but as in Poulantzas's theory, the conclusion is that technocrats are only "relatively autonomous." It is always assumed, rather dubiously, that they are acting in the long-run collective interests of capitalists.²³

O'Brien's discussion of Chilean monetarism is more interesting when it examines concrete political and institutional constraints (which it does too rarely) than when it reiterates elegant, but empty, theories of a totally marketized and depoliticized society. Although no legislature existed in Chile, trade unions were not reformed for six years, until the adoption of the Plan Laboral. This new policy aimed at atomizing the unions, but they proved resistant to it (p. 171). Without any political analysis of the regime's relation to civil society, it is hard to understand why Finance Minister Sergio de Castro was eventually forced to resign because of the unpopularity of his successful abolition of wage indexation (p. 158) or why "dogmatic" neoliberals were dropped as a result of systematic pressure from business associations (p. 161). O'Brien's disclaimer regarding "the difficulties in trying to establish what actually happened in Chile" is striking in view of his confidence in offering explanations (p. 162). In fact, the unreliability of statistics is hardly the greatest difficulty faced by researchers, given the order of Chile's economic catastrophe; and the secrecy shrouding decision makers presum-

ably makes it harder to explain why policies were chosen than to explain what was decided.

The Pinochet regime entered a massive crisis as a result of its exchange-rate overvaluation (which, incidentally, was not favored by Friedmanite theories) and rapid accumulation of external debt. But O'Brien argues that "there is no evidence that an alternative policy, e.g., a fluctuating exchange rate, would have changed that much" (p. 180). Yet many economists would probably reply that a fluctuating exchange rate could have avoided the mass bankruptcies and lessened the temptation to take out dollar-denominated loans. Was there any structural reason why Brazil could invest some of its foreign loans in productive infrastructure while the Southern Cone countries squandered most of theirs on imports or capital flight? O'Brien argues that the "crisis undermined the hegemonic fraction of the power bloc, international finance capital" and that Pinochet "turned against them in an effort to preserve his own personal prestige." But despite the massive intervention of banks and industry and the imprisonment of a few notorious speculators, the regime has not really altered its economic, let alone its political, course. In fact, it has shown a remarkable resilience, albeit from a fortified position akin to Hitler's bunker.

Manuel Antonio Garretón's intellectual production on Southern Cone authoritarian regimes has been prodigious. *Dictaduras y democratización* contains four of his recent theoretical essays. The second, "Democracia, crisis y transición política en Chile," bears most directly on the problem of the obstacles to democratization in Chile. Here Garretón starts with the observation that three different meanings are typically attached to the term *democratic transition*. To the regime, it means institutionalizing itself on a new footing; to the centrist opposition, it means restoring "formal" democracy; and to the Left, it means a chance to proceed toward a deepening of social democracy. A "formal" project risks being the most easily overturned, according to Garretón, although introducing a socialist dimension may create "the temptation to renounce democratic principles when the possibility of transformation gets bogged down and revolutionary opportunities appear" (p. 45). This triptych should immediately alert the reader to the differences between the Chilean situation and those hitherto considered, especially Argentina and Uruguay, where the extreme alternatives of authoritarian institutionalization and radical social transformation were never viable.

According to Garretón, while the material bases for class compromise are meager under dependent capitalism, Chilean political parties are still tainted by populism and (Leninist) vanguardism and are seriously at odds as to the kind of society they would like to see in the long term. Meanwhile, the possibility of militarily defeating the armed

forces, as in Central America, is ruled out by their elite support, corporate cohesion, sophisticated training, and advanced matériel. Although the scale of the economic crisis and the “eruption of the social world onto the political stage” eventually forced Pinochet to pursue a dual strategy of repression and political dialogue (p. 49), early hopes for a regime overthrow proved mistaken (p. 52). The opposition remained split on the need for negotiation versus the need for frontal mobilization, a split that reflected the different conceptions of democracy held by Center and Left. The fundamental blockage in Chile stems from the loyalty of the military to Pinochet and the narrow concerns of those allied with the regime, “to which the action of the opposition is not alien” (p. 55). To extend such a focus on the regime’s interest, one needs to know the sources of Pinochet’s power and the loyalty of the military and his allies. Garretón is perfectly aware that the real possibility exists of continuing exhaustion among the opposition, while Pinochet hangs onto the timetable laid out in the 1980 Constitution. This document provides for the choice of a new president in 1989 by the service chiefs, who could keep Pinochet in office until 1997, by which time he (like Franco) might have died in his bed.²⁴

As Garretón points out, “an end to the military regime via the action and pressure of the opposition necessarily passes through the calculus and decision to withdraw the armed forces” (p. 57). Unlike Brazil’s military government, the Chilean regime is not seeking a way out; unlike Argentina’s, it remains united and able to govern; and unlike Uruguay’s, it has not drifted away from the core interests of the military corporation. The solution, according to Garretón, is first “to cause the national and social crisis to penetrate into the interior of the armed forces through a process of popular organization, protest, rebellion, and mobilization” (p. 57). Yet the protests unwittingly scared dominant classes and elites into renewed support for Pinochet and did not facilitate achieving broad opposition consensus, Garretón’s second requirement. He insists on the need for two pacts, one procedural (to put an end to the dictatorship) and the other based on a “bloc for change.” The question he does not address is to what extent these two pacts may operate at cross purposes.

Writing more recently, Carlos Huneeus has confronted the problem of Pinochet’s abrupt cancellation of liberalization by declaring a state of emergency on 6 November 1984.²⁵ Huneeus centers his analysis on the interests of regime supporters and the regime’s multiple sources of legitimacy, which in Chile (unlike other bureaucratic-authoritarian regimes) include claims to legality as a result of the 1978 and 1980 plebiscites and even historic continuity via the Consejo de Estado (which includes former conservative political leaders). Huneeus argues the need to reject functionalist analyses that tend to view every crisis as

“insuperable” and to focus instead on strategies for “conflict regulation” by the regime (p. 34). The key to Pinochet’s resilience has been his role as arbiter in a complex and heterogeneous coalition and his substitution of personal power for institutionalization. Also, the number of senior officers in the cabinet has consistently exceeded that in Argentina or Brazil, and no tendency toward civilianization has developed. Huneus believes that the survival of military professionalism bodes well for the future stability of democracy once it is restored. Yet it might be fair to add that this preservation of professionalism is an obstacle to the transition in that the military in Chile has been far less fragmented than in other bureaucratic-authoritarian regimes.

On economic issues, Huneus is somewhat subjective in qualifying the Plan Laboral as “precapitalist,” allegedly because it does not represent a coherent strategy for ameliorating class conflict by incorporating popular sectors. Yet he is illuminating on the cooptive strategy pursued by the Programa de Empleo Mínimo during the depths of the crisis and its deliberate manipulation of patronage. Protesters found themselves disciplined by exclusion from its benefits. His most striking argument is that the Chilean opposition actually possessed more resources than in Argentina or Spain but still proved incapable of dislodging Pinochet by head-on confrontation. The generalized economic crisis led some of the middle class to participate in the protests, and the opposition triumphed in the elections of various interest and professional associations. But the greater the conflict, the more dichotomous the struggle became, thus reducing the chances for a negotiated way out. The parties also made mistakes, as in demanding Pinochet’s immediate resignation when talks were held with Prime Minister Sergio Onofre Jarpa. Opinion data show that Chileans did not blame the president for the country’s economic disaster (p. 66). The regime was able to skillfully buy off crucial social groups that threatened to join the protests, particularly truckers and small shopkeepers (p. 75). Also, tariffs were raised again. Perversely, the crisis increased the dependence of groups on the state more than it reduced the state’s resources for coopting the groups (p. 76).

What is stimulating in Huneus’s analysis is that it goes beyond the kind of analyses that treat political economy in terms of exogenous forces molding politics, showing them to be partially malleable through state policies. Nevertheless, Huneus’s description of Chile as a *de facto* dyarchy (p. 78) and his prediction that the country will follow a model of slowly guided reform similar to that of Brazil (p. 83) contain a large measure of wishful thinking. It is by no means clear that the Pinochet constitution (which Garretón correctly views as an institutionalization of authoritarianism) can be accelerated into a voluntary liberalization. Chileans enjoy a surprising degree of freedom to protest and

express dissent but have absolutely no channels for legitimate participation of the kind maintained in Brazil.²⁶ This view does not imply that Chile can experience only a “democratic rupture” or a collapse equivalent to that of Argentina (barring divine providence). Rather, the more likely scenario would seem to be a reluctant bargain by the military, akin to Uruguay’s *Acuerdo del Club Naval*. But the main difference in Chile—Pinochet himself—currently constitutes an insuperable obstacle. Although the opposition has been improving its capacity for unified action, progress may remain blocked, as it did in Spain, until the president dies.

Conclusion: Transitions in Comparative Perspective

If one were to summarize crudely the different paths of transition, Uruguay’s negotiated path could be said to fall in between those of Argentina (collapse) and Brazil (deliberate liberalization from above). Five kinds of fundamental explanations have emerged for transitions: legitimation problems, political economy, popular movements, opposition alliance and negotiating strategies, and the capacities and interests of powerholders. The interaction of the last two sets of factors most powerfully predict the path and timing of transitions. But legitimacy, class struggles, and mobilization can also enter into the calculus of power resources and interests. Where these factors do not produce a pact, they may produce unilateral withdrawal.

The fundamental need for future research is not simply to accumulate more data on individual political systems, as Cammack prescribes, although vital evidence is still lacking on such fundamental issues as how bureaucratic-authoritarian policies were made. More emphasis is needed on cross-national subsystemic comparisons of political and social actors (for example, labor movements, bourgeois parties, business owners, producer groups, bureaucrats, or the military). Such studies must be precisely aimed at uncovering key theoretical issues and at highlighting the contrasts in structural contexts as well as determinants of the strategies attempted by particular actors.

One of the most general problems that remains to be explained is why some bureaucratic-authoritarian regimes have coped more successfully than others with the tensions between military professionalism and government (as in Chile, where Pinochet has retained the confidence of the army, if not always that of the other services). In particular, why were military divisions so severe in Argentina, and how might they have been better managed from the point of view of preserving the core interests of the armed forces as an institution? Rivalries among the services cannot alone account for the regime collapse. Pion-Berlin cites O’Donnell to support the view that a major factor in dissen-

sion within each service was poor economic performance (p. 72). But why has it not produced the same impact in Chile? Meanwhile, how was it that in Brazil, a liberalizing coalition came to power, thus maintaining the unity of the armed forces by isolating hard-liners? More information is also needed on the evolution of the internal situation of the Uruguayan army. The naval club pact was eventually negotiated by the commanders in chief but was more or less explicitly opposed by President Gregorio Alvarez, whose apparent ambition was to continue in office.

Luis González's convincing analysis of the Uruguayan and Chilean cases also suggests lines for future comparative research on political parties. Why was it that an alternative hard-line alliance of Left and radical Blancos, similar to Chile's Movimiento Democrático Popular did not arise in Uruguay? What are the key factors in decisions by parties of the Left to negotiate their entry into the game of liberal democracy? What were the origins and consequences of disunity within the left in Brazil and of the historic mellowing of enmity between Radicals and Peronists in Argentina? As has already been suggested with regard to the military, the best way to delve into such unanswered questions will be to proceed by comparing the dynamics of parties and party systems across cases. For now, the answers must be constructed largely from uneven country studies, although the best of the comparative essays reviewed here demonstrate how much more fruitful this way forward may be than simply investigating cases and ideal types.

NOTES

1. *Transitions from Authoritarian Regimes*, edited by Guillermo O'Donnell, Philippe Schmitter, and Laurence Whitehead (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986). The first volume discusses European cases; the second, Latin America; and the third and fourth, theories and comparisons. One reason that I have not included a discussion of this project is that I contributed the chapter on Uruguay.
2. An early attempt in such a direction is Dankwart Rustow's "Transitions to Democracy," *Comparative Politics* 2, no. 3 (1970):337-63. While stimulating, Rustow's argument is directed more toward long-term historical phases than toward short-term dynamics.
3. Robert Dahl, *Polyarchy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971).
4. Alfred Stepan, "Military Politics and Three Polity Arenas: Civil Society, Political Society, and the State," to be published by Oxford University Press in a book he is editing entitled *Democratizing Brazil*. A Portuguese version was published in Brazil as a separate item. See Stepan, *Os Militares: Da Abertura à Nova República* (Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 1986).
5. "State and Alliances in Argentina, 1956-76," *Journal of Development Studies* 15, no. 1 (1978):3-33.
6. Some of the answers may lie in Smith's earlier dissertation. See "Crisis of the State and Military-Authoritarian Rule in Argentina, 1966-1973," Ph.D. diss., Stanford University, 1980.
7. *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 27, no. 2 (Summer 1985):55-76.
8. See Scott Mainwaring and Eduardo Viola, "Transitions to Democracy: Brazil and

- Argentina in the 1980s," *Journal of International Affairs* 38, no. 2 (Winter 1985):193–219.
9. A similar version appears in *Transición a la democracia*, prepared by Augusto Varas (Santiago: Asociación Chilena de Investigaciones para la Paz–Ainavillo, 1984).
 10. Guillermo O'Donnell, "Notas para el estudio de procesos de democratización a partir del estado burocrático-autoritario (Documento de trabajo)," *Estudios CEDES* 2, no. 5 (1979); reprinted in *El análisis estructural en economía*, edited by José Molero (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1981).
 11. This essay was also published in *Uruguay y la democracia*, Vol. 3, edited by Charles Gillespie, Louis Goodman, Juan Rial, and Peter Winn, 101–20 (Montevideo: Banda Oriental, 1985).
 12. See also Luis González, "Uruguay 1980–1981: An Unexpected Opening," *LARR* 18, no. 3 (1983):63–76. My essay, "Uruguay's Transition from Collegial Military-Technocratic Rule," appears in O'Donnell, Schmitter, and Whitehead, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule*, Vol. 3. The concept of *democradura* was coined by Philippe Schmitter.
 13. For the opinion that in Uruguay the military were psychologically, as well as structurally, the prisoners of the country's deeply rooted democratic traditions, see Lili-ana De Riz, "Uruguay: la transición desde una perspectiva comparada," in Gillespie, Goodman, Rial, and Winn, *Uruguay y la democracia* 3:121–38.
 14. As Juan Pablo Terra has pointed out, the Uruguayan military's threat to impose a new constitution unilaterally lacked credibility, given the previous referendum and primaries. See his "Seguridad nacional y democracia en Uruguay," in Varas, *Transición a la democracia*, 147–58.
 15. The pact conformed to O'Donnell's model in "Notas para el estudio de procesos de democratización" of an alliance between "soft-liners" in the regime and moderates in the opposition, but with the odd twist that the Left (hitherto treated as antisystem by the military and other parties) joined the moderate camp.
 16. The orientation of much of the speculative literature on how parties may promote transitions by "consociational" mechanisms would seem to be a red herring in the Uruguayan case, although such mechanisms may play a larger role in democratic consolidation. The concept was first invented by Arend Lijphart in his article "Consociational Democracy," *World Politics* 21, no. 2 (1969):207–25.
 17. As Karen Remmer pointed out to me, another obstacle to a strategy of moderation was the die-hard determination of Pinochet and his allies to hold onto power. Aguiar suggests that in Uruguay, a "feudalization" occurred within the armed forces, that is, an increasing decentralization and fragmentation of power that posed a major obstacle to any new alliance seeking to postpone the promised elections.
 18. See Bolívar Lamounier, "Opening through Elections: Will the Brazilian Case Become a Paradigm?" in *Government and Opposition* 19, no. 2 (Spring 1984):167–77.
 19. See Bolívar Lamounier, "Apontamentos sobre a Questão Democrática Brasileira," in *Como Renascer as Democracias*, organized by Alain Rouquié, Bolívar Lamounier, and Jorge Schvarzer (São Paulo: Editora Brasileira, 1985), 104–40.
 20. Fernando Henrique Cardoso, "O Papel dos Empresários no Processo de Transição: O Caso Brasileiro," *Dados* 26, no. 1 (1983):9–26.
 21. See Francisco Weffort's remarks in the roundtable discussion published in *O Futuro da Abertura: Um Debate*, edited by Bolívar Lamounier and José Eduardo Faria (São Paulo: Instituto de Estudos Econômicos, Sociais e Políticos de São Paulo–Cortez Editora, 1981), 50–52.
 22. An earlier version of Donald Share's and Scott Mainwaring's essay appeared under the title "Transitions from Above" in the Kellogg Institute Working Paper Series published by Notre Dame University. The version cited here was published as "Transitions through Transaction: Democratization in Brazil and Spain," *Political Liberalization in Brazil*, edited by Wayne Selcher (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1986).
 23. O'Brien's essay contains a number of inaccuracies and peculiar judgments. For example, he confuses the level of the consumer price index with its rate of change (p. 154); he describes the onslaught on the welfare state as leading to a "class apartheid system" (p. 157); his penchant for oxymoron leads him to accuse the "Chicago Boys"

- of "a mystical belief in economics as an exact science" (p. 151); and he calls the Unidad Popular experiment "essentially Eurocommunist" (p. 144).
24. The single candidate chosen by the commanders in chief for the presidency will then have to be confirmed in a plebiscite, opening up a degree of hope for change, according to some.
 25. Carlos Huneeus, "La política de la apertura y sus implicancias para la inauguración de la democracia en Chile," *Revista de Ciencia Política* 7, no. 1 (1985):25–84.
 26. The reimposition of a state of siege following the unsuccessful attempt on Pinochet's life in September 1986 has led to a new crackdown, but Chile still remained freer than Uruguay prior to the Naval Club pact in most respects.