2023-03

Democracy in the balance: movements, institutions, and the prospects of democratic deepening in Chile

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Pardee Honors Undergraduate Thesis

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Introduction

Since the Democratic Third Wave of the late 20th century, many countries across the global south witnessed democratic transitions away from authoritarianism. While in some cases these transitions have led to reductions in inequality, and vibrant experiments in democracy and state-society relations at the local level, more often than not, these democratic transitions have failed to translate into a political system that offers more than periodic voting and basic civil liberties. Creating real lasting democratic strengthening is the challenge that many countries face, yet few have been able to meet. *Why?* This dilemma suggests an important puzzle around what scholars have referred to as "democratic deepening." Many of the same states that democratized so rapidly and fervently in the late 20th century seemed to lose momentum in democratization just a decade or so later. Democratic deepening in and of itself does not have a clear method, and many political scholars today are contending with this same question of how democratic deepening can occur, how it can last, and why there continues to be a lack of quality within the democratic processes.

In order to address this broad question of democratic deepening in the global south, I focus on the case of Chile, one of the more prominent symbols of the democratic transitions of the later 20th century. Since its democratization in 1989, Chile has contended with this same question of how democratic deepening can occur in the wake of a 15-year dictatorship. The transition from the Pinochet dictatorship on the back of a popular democratic movement stoked the hopes and dreams of millions of Chilean citizens that a more equal and egalitarian political future was possible. Yet today, over 30 years later, many of these expectations have been left unfulfilled, with persistently high levels of inequality, racially and economically segregated cities, and

limited avenues for participatory democracy. In this thesis I ask, *why has Chile failed to deepen its democracy since its transition*? Moreover, how might this failure inform our understanding of the challenges of the process of democratic deepening as a whole?

While much of the existing literature focuses on the relationship between the state and civil society, I argue that the key to understanding the Chilean government's inability to advance greater democracy and citizenship is *the relationship between civil society and the broader public over time*. I capture this relationship–the extent to which civil society is integrated or constrained by its ties to the public citizenry–using the concept of *embeddedness*. Embeddedness is often used by scholars to describe the relationship between the state and civil society (Bradlow, 2021; Heller, 2017). However, this framing presumes that civil society is an effective representative of the public. Yet as I will show, this relationship between civil society and the broader public can vary and fluctuate over time, resulting in important outcomes for democratic deepening. As such, in this thesis I adapt the term embeddedness to note the extent to which civil society organizations are, or are not, *embedded* in the broader public, aligning and operating with the support of the citizens they are meant to speak for.

I argue that Chile represents a case where the level of embeddedness of civil society has been weak or inconsistent over time and that this weakness has had a profound impact on Chilean democracy. Yet this inconsistency has not occurred uniformly. Particularly when dealing with movements or moments that demonstrated some initial promise, a subsequent loss of civil society embeddedness (or, what I call "disembeddedness") can occur for different reasons. In this thesis, I highlight several varieties of disembeddedness using key, diverse political moments

between 1989 and the present. These are temporary spaces where a potential for democratic deepening existed, yet which ultimately resulted in a reinforcement of the stagnant status quo. These spaces include: 1) the early transition period of Chile, 2) the indigenous mobilizations surrounding the construction of the Ralco Dam, and 3) the student mobilizations of the early 2010s that lead directly to the 2022 constitutional crisis. These three moments of participatory politics capture key political events in which the Chilean state was forced to engage with movements and civil organizations and where a potential outcome would have led to some form of democratic deepening, yet failed to do so. In each case, disembeddedness undermined the promise of these movements over time, yet in different ways. I use three different terms to describe these cases of disembeddedness: *interia*, *capture*, and *misalignment*, to describe the different ways these moments were unable to maintain popular support and lead to a higher quality of democracy. In order to best analyze my argument, I will first define the common terms I use— namely, "democracy", "democratic deepening", "participatory politics", and "embeddedness". I will also begin building the framework with which I plan to analyze my three historical cases. The definition of democracy used in this thesis is one that combines a traditional view of democracy as electoral participation and recent departures to that definition that instead look at the expansion of civil rights and ability for citizens in a democracy to negotiate their rights.

Recent scholarship emphasizes the role of social movements in creating substantive democracy, or deepening democracy. This body of scholarship pushes back on the traditional view of democracy as defined by formal institutions like free and fair elections, and rather argues that this rigid definition creates a paradox in which delegation to representatives and sovereignty of

the people— both common modes of defining democracy —stand in contention with each other (Heller, 2022). This more recent departure from the traditional definition focuses on the deliberative aspects of democracy in which people are able to exercise their sovereignty through participation and the creation of deliberative outcomes in order to reconcile the more traditional view of democracy as based on elections and representatives with the end goal of popular sovereignty. Though identified in various ways— "substantive democracy", "participatory democracy", "deepening democracy" —these terms point to a shift in literature wherein democracy exists when "there are high levels of participation (in electoral politics and in civil society) across social categories of class, gender, ethnicity and race and where subordinate groups can effectively participate in the political process" (Heller, 2022) both in social movements and in electoral processes like voting, and the process of democratic deepening must occur with the aim of including marginalized groups and creating more civil liberties for the population. In this paper, I will be referring to this definition when I refer to "democratization" and "democracy". That is, the idea of democracy does not end at the establishment of free and fair elections, but continues to include processes for participation, collective action, accountability, and lasting reforms and policies that allow citizens to "realize the ideal of self-rule" (Kadivar et al., 2020).

The act of deepening democracy refers to the ability for citizens to create modes of participation that lead to lasting accountability and the expansion of civil liberties through collective action. The Chilean cases I discuss in this thesis encapsulate the ways in which the broader population experiences democratic deepening and the ways in which marginalized groups call for deeper democracy— the early transition period and the 2011–2022 student and constitutional movement

include the entire Chilean population while the case of the Ralco Dam and indigenous mobilization in the 1990s is a case that features groups who have been otherwise excluded from society and from a quality democratic experience. Scholars who look at deepening democracy emphasize the importance of participatory institutions, deliberation in civil society, and redistributive policies that give marginalized groups a voice (Kadivar et al., 2020).

The shift in democratic scholarship and the definition of democracy has led to developments in the measurement of democracy—most notably, the "Varieties of Democracy" or V-Dem, a dataset developed to incorporate ideas of substantive democracy in the measurements of democracy (Coppedge et al., 2019). The dataset looks at democracies in five dimensions: electoral, liberal, participatory, deliberative, and egalitarian. While I will not be using the model to measure democracy in Chile because other scholars have done so (Coppedge et al., 2019; Kadivar et al., 2020), the last three dimensions— participatory, deliberative, and egalitarian— provide defined traits with which I can analyze each of the three cases to best mitigate the inevitable differences that occur in each case. My effort to standardize the historical cases will minimize the ability for the differences in outcome to be attributed to changes in the context alone. The deliberative dimension addresses how decisions are reached, whether outcomes are characterized "by a commitment to the common good", and how political elites justify their behavior— either through addressing the public, providing space for counter-arguments, and collaboration with other political elites (Kadivar et al., 2020). The participatory dimension addresses the modes of active citizen involvement in the political process and the extent to which people have a direct influence on policy decisions (Kadivar et al., 2020). The egalitarian dimension addresses barriers that people face when exercising their rights and the distribution of

rights across social groups (Kadivar et al., 2020). Because the age of Chilean democracy varies in each case, the cases may be viewed as unrelated to each other or as not comparable parallels with which I can illustrate the ways in which deeper democracy has not been achieved in Chile.

An additional effort to standardize my historical cases is made in the way I define these historical periods. I refer to these cases as "moments of participatory politics", or moments in which Chileans negotiate their citizenship, their access to civil liberties, and the quality of democracy they experience. This largely builds off of Heller (2012) who identifies moments of "decentralized participatory governance" as a framework to compare examples of participation in Brazil, India, and South Africa— cases which are not parallels. I adopt a similar framework by defining these cases as "moments of participatory politics" to further draw parallels between my cases. The cases I analyze in Chile exemplify moments in which Chileans reckoned with institutions, used political pathways, were led in part by a variety of actors (political parties, political elites, social movements, and institutions), and demanded actionable and specific outcomes.

Literature Review

Several sources attempt to address the challenges presented by the puzzle of Chilean redemocratization: more specifically, why have some countries been able to experience democratic deepening, and others have not? Several scholars have approached this argument, and I will focus specifically on the varied approaches of Fung & Wright (2001), Heller (2012), and Kadivar (2022).

Fung & Wright (2001), pioneers of scholarship on deeper democracy, establish in their work that coordinated decentralization is the key to deepening democracy. Fung & Wright identified a concept referred to as "Empowered Deliberative Democracy" (EDD) which describes a decentralized and concrete form of creating lasting and higher quality democracy. Instead of discussions over abstract principles like justice and popular sovereignty, EDD looks to concrete, real-world outcomes like deliberation on street paving, school curriculum improvement, and environmental management. It also looks to disperse the deliberation practices from formal state institutions to civil society. EDD is characterized by three key principles and three institutional designs. The key principles are Practical Orientation, a focus on tangible problems, Bottom-Up Participation, the involvement of ordinary people and officials close to the problem, and Deliberative Solution Generation, the deliberative development of solutions to these problems. The three institutional designs work in tandem with the key principles: the bottom-up participation is guaranteed by the devolution of public decision authority to empowered local units; the practical orientation is cemented in the centralized supervision and coordination of EDD; and the deliberative solution generation is supported by the use of new state institutions which keeps the process state-centered. Fung & Wright's theory is one of the few theories that

relies on the participation of the broader public in civil society. If people do not want to be part of EDD or are isolated from civil society, it cannot be as effective.

Heller (2012) looks directly at the interplay between social movements and institutions, particularly in what is called "effective citizenship," which describes the ability to bridge the gap between formal rights and the actual practicing of those rights. "Effective citizenship" can only occur within civil society, or the space that holds a state-society relationship. In comparing younger democracies, Heller sees a two-fold problem with state-society relations— 1) how citizens engage the state and 2) where citizens engage the state. Heller's question of "how" and "where" also creates a question of cohesion, or the depth of the vertical relationship between people and institutions. How citizens engage institutions is largely determined by the procedures of engagement, if any, to which people have access. Often in younger democracies, there is a lack of procedure, and people are unable to engage in institutional processes. Or, due to patronage and corruption, people are unwilling to engage in institutional processes either because corruption ensures that rights are not able to be practiced to their fullest extent or because fear keeps citizens from engaging the state. Where citizens engage the state is impacted by the amount of institutional avenues available to ordinary citizens and how easily accessible these pathways are. In terms of democratic deepening, which for Heller would be the creation and maintenance of effective citizenship, balance between institutions and social movements are key. Heller refers to this as "Decentralized Participatory Governance" (DPG) wherein "how" citizens engage the state is strengthened through more coordinated social movements, clearer demands, and more organized shows of public power, and "where" citizens engage the state is strengthened

through increasing the number of institutional pathways and creating institutions that can effectively ward off elite capture, corruption, and provide genuine engagement for citizens.

Kadivar (2022) focuses more on social movements and the length of their mobilizations. According to Kadivar, the length of an unarmed mobilization is crucial to the durability of the movement as well as the ability of the movement to bring about deeper democracy. If an unarmed popular movement mobilizes over a long period of time, it is able to create an organizational structure with solid leadership and strong links between government and society. Kadivar also states the importance of activists co-opting pre-existing institutions and political processes either in the period of mobilization or the period following the longer social movement. The length of the mobilization and the ties the movement is able to create can deepen democracy by preventing weak institutionalization and integrating, or "co-opting", the pre-existing political system. His emphasis here is on the ability of the movement to integrate into the political arena to affect policy and to ensure that the movement's values and demands are discussed in government. The key to democratic deepening for Kadivar is duration of social movements, preferably years-long mobilization that can build an organizational structure and create ties between government and society through co-opting and integrating with the political system.

These three theories on democratic deepening are focused on the various facets that interact with civil society— decentralization of problem-solving, balance between social movements and institutions, and time of mobilization. Civil society is a place to improve the quality of representation, to encourage participation, and to foster collective values (Kadivar, 2022a). It

also is a place to contest the current political system and air out grievances with the political elite. It's where organized social actors "challenge the power of the state" and where democratization can occur as people build their civic identities and build capabilities that allow them to effectively interact with the state (Heller, 2022). While civil society is an important space for democratic deepening to effectively happen, these three theories assume civil society ties to the broader public are strong and effectual, but this is not necessarily a given even when balance between institutions and social movements is achieved, or when coordinated decentralization occurs, or when mobilizations are active for a long enough period of time to have organizational capabilities and co-opt the political system. It is this "disembeddedness" between civil society and the broader population that I will explore in the context of Chile and democratic deepening.

Argument

To illustrate the concept of "disembeddedness" in Chile, I first provide historical context and three cases in which democratic deepening should have occurred but could not because of the lack of embeddedness between the Chilean civil society and the Chilean public. Chile's modern democracy begins with the end of the Pinochet dictatorship. The 1990 Chilean government, which followed the end of the Pinochet dictatorship after a 1988 plebiscite that removed Pinochet as the executive head of Chile, promised redemocratization and the maintenance of the neoliberal economic model. The resulting government was a coalition of Christian Democrats, Socialists, the Party for Democracy, the Social Democrat party, and others of the center-left bloc— these parties created a coalition government referred to as the *Concertación de Partidos por la Democracia*. The Early Transition period led by the *Concertacion* presents one of the first spaces for democratic deepening during which

institutionalized interactions bring together the people and the state for a specific period of time in an effort to expand the "traditional democratic institutions and other facets of citizenship" beyond just multiparty elections and basic civil liberties (Fung & Wright, 2001; Heller, 2022). These spaces for democratic deepening permeate Chile's democratic transition— the early transition period with the *Concertación*; the 1990 Special Commission for Indigenous Peoples (CEPI) and subsequent Mapuche mobilization; the 2011 negotiations with student protestors beginning the decade of negotiation between the Chilean people and the Chilean government leading to the 2022 Constitutional Convention —yet these efforts have continually failed to provide a higher quality of democracy and have broken down in violent protest or national disapproval.

The literature on democratic deepening suggests that the relationship between state and civil society has a role in democratic deepening like Fung & Wright's theory on coordinated decentralization, Heller's theory on balance between social movements and institutions, and Kadivar's theory on time for mobilization development. Building on this work, I identify three key moments in Chile's recent democratic history where a potential for deepening, a key moment of negotiations between state and society took place, yet failed to result in democratic deepening. Though on their own these moments are not critical junctures of democracy in Chile, taken together, I argue these moments encapsulate a broader issue with democracy in Chile and present barriers to deepening. Though context differed, each case began with initial success and then broke down, failing to meet its end goal of substantive democracy.

Scholarship on substantive democracy highlights the importance of civil society for people to experience a greater quality of democracy, yet these theories take for granted the ties between civil society and the people whose interests it is meant to represent. Any balance between civil society and the state for the purposes of democratic deepening presumes a continuing embeddedness between the relevant movements, organizations, or associations and the broader public. Yet such a relationship is not static, it requires constant renewal and commitment. Civil society organizations that once represented popular interests can lose momentum or be co-opted over time. This is one reason why moments of deep engagement between civil society and the state that initially seem promising can fail to produce democratic deepening.

I argue that these three initially-promising moments of democratic deepening failed not because of the imbalance between civil society and institutions as Heller (2012) suggests, or because of a lack of decentralization (Fung & Wright, 2001), or a too-short social movement (Kadivar, 2022b) but failed because of a fundamental disembeddedness of the broader public from civil society and the state. In this thesis, I explore three moments that initially seem to support one of the three theories I have presented and so experience initial success. In each case these moments failed to deepen democracy due to three processes of disembeddedness: inertia and subsequent disillusionment, elite capture of institutions, and misalignment. In the first case, the early democratic transition period was an incomplete process that froze the development of social and civil rights, leading to an eventual stagnation in the political process and disrupted any attempt to increase participation of the population in the political process. In the second case, the indigenous mobilization around the construction of the Ralco Dam illustrates how easily institutions like the National Corporation of Indigenous Development (CONADI) were co-opted

by political and corporate elite, and continues to undermine any negotiations around social rights for the indigenous Chilean population. In the third case, the decade of youth mobilization, which led directly to the creation of a new constitution, was rendered ineffective by a misalignment between the leaders of the social movements and the values of the broader Chilean public. Ultimately, moments of democratic deepening can have strong starts because of the power balance between civil society and the state, but if the foundation for civil society—embeddedness, or the *relationship between the people and civil society* — is weak or does not exist in a meaningful way, democratic deepening cannot be sustained over time.

Chapter 2: Early Transition

I define the "Early Transition" period as beginning with the plebiscite in 1988 and ending with the election of Sebastián Piñera, the first right-wing President of Chile since the return to democracy. I place importance on the Concertación's governance, a legacy which ended when Piñera was inaugurated in 2010. This two-decade period illustrates the restricted democracy that begins the process of disembeddedness between Chileans and civil society in the nation. First, I provide the historical context necessary to understand the disembeddedness at this point in Chile. Then I move into how this case relates to the dominant theories discussed in my literature review, and how disembeddedness is cemented in this period. The Early Transition period illustrates political inertia, or the phenomenon where institutions fail to respond effectively to social change. The Concertación, while useful in the Chilean transition to democracy, caused a stagnant Chilean civil society by refusing to address the social demands of Chileans.

Just prior to the Early Transition period is the 1980 Constitution, which was structured by the military dictatorship in an effort to legitimize the military government and protect the policy established by the military regime once Chile returned to democracy (Couso, 2011). During this time, there were several mobilizations— most notably, the social struggle of 1983 which was triggered by a severe employment crisis. It is in this social struggle that Chileans begin to define their democracy: "a space for social action within which goals such as income redistribution and accountability for human rights abuses could be pursued" (Bresnahan, 2003). To further legitimize the military government, Pinochet proposed a plebiscite in 1988 with the opposition, Agreement of Parties for the No, being made up of 17 different political parties spanning all of

the center-left political spectrum (Albala & Tricot Salomon, 2020). The victory of the opposition led to presidential and congressional elections for 1989 with the same two political blocs, pro-Pinochet and the opposition. The opposition created the *Concertación de Partidos por la Democracia* with the presidential candidate, Patricio Aylwin, for the 1989 Presidential election. This election marks the start of the Chilean political transition (Santos 2005).

The process that leads to a disembeddedness of the people with civil society is due to political inertia, which results in a failure to meaningfully expand democracy, because of the historical context that established the Concertación government. The 17 political parties that created the Concertación were united in one idea—opposing Pinochet. Other issues like income inequality, addressing the human rights violations of Pinochet administration, and social and civil development were not addressed in the coalition government in an effort to maintain stability in the newly transitioned government. The government lacked consensus in how to adapt to the changing social norms of Chile, and in how to reckon with Pinochet's legacy in the nation (Garretón, 1999). This lack of consensus largely stalled the development of Chile as a modern democracy as the Concertación ignored debates on civil and social rights so as to not "endanger 'stability' or 'governability' of a transition", causing a political freeze/stagnation which continued until 2013 when the election process was reformed and proportional representation replaced the electoral binomial system (or party-majority) (Garretón, 1999). Pinochet's legacy in Chile resulted in an extremely unequal society, and rather than pursue policies that may distribute public goods to lessen the burden of inequality, the Concertación resolved to/was constrained to pursue neoliberal economic policy, resulting in economic growth for the nation as a whole but ultimately increasing the inequality in the nation. In 2019, the World Bank reported

that one percent of Chileans hold more than a third of the country's wealth, earning Chile's spot as one of the 20 most unequal countries in the world (Langman). This political inertia is in part what causes Chile's political stability relative to other nations in the region, as inertia is characterized by a pursuit of centrist policies in an effort to remain in office(Chatterjee & Eyigungor, 2020).

The Concertación in the Early Transition period had initial success in terms of democratic deepening because it was the transition government that facilitated the return of formal democracy to the nation. Globally, Chile's transition is considered a success story of a more peaceful democratic transition due to the plebiscite and its "efficient administration of the state and economy" (Couso, 2011; Heller, 2022). Its relative stability since transition is unique in the region as most returns to democracy in Latin America lead to a later devolution in democratic governance. Chile though instead has remained in a limited form of democracy. In terms of substantive democracy, it is limited. It meets the traditional electoral (free and fair elections and the ability for competition in the political sphere) and liberal (the creation and maintenance of civil liberties, bodies independent from politics, and separation of powers) qualities, but aside from the initial constitutional reforms that expand avenues of participation through direct election which speaks to the period's participatory dimension, the period is missing a deliberative and an egalitarian dimension (Coppedge et al., 2019). This period in comparison to future cases discussed in this paper is the most limited respective to substantive democracy. However, its relevance lies in the pattern of initial/anticipated success and its later failure to have any significant effect on the quality of democracy in Chile aside from facilitating a transition to democracy and expanding electoral participation.

Two factors contributed to the political inertia that affected the Concertación and led to the enduring disembeddedness of this time period: the rigid 1980 Constitution and the Concertación's policies that failed to address larger issues in Chile. At the start of the transition, following Aylwin's election, attempts to reform the 1980 Constitution began. The 1980 Constitution featured a number of authoritarian aspects like non-elected senators, an electoral system designed for no political group to attain a clear majority in Congress, and the requirement of supermajorities for the approval of bills— "4/7 of the total members of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate"(Couso, 2011). In 1989, power of the executive branch was reduced and more power was granted to the Congress, and, in 1991, direct elections of mayors, council members, and senators were introduced (Santos, 2005). These initial reforms work to incorporate more avenues for people to interact with the political system and dismantle the most authoritarian aspects of the Constitution. The direct mayoral and congressional elections address Heller's point of "where" citizens interact with the state— another avenue added with a direct line to local government. The initial democratization seems to deepen as the state expands checks on the executive branch of the government and expands access to free and fair elections on the local level. However, this initial deepening from the reforms is quickly derailed by the Concertación's fraught political alliance. The coalition itself was formed mainly by a political necessity to oppose Pinochet in the 1988 plebiscite. With such a mix of political ideologies, the tension within the coalition as well as the stagnation politically is a given. The Concertación instead focused on protecting the neoliberal economic policies established during the Pinochet-era. They were unable to significantly reduce the extreme income inequalities produced during the dictatorship (Bresnahan, 2003). While Chile itself proved to be the "Latin American

Tiger" in terms of economic growth, people within the nation suffered through extreme income inequality, causing popular doubt of the policies the Concertación pursued (Goldfajn et al., 2021). The Concertación's preference of pact-making between political elites as a form of governance further isolated the Chilean people from the political process. The pact-making style of governance was elite-dominated, and the 1980 Constitution further isolated the people from institutions and effectively participating in political and civil arenas as the Constitution establishes some norms that effectively limit popular sovereignty (Garretón, 1999). The early transition government's pursuit of economic growth, that ultimately did not benefit the greater Chilean public, and the simultaneous lack of expanding civil rights for fear of destabilization begins this process of disembeddedness. Political inertia describes an institution or political body that, at some point in time, was necessary for the nation but, over time, is unable to adapt to the nation's needs. The Concertación's choice to pursue economic growth was necessary to maintain initial stability when the democratic transition began. However, as time passed, this rigidity gave way to political stagnation— inertia —and this lack of movement or social progress for decades isolated the population from participating in civil society.

This case speaks to a few aspects of Heller (2012) theory on what creates democratic deepening. The early transition period increases "where" citizens engage with the state, especially as the Concertación continued to reform the Constitution to increase the amount of electoral participation Chileans could have. The nature of democratic transition creates a civil society— thus creating the "where" citizens can engage with the state that Heller sees as key to effective citizenship —and, throughout this two-decade period, there is some involvement in the civil society especially in the youth like the 2006 "Penguins" mobilization where high school and

middle school students protested the stressful national exam and limited entrances to higher education. However, sustainable substantive democracy does not exist in this case, despite the fact that "where" citizens engage with the state is constructed in this period.

The early transition government's inability to expand in any meaningful way social and civil rights for its population leads to the stagnation of the political sphere in Chile, and the quality of democracy remains frozen. Though the Concertación's coalition nature was useful for a victory over Pinochet's campaign, the coalition was later unable to adapt to changing Chilean norms. The coalition government prioritized economic development through a neoliberal model and failed to address pressing issues like prior human rights abuses, income inequality, and privatization of goods like education and healthcare, demonstrating inertia— "the failure of institutions to respond adequately to social, technological and environmental change" (Zantvoort, 2017). Inertia is caused by institutional rigidity, or the continual existence of institutions and institutional practices after they have outlived their functionality (Fukuyama, 2013). Chile has had three Concertación administrations since the transition to democracy. Throughout even the earlier administrations, one begins to see the stall of the Concertación with annual economic growth from 1998 to 2002 being 2.4 percent when, in 1990 – 1997, annual economic growth was 7.7 percent (Jocelyn-Holt, 2013). At the time of the Concertación's end— when Piñera was elected in 2010, 21% of Chileans lived below poverty level, which has remained true since 1998 (Jocelyn-Holt, 2013). Despite the stall in the Concertación's effectiveness from the late 90s, it remained in power until 2010. This decade of stagnation leads people to lose a sense of collective agency, and lowers participation even in the most traditional of participatory processes— elections. Turnout for voting in 1989 was approximately 87% of the voting-age

population while in 1999 the turnout was 73%, and in 2006, the turnout was approximately 61% (R. Carlin, 2006). The two-decade period experienced a steady decrease in turnout and in registration for national elections. The ineffective nature of the Concertación was largely due to their inability to escape the Pinochet era, resulting in popular distrust of politicians with only 50% of people polled trusting that democracy is the best political system and only 12% of people polled trusting the Chilean political parties (Jocelyn-Holt, 2013). An embedded civil society would experience higher turnout with demands for higher quality of democracy, and, with the elements of Heller's theory, one would expect a more engaged population.While the ability of an institution to not change is functional in that it provides stability and develops rules for the broader population to engage in, the inability for an institution to adapt leads to a loss of individual autonomy and collective agency (Rosa & Scheuerman, 2009). Political inertia and the resulting restricted democracy continued to isolate the population from civil society, and the inability to properly embed the broader public in civil society and the political sphere further prohibits democratic deepening.

Chapter 3: Indigenous Mobilization & the Ralco Dam

The Indigenous mobilizations of the 1990s in Chile and the institutions that played a role in the creation of the Ralco Dam could have resulted in a deeper democracy for indigenous Chileans but the moment ended in elite capture, which is another process that furthers disembeddedness in the broader public. Elite capture is a process characterized by actions elites take to modify institutional and civil processes to fit their interests or to create a certain outcome (Rajasekhar et al., 2018). The Mapuche are a historically-disenfranchised group in Chile, and substantive democracy is often most potent and sustainable when movements to deepen democracy come from marginalized groups within a democracy (Heller, 2022). This case presents another deep tension within the political sphere: indigenous recognition and sovereignty which clashes with regional development projects. The indigenous mobilization of the period had the potential to provide a higher quality of democracy for the Mapuche and end tension between development and indigenous sovereignty by prioritizing Chileans over economic interest. This case highlights a pervasive issue that hinders embeddedness in Chile— capture of institutions by the corporate and political elite.

The Mapuche, the largest indigenous group in Chile, have a complicated history with the Chilean state, full of failed promises and policy reversals. By the early twentieth century, the Mapuche were pushed onto roughly five percent of their original territory, so, in the 1960s and 1970s, President Eduardo Frei Montalva and President Salvador Allende both promoted national land reform and restored nearly 173,000 acres of land to indigenous ownership (Carruthers & Rodriguez, 2009). This land restoration and other important initiatives like the creation of civil society organizations for the indigenous population and Mapuche Cultural Centers came to an

end with Pinochet's rise to power. Pinochet instead promoted the privatization of land for regional development and foreign investment. La Concertación's candidate, and later President of Chile, Patricio Aylwin proposes the 1989 "New Imperial Pact," which promises the resolution of land disputes and constitutional recognition of Indigenous peoples in Chile. This historical context creates the backdrop for the Ralco Dam. The Mapuche already have historically been isolated from civil society, and while Aylwin's Pact takes steps to include indigenous Chileans, this inclusion later fails.

Aylwin's Pact ushers in the decade "of renewal for Indigenous peoples' movements" —the 1990s (Carruthers & Rodriguez, 2009). In the spirit of the decade, the Aylwin administration created a Co-Participatory Special Commission for Indigenous Peoples (CEPI), which consisted of ten Indigenous representatives, ten government representatives, and a three-person directorate nominated by the President. CEPI is one of the first steps since the Chilean return to democracy taken towards the incorporation of Indigenous voices in the political sphere and in civil society. Following Heller's theory of deliberative participatory governance, the Commission created another pathway for indigenous citizens to negotiate their social and civil rights through genuine involvement by the Commission's effort to balance representation as they afforded equal seats to Indigenous groups and state representatives. The three-person directorate is another effort to ward-off capture by any one person heading the Commission.

Initial success for deeper democracy is found here with the creation of CEPI. Not only did the Commission itself create a new avenue for participation but it also formulated new legislation to expand on the rights of Indigenous Chileans. Particularly, from 1990 to 1993, CEPI collaborated

on legislation for a new law that would grant constitutional recognition and ratify the International Labor Organization (ILO) Convention No. 169 CONCERNING INDIGENOUS AND TRIBAL PEOPLES IN INDEPENDENT COUNTRIES, which is referred to as the Indigenous Law. Chile's Congress passed the Indigenous Law in 1993, and the law called for a new institution to promote the cultures and development of indigenous people— later known as the National Corporation of Indigenous Development (CONADI). CONADI replaced CEPI and institutionalized the co-participatory spirit of the 1989 New Imperial Pact and CEPI with eight indigenous representatives, eight non-indigenous government representatives, and one executive director appointed by the President (Gacitúa-Marió, 2000). From Aylwin's Pact and the creation of CEPI comes a formal institution for Indigenous development. This case is a success in the effort to deepen democracy— CONADI opens a formal participatory avenue for Indigenous Chileans to argue land disputes, preserve their cultures, and push for land reform by being in contact with the state directly. However, this move towards a higher quality of democracy proves to be unsustainable as tensions from elites limit the effectiveness of CONADI and CONADI later faces elite capture from the executive branch of Chilean government.

The construction of the Ralco Dam and the context surrounding this project best illustrates the limits and eventual failure of this attempt at democratic deepening. It presents a case in which an institution worked the way it was designed and later became ineffective due to elite capture, resulting in a more disembedded population. The Ralco Dam was built by the National Electric Company (ENDESA) in the Upper BioBio River Basin— the heart of Mapuche territory. The project involved major ecological and cultural disruption, industrialization of wild lands, and the forced relocation of hundreds of Mapuche. In 1996, three years after the creation of CONADI,

ENDESA presented an Environmental Impact Study of the Ralco Dam in an effort to begin construction. The National Energy Commission rejected the study because it understated the ecological consequences of the project, but the study later passed inspection after addendums were made to make the Dam seem less destructive (Carruthers & Rodriguez, 2009). CONADI still opposed construction of the Ralco Dam, stalling the project, until, in 1997, President Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle removed the project's opponents from their offices, including CONADI's national director and lead lawyer. The Ralco Dam is approved, and plans for construction begin. In the summer of 1998, CONADI appealed for a construction halt as the sixteen representatives of the institution opposed the Ralco. With pressure from President Frei Ruiz-Tagle, the non-indigenous representatives resign and are replaced by officers who would vote in favor of the Dam. CONADI prepared to vote again for the Ralco Dam, and the decision was left in the hands of the national director of CONADI as the eight Indigenous representatives opposed the project and the eight non-Indigenous representatives were in favor of the Dam. The director votes against the construction of the Dam and is later forced to resign due to pressure from the Frei Ruiz-Tagle administration. A month later, Frei Ruiz-Tagle nominates the first non-Indigenous director of CONADI who approves the project, and construction for the Ralco Dam proceeds. The Dam was finalized in 2003.

As this tug-of-war occurs at the federal level, Mapuche people protest through land occupations and demands for the return of their land. The Mapuche also negotiated extensively with CONADI and ENDESA over the project, and social interest groups used institutional channels to stall the finalization of the Dam (Gacitúa-Marió, 2000). Throughout the many starts and stops of the project, the Mapuche and CONADI councilors were in frequent contact as the Mapuche were

interested in opening negotiations for their rights, yet President Frei Ruiz-Tagle refused to meet with the representatives of the Mapuche communities (Waldman, 2012).

The Ralco Dam is one of the most poignant examples of elite capture of institutions meant to expand the social and civil rights of the marginalized Mapuche people. The underlying tension I named earlier between economic interest and indigenous rights provides the undercurrent for the failure to deepen democracy that this case presents. However, it is the capture of institutions by elites that continues the pattern of disembeddedness found throughout Chile's recent history. The removal of officers, the lack of executive support for CONADI's appeals, and the refusal to meet with community representatives left no space for democratic deliberation of the project or for people to continue engaging in the project. The Ralco Dam highlights the pattern of elite-style governance found in the Pinochet era and in many Concertación administrations.

Using the three factors of V-Dem to evaluate whether the period actually could have established a higher quality of democracy, I find that this case has a deliberative component through the processes that state institutions used to consult each other like ENDESA and the National Energy Commission did for the Ralco Dam. The deliberative component looks not only at moments of deliberation from the population but also at moments of deliberation and accountability of institutions through other institutions. When ENDESA submitted an Environmental Impact Study to the National Energy Commission, ENDESA engaged in deliberation with another institution. The multiple rounds of voting in this case is another form of accountability that was pursued in this case. This case also has a participatory dimension as CONADI continued involving Mapuche community representatives in the dialogue around the Ralco Dam

(Gacitúa-Marió, 2000). While the case does not have an explicitly egalitarian component, the creation of CONADI with efforts towards equal representation of Indigenous people does indicate an effort to reduce the barriers Indigenous people face in contesting government projects and amplifying demands for land redistribution and Indigenous sovereignty. This period had clear potential to advance and expand the civil rights of the Mapuche in Chile. However, avenues for participation are overshadowed by elite interests and alignment with private investments in the nation.

Chapter 4: Student Mobilizations and Constitutional Crisis

The recent decade of student mobilizations leading to the 2022 Constitutional Crisis presents a third process of disembeddedness— misalignment between civil society organizations and the broader population. I draw on ideas of frame alignment to define misalignment. Frame alignment refers to a link between parties and social movements in which the social movements ideology, actions, and goals are "congruent and complementary" with a political party's interests, values, and beliefs (Blings, 2020; Snow et al., 1986). In this idea of alignment is also a third actor— the broader population — with which social movements and political parties must also align. Misalignment is when ideologies, values, and goals are incongruent, leading to a disembedded public. This period begins with the 2011 student movement that opens the dialogue to the creation of a new constitution, leading to the 2022 Constitutional Crisis. This case had the most apparent initial success in comparison to the other two periods discussed. The student mobilizations of 2011–2013 follow Kadivar's theory of time and integration into the political system directly and carried the dialogue around a new constitution throughout the 2010s with later mobilizations in 2016 and 2019, but when the moment finally came for Chileans to create a new constitution, the nation rejected it. In September of 2022, nearly 72% of voters rejected the Constitution put together by the 154-member Constitutional Convention when only two years earlier 80% of the voting-age population voted for the creation of a new Constitution. Despite the integration of movement leaders into the political system as representatives, congressmen, and President of the nation, despite the resounding approval for the creation of a new constitution that would effectively bring a deeper quality of democracy to Chile, the moment failed. This case illustrates a third process that leads to disembeddedness of the population: misalignment.

This moment begins with students' reactions to the privatization of education. From the Pinochet era onward, the educational system has largely declined in quality due to the neoliberal policies established by Pinochet's government that minimized state authority in the regulation of education and curriculums, increased the ability for private investment in higher education which produces high cost for college, and reduced the public funding of schools (Torres, 2022). Despite the quality of education declining, the cost still remains a large barrier to those pursuing higher education, and furthers the inequality found in Chile. According to an OECD report "Reviews of National Policies for Education: Quality Assurance in Higher Education in Chile 2013", only 26% of 18–24 year-old Chileans were enrolled in higher education institutions in 2012.Many students take out large loans to pay the costs and still experience high amounts of debt and unemployment. The 2011 movements expressed dissatisfaction with the education system and cycle of debt and unemployment that followed. The mobilizations were led by *la Confederación de Estudiantes de Chile* (Confederation of Chilean Students; known as CONFECH), which represented the majority of the university student federations. Their demands were as follows: (1) greater participation of the state in the educational system, guaranteeing education as a social right for the entire population, and increased public financing of education, including a free university system; (2) an end to the generation of profits for the owners and administrators of private educational institutions; and (3) an end to the system's overindebtedness and to the poor quality of institutions despite their high costs (CONFECH, 2011). The students viewed education as a social right, and the privatization of that right could not stand.

The conceptualization of education as a social right opened the movement to explore larger concepts of justice, social rights, and the legacy of neoliberalism in Chile. The barriers to

students regarding inclusion in decisions around education and other relevant issues in their lives like cost of living, debt, and employment opportunities called into question how effective Chilean democracy actually was. This shift in youth engagement in politics is summarized best by Chilean sociologist, Manuel Antonio Garretón Merino:

> "In the era of dictatorships, or in the era of civil wars, democracy was an aspiration in which a group of institutions would ensure that citizens could make decisions relevant to their lives through a representative mechanism. That vision of democracy has shattered, in some crucial way. Now people live in democracy as a personal experience rather than living in it as a political structure in continuous process." (Garretón, 2021, p. 25, translated by author)

The idea of democracy as providing a vehicle through which citizens are represented is no longer the ideal democracy that Chileans want. Rather, democracy is now thought of as something far more personal, and meant to be contested in civil society instead of Congress buildings and voting booths. Once the student movement was opened to larger concepts, and everything political was viewed as fair game for contestation, the creation of a new constitution became the next point of contention.

In 2013, the leaders of CONFECH entered politics by organizing into new political forces with constitutional representation, creating a new political party called the New Majority. Two years later, the 2011 student mobilizations saw the fruit of their labor as education became an issue on the ballot, and with an election on the horizon, educational reform was pushed to the forefront of Michelle Bachelet's re-election campaign. Bachelet proposed several policies aimed at all levels of education— her administration proposed free higher education, legal limits to profit-making in educational institutions that received public funding, the elimination of all forms of discrimination against grade-school students, and more coordinated regulation of curriculums (Kubal & Fisher, 2016). Free education was implemented in a sense, with the *Fondo Solidario de*

Crédito Universitario (University credit solidarity fund) which can cover part or all of tuition, but only 30% of students benefited from this reform (Kubal & Fisher, 2016). The free higher education reform applied to public universities but not private universities despite the private institutions presenting the highest cost barrier to advanced education (OECD, 2013). Despite the reform, the quality of education and strength of public universities were ignored and students who attended these institutions largely suffered from the low-quality education (O'Boyle, 2016). Bachelet's reforms did not provide structural change to the education system as a whole, and the reforms provided a surface-level solution to what student protesters saw as a structural problem as the system of privatization of education created the larger issues of inequality and student debt.

This case's initial success with political reform supports Kadivar's theory on time of mobilization being key to democratic deepening. Kadivar's theory posits that the longer a mobilization is active, the stronger and more effective it becomes as time allows the movement to form a leadership structure and integrate into the existing political system. CONFECH's movement started off with an organizational structure with the University of Chile's student federation being at the forefront of the movement, and the protests lasted long enough for the leaders of CONFECH to graduate university and enter politics. The first leader of the movement, Camila Vallejo, served as a district representative in the Chamber of Deputies, the lower house of Chilean Congress, from 2014 to 2022 and now serves as the Minister General Secretariat of Government in the Boric administration (Goldman, 2012). The successor of Vallejo in CONFECH was Gabriel Boric, leading the organization from 2011 to 2012, who in 2014 joined Vallejo and other student movement leaders in the Chamber of Deputies ("Gabriel Boric," 2021).

Boric and Vallejo both remain prominent figures in Chilean politics— Boric now serves as Chile's President and was inaugurated in March 2022. By all accounts, this is exactly what integration and co-optation of the political system is, which is a focal point of Kadivar's theory. CONFECH's movements from 2011 to 2013 should be considered a success in democratic deepening: there was reform to honor their demands; there was dialogue between protestors, the Piñera administration, and the Bachelet administration. Chileans should have experienced a higher quality of democracy as the movement demonstrated how to negotiate one's social rights, especially the social right to education.

This case's initial success can also be attributed to aspects of Fung & Wright's theory of coordinated decentralization. CONFECH is the governing body through which other student federations— the "empowered local units" as Fung & Wright would describe them —can deliberate their demands. With a clear problem to solve and a bottom-up approach, the ability of CONFECH to enter in negotiations with both Piñera's administration and Bachelet's administration illustrates how coordinated decentralization can lead to clear efforts in problem-solving and in expanding the rights of Chilean citizens.

However, by 2015, it was clear that the reforms promised earlier on by Bachelet during her campaign and early on in her second term as President would not be occurring at the same scale, and students felt betrayed by this change of pace (O'Boyle, 2016). Students protested again from 2015 to 2016 against the lack of change in the education system and the inequality the system creates. Like the earlier wave of protest, this mobilization opened itself to other questions of social rights like the right to retire and live dignified lives in old age. The next system under fire

with this wave of student mobilization was the private pension system, originally established by Pinochet's administration to replace the previous "pay-as-you-go" system with a system based on individual capital accounts managed by private companies known as Administrators of Pension Funds (AFPs) (Vial Ruiz-Tagle & Castro, 2001). Over time, this private system has shown its limitations, largely due to the low required replacement rates, so workers are expected to retire on funds equalling 40% of their final wages at time of retirement (Pienknagura & Evans, 2021). Students alongside workers unions took to the streets from 2015 to 2016 to rail against the privatization of education and the pension system. Chileans of all ages pointed at the neoliberal policies established in Pinochet's administration that diminished Chilean quality of life and exacerbated inequality, and once again, targeted the constitution made during the Pinochet administration.

The continual dissatisfaction of the Chilean public over decades culminated in the "Social Outbreak" (*Estallido Social*), a national movement that exploded over the hike in transportation fares, which began in October 2019 (Laing et al., 2019). This third wave of mobilization once again featured students and educational institutions as the point of organization because high school and university students rely on public transport to get to their classes and could not afford the hike in fees (Olivares & Carrasco-Hidalgo, 2020). Workers joined the movement as they faced the same issue of necessary reliance on an increasingly-expensive system. The protests were violent and lasted until September 2022. The movement quickly came to encompass a myriad of social issues and revived the dialogue presented by the 2011–2013 student movements— structural change, primarily through a new constitution.

Similar to the 2011–2013 mobilizations and the 2016 mobilizations, protestors during the *Estallido Social* were able to open a space for negotiation with the federal government, and received promises of reform and, most importantly, of a new constitution. In an effort to quell the violence, the Pinera administration signed an "Agreement for Peace and a New Constitution" on November 15, 2019, a document which promised a referendum in the following year for Chileans to vote on the establishment of a Constitutional Assembly, which would either be a "Mixed Convention" (70% Parliamentary officials and 30% civilians) or a "Constitutional Convention" (100% elected by the people) (Dulci & Sadivia, 2021). The referendum was held on October 25, 2020 and resulted in a 78% approval rate of a new constitution and of the creation of a "Constitutional Convention", in which 154 members would be voted on by the people (Bartlett, 2022). The resulting convention was made up of 17 indigenous members and the 138 seats divided according to proportional representation by 11 coalitions and 7 independent candidates. On September 4, 2022, the 2022 National Chilean Plebiscite was held to determine whether the newly drafted constitution would be approved. In an astounding turn of events, the Constitution was rejected by 62% of voters (Villegas et al., 2022).

This case initially experienced success with each wave of protests being able to clearly articulate their demands and enter a space of dialogue with institutions. Using the three characteristics related to substantive democracy— deliberative, participatory, and egalitarian —to determine the potential of this period's success, each wave had a high deliberative component with political elites engaging in talks with the movement's leaders and without a co-optation of demands from other elite cohorts. The *Estallido Social* had a high participatory component with the direct involvement of citizens electorally in the 2020 referendum to create the Constitutional

Convention and in the 2022 plebiscite to review the drafted constitution. The creation of the Constitutional Convention was egalitarian in its use of proportional representation and in the efforts to ensure gender parity, LGBTQ+ representation, and Indigenous representation.

This period's initial success also touches on Kadivar's theory of longer mobilizations being key to democratic deepening and on Heller's theory of balance between social movements and institutions being key to deeper democracy. Like Kadivar poses, integration of the 2011–2013 student leaders into Congress was only possible due to the organizational structure of CONFECH and of the time Vallejo and Boric spent in dialogue with politicians. Their co-optation of the political system largely influenced the movement for a new Constitution and kept at the forefront of Chilean politics the need to expand Chilean civil rights. These movements also provided examples for how citizens can engage in negotiations for their rights, and several attempts were made to push reform on the government. The waves of protests also expanded where citizens could engage in demands for civil rights, namely in protest, in the creation of institutions like the Constitutional Convention, and in the incorporation of already-established institutions like Congress.

Based on V-Dem characteristics and on the two theories discussed above, this period should have provided sustainable expansion of Chilean civil rights— more than any case discussed previously —but that was not the result. In the 2011–2013 movements, education reforms were promised but never came to fruition in the magnitude it should have. In the 2016 movements, privatization of education and the pension system were negotiated and no structural change was made. In the 2019–2022 *Estallido Social*, the new Constitution should have expanded civil rights

and yet, in the span of two years, the Chilean people rejected the document after over a decade of dialogue around a new constitution.

Alignment is created through three processes: 1) electoral campaigns and movements raise awareness on core issues and inform the broader public on core values and goals to address the salient issues; 2) overlap of political parties and social movements create an embedded relationship that the broader public support both in traditional means (elections) and non-traditional means (protest); 3) political parties, social movements, and the broader public maintain a relationship through seeking advice from the public on how to address or create an outcome (Blings, 2020). This alignment occurs in the period, but the added dimension of the broader public means social movements should too be accountable to the people they represent, and public opinion points to incongruence.

Chileans do not agree with Boric's administration in how the new Constitution was drafted, both in how it was written and in how the Constitutional Convention was created. According to a public opinion poll conducted by Ipsos in August 2022 (just before the new vote on the draft), four out of five Chileans believe that the Constitution must be reformed, whether the reform occurs as a new draft or in just reforming the 1980 Constitution. A third of the Chilean population believes that only political forces in power should decide the mechanism through which the Constitution should be reformed (IPOSOS, 2022)— this is the first major departure from the mobilizations behind the push for a new constitution. The mobilizations largely called for more citizen involvement in the process, and yet a third of the population would rather the constitutional process be established by the political parties in power. The newest draft of the

Constitution was also viewed as too radical: “The constitution that was written now leans too far to one side and does not have the vision of all Chileans,” says a Chilean voter in support of the rejection of the draft (“Chile Says Emphatic No to Proposed New Constitution in Referendum,” 2022). Boric’s left-leaning political party put most of its support behind the creation of this document— a document believed by a third of the population to not have any aspects that are well-developed (IPOSOS, 2022).

This case presents limitations on how effective participation can be when historical contexts are not addressed, specifically the lack of embeddedness in civil society. The Constitutional Convention presented drafts of articles for the constitutional draft, and yet the continual ideological drift of the Convention isolated the majority of the Chilean public. The draft was 365 articles and deemed “too left-wing and too radical” (“Chile’s New Voting Rules May Have Derailed the New Constitution,” 2022). The ideological drift towards the extreme left isolates more moderate Chileans who voted for a new Constitution but who do not agree or identify with left-wing ideologies. Despite the members having been voted in by the public, the extreme structural changes presented in the Constitution, like the dismantling of the Senate, caused a shock to the public, and this isolation hinders the involvement of Chileans in the civil society (Negretto, 2021).

Further Analysis: Embeddedness in Civil Society

The historical cases I highlight in Chile's recent history are three periods in which the potential for democratic deepening was present as illustrated by the three V-Dem characteristics (deliberative, participatory, and egalitarian). Each case had aspects of three theories on the key to creating sustainable substantive democracy, and yet each event led to the eventual failure to effectively deepen democracy because of the relationship between civil society and the broader public, which varies in strength across Chile's recent history. Each case demonstrates a different process through which disembeddedness of the population occurs: political inertia, elite capture of institutional and political processes, and misalignment. The lack of an embedded populus into civil society limits how effective each case could have been for the expansion of Chilean democracy.

While the concept of embeddedness is looked at in relation to civil society organizations and institutions, the concept can also be applied to individuals and their ties to civil society as popular involvement in pushes for democratic deepening provides ties for social movements, civil society organizations, and institutions to draw on. An embedded population is able to maintain the pragmatic solutions brought forward by social movements and institutional reform (Bradlow, 2021). However, the Chilean population is disembedded with civil society, exemplified by the steady decline in electoral involvement. From 1989 to 2013, the percentage of the voting age population that actually submitted valid votes in presidential elections decreased from 82.1% to 41.1% (Morales Quiroga & Reveco Cabello, 2022). Low levels of electoral participation often results in higher protest participation rates (R. E. Carlin, 2011). The several waves of protest in Chile coincides directly with the steady decline in elections, indicating a

dissatisfaction with Chilean democracy but a lack of agency among the population to effect change and expand civil liberties (R. E. Carlin, 2011).

Chile, in the definition of Bradlow, is a cohesive nation— it experiences high vertical integration of social movements with institutions like the movements behind the 1989 return to democracy resulting in the reestablishment of democratic institutions, the Mapuche movements during the creation of CONADI and the Ralco Dam, and the student movements wherein student leaders entered politics. High cohesion results in programmatic approaches to the expansion of civil rights and prioritizes a top-down approach in the form of new institutions or federal level reforms (Bradlow, 2021). However, a highly cohesive state struggles to effectively expand civil rights as top-down governance leads to an isolated population.

The three processes of "disembeddedness" exemplified by the eventual failures of the three cases are political inertia, elite capture, and misalignment. Each process leads to a disillusioned and isolated populus, active in protest but inactive in elections. Disembeddedness occurs as a reaction to institutional and civil society failure where people exit from civil society and choose to not participate (Hirschman, 1970). This exit stalls democracy as people exit civil society, which is the space where they develop democratic values (Lorch, 2021).

Conclusion

Chile is a nation with a relatively stable democracy. However, despite the near two decades of social movements and attempts of Chileans to negotiate their rights, Chile does not seem to experience a higher quality of democracy, or deeper democracy. Based on dominant theories of democratic deepening like Fung & Wright (2001), Heller (2012), and Kadivar (2022), one would expect to see democratic deepening in Chile. I argue that there is another process occurring that limits the effectiveness of the many attempts for the expansion of civil rights: disembeddedness. The dominant theories on democratic deepening take for granted civil society ties. Using three cases in recent Chilean history, I illustrate how the Chilean population is disembedded from civil society, and weak ties to civil society limit how effective democratic deepening can be.

This exit of Chileans from civil society has further implications for democratic deepening: as modernity continues, populations will begin to experience a "frenetic standstill" where people experience a simultaneous acceleration in technological development and stagnation politically (Zantvoort, 2017). This creates "social inertia," which results in more people exiting civil society (Rosa & Scheuerman, 2009). Social inertia is largely characterized by a sense of "instability and unpredictability of social institutions and practices" alongside the ever-increasing rate of change of social values, identities, and norms (Rosa & Scheuerman, 2009). This phenomenon will further limit attempts at democratic deepening as current theories do not address this isolation and exit of the broader public from civil society, which is where democratization occurs. The processes of disembeddedness highlighted in the paper above also present another question: *how do people become re-embedded into civil society? Are there effective processes to strengthen the ties between the population and civil society?*

Chile is far from alone in the experience of unsustainable democratic deepening, and these processes of disembeddedness can be studied in other nations where substantive democracy struggles to take root. South Africa, for example, early on established institutionalized forms of citizen participation through neighborhood assemblies, but these avenues for participation were short-lived successes (Heller, 2012). Its strides made in democratic deepening disintegrated into a more restricted form and is left with an ineffective civil society (Heller, 2012). The analysis of the relationship between civil society and the broader public could provide insight into the disintegration of institutionalized participatory avenues and of civil society— namely, insight into whether disembeddedness also occurs in South Africa and the processes that lead to weakened ties between civil society and the broader public.

Democratic deepening is the process by which people negotiate and expand upon their rights, and without proper analysis of the necessary processes that ensure sustainable democratic deepening, substantive democracy cannot occur. The extent to which civil society and a population are tied to each other sets the foundation for viable democratic deepening, and the exclusion of this analysis in dominant theories of deeper democracy leave out a key determinant of whether substantive democracy can actually develop in a given nation.

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