

The Rise of the New Right in Latin America: Argentina's Republican Proposal in Comparative Perspective¹

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Abstract

This paper addresses the emergence and growth of competitive right-wing parties in contemporary Latin America, in a context of left turn and of growing consensus of progressive social and cultural agendas. It places the core case of Argentina's Republican Proposal (PRO) party in comparative perspective with Chile's National Renovation (RN) party and Independent Democratic Union (UDI) party, with Colombia's Democratic Center (CD) party and with the Bolivian regional party Social Democratic Movement, in an effort to understand their differing degrees of success in adverse circumstances. Based on long-term research using a variety of methods, I show that competitiveness has been driven by three factors: programmatic innovation by personalistic leaders; organizational mobilization of both core and noncore constituencies; and elite fear of the "Venezuela model."

Introduction

"Corporations will never again occupy the House of Government and make decisions, as they did for years. To do so, they must leave [their] corporations and create a political party [...] they must leave the corporation and enter elections" (*Página/12*, 4/20/ 2011). With these words, Cristina Fernández de Kirchner, then president of Argentina, challenged businessmen who disagreed with her to enter the electoral arena. The Front for Victory, a center-left Peronist party, had ruled Argentina since 2003 and was headed for a comfortable re-election in the 2011 presidential election. Other officials in Fernández de Kirchner's government had similarly provoked those who had participated in anti-government *cacerolazos* (street demonstrations), which were led by member of the upper-middle and upper classes, to enter politics. "Let them build a party and win elections," said Cristina Kirchner's Chief of Staff in September 2012. "Those who use the death of Nisman for electoral purposes; we await

¹ Este texto está basado en el argumento de un manuscrito en preparación sobre el surgimiento de las derechas partidarias competitivas en América Latina a partir del giro a la izquierda. Por lo mismo, no incluye las conclusiones del trabajo, que se encuentran en proceso. Citar solo con autorización del autor: gvommaro@unsam.edu.ar

their campaigns," the Minister of Defense said in February 2015, before a march to request clarification of the circumstances surrounding the death of a prosecutor (*Perfil*, February 11, 2015). In this way, and in a country where the Right had historically been electorally weak, Peronist leaders challenged the social core of that sector—economic elites, upper-middle classes and upper classes (Gibson, 1996; Luna, 2014; Middlebrook, 2000)², to organize. They also tested the Right's non-partisan strategies of influence and mobilization, challenging their leaders to transform power into votes. At the time, a center-right political party—Republican Proposal (PRO)—was seeking to advance in the Argentine political system. The PRO was born in 2001-2002 in the context of a severe social and economic crisis. The 2015 presidential elections in Argentina culminated in the unexpected triumph of the *Cambiamos* coalition, which was dominated by the PRO. After more than a decade of party-building, the right-wing coalition had managed to defeat Peronism electorally. The "left turn" (Levitsky & Roberts, 2011) in Argentina came to an end.

The PRO represents one of the most important cases of a competitive (in electoral terms), relevant (in terms of its role in the inter-partisan debate arena, i.e. in Congress and in the public sphere) and vibrant (in terms of democratic representation and channeling the careers of ambitious politicians)³ Latin American right-wing party. Scholars of Latin American politics have pointed out the difficulties of party-building in the region (Levitsky, Loxton & Van Dyck, 2016), as well as the transience of many Latin American political parties (Coppedge, 1998). However, in recent decades, often in adverse political contexts, right-wing parties were born and, after a process of building

² "Conservative parties are defined here as parties whose core constituencies are upper social and economic strata but that mobilize multiclass electoral support in a common political project" (Middlebrook, 2000: p. 3).

³ Rosenblatt (2018) identifies four dimensions that characterize "vibrant" parties, all four of which could be applied to the case of PRO. First, PRO has a *purpose* articulated around a market-oriented program, a rejection of the participation of collective actors in the domestic market and an explicit anti-populist and anti-Kirchnerist profile. Second, PRO has *foundational experiences* (what the author calls "trauma") that cement the adherence of its members. These occurred around the 2001 and 2002 crisis - when social and economic elites decided to "get into politics" before the social and economic collapse of Argentina, in the context of political polarization during the final years of Kirchner Peronism, which prompted a "moral panic" regarding the possible "Chavista" drift of Argentina (Vommaro, 2017). Third, the PRO's decision to privilege electoral competitiveness over program objectives and to follow Mauricio Macri, a candidate with high levels of popularity, provided *channels for the political ambition* of politicians. Fourth, the erection of certain *barriers* that made the exit of cadres coming from the traditional parties costly, delimited partisan boundaries (condensed in the party brand) and provided internal discipline (maintained by the PRO ruling coalition). However, PRO does not meet one of the author's criteria for *vitality*—it did not compete in three consecutive national elections and thus did not have the opportunity to lose power. It remains to be seen, therefore, whether the party will maintain its vitality over time, and especially after its departure from the national government.

and electoral expansion, successfully challenged incumbent parties and found electoral success. These new, competitive right-wing parties have managed to not only overcome several obstacles associated with party-building (Levitsky, Loxton & Van Dyck, 2016), but also structural (Gibson, 1996) and historical (Luna & Rovira, 2014) impediments to the expansion of right-wing partisan politics in Latin America. What explains these new right-wing parties' success in overcoming these challenges?

This work analyzes the rise of competitive right-wing parties in Latin America. It focuses on the PRO party as a core case, but places it in comparative perspective with four other parties in three countries: the National Renewal (RN) and Independent Democratic Union (UDI) in Chile, which function as an electoral coalition, the Democratic Center (CD) in Colombia and the Social Democratic Movement (MDS), a regional party in Bolivia. This contribution aims to add to the discussion on this subject by identifying factors that have contributed the New Right's success in formulating competitive parties, and detailing their different organizational and programmatic structures. In this way it, seeks to elucidate the varied approaches to social and economic activism that have played a role in emergent Right politics. If parties are "agents of collective action and social coalition-building" (Gibson, 1992: p. 14), the study of their connection to their social environment (Sawicki, 1997) helps us to understand how they connect with non-electoral right-wing groups, ultimately organizing them to form a coalition that seeks to come to power by way of votes.

The study of new competitive right-wing parties is critical to grasp the contemporary Latin American political landscape. The last decade has been marked by the resurgence of right-wing political coalitions and groups that seek to gain power through elections. In the 1980s and 1990s, right-wing ideas found favorable conditions (Gibson, 1992), however, amid the left turn that followed, the anti-statist consensus weakened and the attractiveness of liberal economic ideas waned. Neoliberalism was blamed for the economic and social crises of the late 1990s (Levitsky & Roberts, 2011). In this context, right-wing parties born during the democratization process as well as those born in the context of the economic crisis of the late 1990s faced the challenge of being competitive in an adverse context. Some of these groups were victorious in their challenges to the governing Left. However, we have yet to fully understand the reasons for their success, and know even less about newer parties, such as the PRO. In fact, the PRO's electoral victory calls existing theories about conservative party-building into question.

My argument is that New Right parties are successful when they pursue programmatic innovation, develop mechanisms for mediating their relationships with core and secondary constituencies (especially NGOs and foundations in the case of the core constituency)⁴, mobilize traditional grassroots activism in the case of non-core constituencies, and exploit “moral panics” (Cohen, 1972) over the Venezuela model and changing culture norms. The theoretical scheme places the structural challenges of right-wing parties within the historical context in which they became competitive and relevant: the left turn, the growing of political polarization, the broad consensus around a progressive social (social policies expansion) and cultural (new gender rights) agenda and the weight of the populist left (whose emblem is the Venezuelan model) that became an object of fear among the social and economic elites in the region. By including arguments in the field of cultural studies, I show the key role played by moral incentives in party mobilization, in particular the concept of “moral panic.” Finally, the objective of this work is to refine and add some theoretical layers to existing arguments about party-building (Levitsky et al), party vibrancy (Rosenblatt, 2018), and party adaptation and breakdown (Cyr, 2016, 2017). It revisits those theories and clarifies their range of applicability to explain how a right-wing party manages to overcome structural and historical conditions to become successful after the crisis of the neoliberal consensus.

Measuring the competitiveness of the new right-wing parties

How should we define a new competitive right-wing party? By “new right-wing parties” I mean parties that (a) have their core constituency in the upper-middle upper classes (Gibson, 1996) and (b) originated during or after the third wave of democratization (i.e., 1978 according to Mainwaring & Hagopian, 2005). I situate the crisis of the neoliberal consensus as taking place in the late 1990s, more precisely since 1998, with the arrival of Hugo Chávez to power in Venezuela (Levitsky & Roberts, 2011). Based on Hagopian & Mainwaring (2005), I assume that the parties born from the beginning of the third wave of democratization are built since their origins with the challenge of electoral competitiveness and incidence in the public and parliamentary arenas. Parties born before this period had to solve other challenges. Among them, the

⁴ Gibson defined a party’s core constituency as “those sectors of society that are more important to its political agenda and resources” (1992: p. 15). The author adds: “Their importance lies not necessary in the number of votes they represent, but in their influence on the party’s agenda and capacities for political action. A party’s core constituencies shape its identity; they are necessary to its existence” (1992: p. 15).

adaptation to electoral competition and the weakening of other paths to influence, such as the support of military and/or ecclesiastical actors. Also, by virtue of the life cycle of the parties, many Latin American traditional right-wing parties were extremely weakened when the post-neoliberal cycle began (such as the Conservative Party in Colombia and COPEI in Venezuela), or their leaders were in retirement or dead (such as J. Balaguer in the Dominican Republic). Therefore, analyzing how the traditional right-wing parties dealt with the structural challenges in the context of the post-neoliberal cycle would lead us to think about other types of theoretical questions and other types of theoretical schemes that are not the object of this paper.⁵

It has yet to define the notion of competitiveness. Definitions of partisan success often use thresholds of electoral results achieved over a certain amount of time. According to Levitsky, Loxton & Van Dyck (2016), party-building is successful when a party: a) wins at least 10 percent of the vote; b) does so in five or more consecutive national legislative elections, and c) survives the departure of its founding leader. However, this definition does not take into account substantive elements that shed light on the ability of parties to aggregate interests and to successfully coordinate among their leaders (Luna et al, 2021); second, it is dichotomic, that is, it establishes only two possible outcomes: success or failure (Cyr, 2016), which does not allow us to analyze the cases that are in the “gray zone” (Goertz 2006: p. 29). In fact, Levitsky, Loxton & Van Dyck (2016) incorporated intermediate categories such as “potentially successful” that obfuscate (contradict) the concept. Third, it defines a completely arbitrary threshold: 10% of the vote does not grant electoral relevance (Loxton, 2014: p. 121). In fact, in his dissertation, Loxton establishes a threshold of 5% (Loxton, 2014b: p. 24). Fourth, this definition excludes cases of parties that have electoral setbacks and that, nevertheless, recover from them, which reinforces rather than denies their vibrant character (Rosenblatt, 2018), and parties built from the local level that progress slowly in their nationalization, such as PRO, which impacts their ability to present themselves in all districts competitively. However, these subnational strongholds are a fundamental resource for party building (Cyr, 2017; Van Dyck, 2018).⁶ These two trajectories toward

⁵ This does not imply that there is necessarily a rupture between new and old right-wing parties, neither in programmatic terms nor in terms of mobilization of constituencies. Nor does it imply that old and new rightists, when contemporary, always compete separately. In fact, in very fragmented party systems, small new right-wing parties have allied themselves with the traditional right-wing parties. In other cases, such as Chile and Argentina, the new Right absorbed the remnants of the traditional Right.

⁶ The arbitrariness of the criteria can be seen in the changes in the classification. As you (AMS) mentioned, some of their alleged success stories turn out to be failures by their own criteria (eg, ADN is

success (non-linear ones and those that build from the bottom-up) are not contemplated in the Levitsky, Loxton & Van Dyck (2016) definition. The authors study the success of parties when they take root. They are interested in stability over time. That is why they define: a temporary metric (five elections) and the requirement of having successfully overcome the departure of the founding leader.⁷ However, the success of a party is not necessarily associated with stability. Recently, Luna et al (2021) proposed a party concept in relation to its capacity for democratic representation. They pointed out that parties are those political organizations that establish coordination mechanisms between their leaders and devices for the aggregation of social group interests. Without coordination between the elites, the parties cannot unify their discourses. Without aggregation of interests, the parties remain disconnected from society.

I propose a definition of success associated with the competitiveness of right-wing parties. By competitiveness I mean both a party's relevance in the public space and in the electoral arena. According to Mustillo, "electoral performance is at least a large and crucial piece of party performance and, often, also a valid proxy for other dimensions of performance" (2009: p. 312). Given this, identifying a party's electoral performance is relevant for its classification. However, 1) this performance is not dichotomous in terms of success or failure (Mustillo, 2009); 2) good results do not have to be maintained in all elections for a party to be competitive. A party may experience an electoral failure. Its ability to recover from that setback accounts for the consolidation of a party, as recent works show (Cyr, 2017; Rosenblatt, 2018). Likewise, parties that were built from the local level and progress slowly in their nationalization can have results of less than 10% at the national level, with very important results at the subnational level that favor their party consolidation and relevance. In their early years, new parties may have a trajectory of rapid growth (explosive in Mustillo's terms) or gradual growth (contenders) (Mustillo, 2009).

Furthermore, such a high temporal range (the five consecutive elections metric) is not useful for a theoretical scheme applied to a specific historical period, such as the crisis of the neoliberal consensus (1998-present). For example Kitschelt (1988) in his study on the significance of left-libertarian parties in Europe in the 1980s establishes a

labeled a "success" in his dissertation but reconsidered on p. 124 of the 2014 book chapter, also in Levitsky, Loxton & Van Dyck, 2016: p. 4).

⁷ Since Huntington, the definition of a successful party is associated with its institutionalization: adaptability, complexity, autonomy, and coherence (Dix, 1992).

far less demanding criteria. The underlying problem is that Levitsky, et. al.'s definition, as well as Loxton's model, is universalistic. My theoretical model, by contrast, pays close attention to context (Pierson, 2004; Ragin, 2000; Goertz, 2006). I propose a definition of competitiveness that is highly contextualized. It is based on a set of attributes (Goertz 2006), which allows one to define the concept of competitiveness "as configurations of attributes that appear to different extents" (Quaranta, 2013: p. 793). I argue, specifically, that competitiveness is constituted by three attributes (Gerring 1999). The attributes are as follows:

1. Subnational roots in at least one relevant subnational district (province or region, depending on the country, that is among the five with the largest population). This indicates the party's ability to build an electoral stronghold. Strongholds are important because they allow for the cultivation of roots, to recruit militants and build organizational resources, which should allow for survival over time (Tavits, 2013; Van Dyck, 2018). Parties that challenge either the governing left or the traditional right must be able to overcome circumstantial electoral defeats. Subnational strongholds serve to build party foundations (Cyr, 2017). The party must maintain its stronghold over time.
2. Visible leaderships: presence of party leaders in public spaces (more than one leader, *i.e.* not only their founding leader), in the national press media, between electoral periods, in relation to other relevant parties' leaders.⁸ A competitive right-wing party must be able to maintain its relevance in the electoral arena beyond the presence of the founding leader. Here, I reference recent works on party-building (Levitsky, Loxton & Van Dyck, 2016; Rosenblatt, 2018) that argue that if the strength of a party depends exclusively on the presence of its leader, its foundations are not solid.
3. Independence from external crisis: the emergence of competitive rights may depend on a crisis, but its competitiveness lies in its ability to obtain political relevance without fundamentally depending on external factors (*i.e.* bad economic performance of the incumbent party in terms of GDP and inflation rate or when the left-wing party is removed from power by impeachment of the president).

The "ideal type" of a competitive right-wing party is one that meets all three attributes. The party must have a stronghold, have multiple visible leaders, and gain relevance and competitiveness regardless of external crisis. My definition focused on the ability of parties to build roots in society. Also, it points out that in times of crisis of

⁸ Cyr (2017: p. 189) proposed a method to measure presence in public debate that is strongly compatible with my conceptual indicator.

the neoliberal consensus, the competitive right-wing parties are those that manage to make their voices heard in the public space. In this sense, my definition of competitiveness tries to capture the relevance of right-wing parties not only in relation to their permanence but also to their significance “in the broader conflicts of society” (Gibson, 1996: p. 19). But we can also measure party’s ability to gain in public relevance observing the independence of its competitiveness from external factors such as an economic crisis. Consistent political relevance doesn’t lie in a providential context but in the party leaders’ strategic mobilization of resources (Cyr, 2017). The definition of a competitive right-wing party during the post-neoliberal consensus period is resumed in the table that follows, using the case of the PRO:

Table 1. Attributes of a competitive right-wing party during the post-neoliberal consensus period. The case of PRO

Attribute	PRO case
Subnational roots	Yes PRO has won all elections in the city of Buenos Aires since 2005
Visible leaderships	Yes Beyond Macri, other party leaders are visible in the national press
Independence from external crisis	Yes The end of the commodity boom did not lead to an economic crisis

A note about the definition of the dependent variable can be made. One possible way to define successful right-wing parties in Latin America is to identify the member of the UPLA, the Latin American association of conservative parties. Self-affiliation in the union of right-wing parties could be a reliable indicator to classify conservative political forces. There are 20 parties distributed in 16 countries. Chile, Colombia, the Dominican Republic and Ecuador have two UPLA members (see <https://uplalatinoamerica.org/partidos-miembros/>).

However, this universe includes traditional parties (born before the third wave of democratization) as well as factions of traditional parties (such as the case of the Movimiento de Dignidad Republicana in Paraguay) and non-competitive parties according to my definition. Also, not all Latin American countries are represented among UPLA members (although most of them are): for example, there are no right-wing parties from Uruguay. It is certain that membership in UPLA reveals the expertise

of right-wing parties in establishing international relations with the Latin American conservative club. In fact, all successful parties by our definition are members of UPLA, but so are unsuccessful parties, such as Bolivia's Movimiento Demócrata Social. UPLA membership is thus not a reliable indicator for identifying successful competitive right-wing parties.

Building competitive right-wing parties in adverse times. A socio-political strategic approach

Building political relevance and competitiveness is crucial for any party that seeks to come to power through elections. Recent contributions to research on Latin American parties have examined the process of party-building and the consolidation of left-wing organizations (Anria, 2018; Hunter, 2010; Levitsky et al, 2016; Madrid, 2012; Pérez, Piñeiro & Rosenblatt, 2019; Samuels, 2004, 2006). With important exceptions (Luna, 2010, 2014; Luna & Rovira, 2014; Loxton, 2016; Loxton & Mainwaring, 2018), right-wing parties have received less attention. Scholarship has instead focused on the crisis of traditional parties (Wills-Otero, 2015) and the “pink tide” (Levitsky & Roberts, 2011; Weyland, Madrid & Hunter, 2010).

Right-wing groups have faced substantial obstacles to party building. The first type of obstacle is structural and is due to the socio-political characteristics of these parties (Gibson, 1996; Luna, 2010; Loxton, 2016). As noted, the core constituency of conservative parties (or right-wing parties) is comprised of the upper-middle and upper classes and economic elites (Gibson, 1996). However, as Gibson (1992; 1996) has pointed out, in addition to their core constituency, right-wing parties must attract secondary or non-core constituencies to become electorally viable. Given this, the conservative party is the major vehicle for elites to unite with other social sectors in a common political project. The challenge for emergent right-wing parties is thus double: on the one hand, they must attract and mobilize social and economic elites, in some cases getting them to abandon or add to their previous political preferences; on the other hand, they must seek out electoral support in other social sectors, among voters who previously supported other parties (Holland, 2013; Loxton, 2016). The construction of appropriate organizational mechanisms for these two tasks is thus an important factor in explaining the success of the New Right.

The necessity of organizational work to attract and mobilize economic elites implies that their adherence to emergent right-wing parties is not automatic. The type of mobilization depends on both these elites' degree of cohesion, which varies across Latin America (Schneider, 2010), and on the existence of traditional competitors for their support (Monestier, 2017). This is to say that there exist cases in which economic elites adhere collectively to a party or to a coalition of parties, as in Chile, and others, like Argentina, where elites adopted particularistic and uncoordinated behaviors that involve personalized relationships with politicians rather than organizations—and especially those politicians who are likely to gain power (Schneider, 2010). In those cases, right-wing parties had to organize their core constituency using strategies to reorient particularistic behaviors. In other cases, such as Colombia's, the new party had to challenge traditional rightist parties' hold over elite sectors.

The mobilization of secondary constituencies means attracting a wider electorate than the party's core voters, in order to build a competitive force. As Gibson argues, “the study of conservative political action in democratic politics is, therefore, the study of the construction of polyclassist coalitions.” (1992: p. 15) Thus, the study of right-wing party-building must take into account strategies used to attract voters. In large part, as we will see, they did so by incorporating local leaders from weakened traditional parties, who provided them connections with popular and middle classes. In programmatic terms, the linkages with non-core constituencies, far from being associated with class interests, “are built in part by weakening class-based solidarity and replacing it with other sources of collective identity” (Gibson, 1992: p. 19), such as problem solving by management or hard-line security (*mano dura*) discourses. The construction of programmatic appeals that allow right-wing parties to mobilize upper classes and economic elites, on the one hand, and noncore constituencies, on the other hand, thus becomes a critical issue for new parties that want to challenge established ones.

This brings us to the second—historical—obstacle that these parties had to overcome: the new rightist coalitions had to strengthen themselves in the midst of dominant left-wing parties or, at least, of government agendas traditionally contrary to the Right. These agendas included, for example, redistribution and the reduction of inequality (Luna & Rovira, 2014) and sexual rights traditionally opposed by conservative sectors. The crisis of the neoliberal consensus gave way to an agenda dominated by the search for higher levels of social justice and popular participation

(Levitsky & Roberts, 2011). The regulatory power of the State was once again at the center of the dominant political orientations. The expansion and universalization of social policies by massive cash transfer programs to informal sectors occupied a large part of public budgets (Garay, 2016; Pribble, 2013). The programmatic issue then became a critical point for the New Right. They sought to champion issues not dominated by the left—in particular, security, (Holland, 2013)—while in cases of an electorally powerful Left, they had to accept some aspects of the post-neoliberal consensus (Vommaro & Gené, 2017), especially in the area of social policies (Niedzwiecki & Pribble, 2017). The same challenge emerged with respect to the cultural agenda. The broadening of the social consensus around gay marriage and the expansion of sexual and gender identity rights led some right-wing parties to abandon traditional conservative positions, even against the inclination of part of their constituency in order not to lose competitiveness among secondary constituencies. Such was the case of PRO in Argentina (Morresi & Vommaro, 2014) and of the Chilean Right under the leadership of Sebastián Piñera (Rovira, 2019). On the other hand, in countries such as Colombia, where the New Right was competing with a moderate incumbent Right, the strategy of representing the ultra-conservative electorate and being spokesmen of the cultural backlash became electorally attractive (Rodríguez Rondón, 2017).

What factors explain how some right-wing parties have become competitive under these adverse conditions? My theoretical scheme attempts to explain the success of new right-wing parties in adverse times, even if it has implications beyond the cases of the new parties studied in this paper, as I show when applying it to the evolution of the ASPs after 1998. This theory recognizes its limited historical scope (Pierson, 2004). The challenges to conservative party's competitiveness --structural difficulties to expand the Right's constituencies, adverse normative consensus-- makes me focus on two types of resources: organizational and ideational. These are high-cost resources, but they are also quite durable, allowing parties to survive in difficult times (Cyr, 2017).⁹ I

⁹ Recently, Cyr proposed to classify partisan resources in four types: material, elite, organizational, and ideational resources. Parties need these four types of resources to fulfill their multiple functions in a democracy (Cyr, 2017: p. 47). Her work seeks to explain the survival of parties in difficult times, and not their emergence. However, the proposed classification makes it possible to identify theoretical types of resources based on: 1) the cost of obtaining them; 2) its durability, beyond moments of electoral success; 3) its effect on the parties' survival. Cyr shows that material and elites resources are easy to cultivate in times of electoral success (Cyr, 2017: p. 43). Organizational and ideational resources, on the other hand, are high-cost resources (2017: p. 11). While the first two tend to disappear in times of electoral crisis, the last two are more durable and allow parties to survive in difficult times.

emphasize the role of leadership: party leaders must strategically use these resources, both with respect to the decision to build organizational mediations and to produce programmatic innovations. Programmatic renewal and organizational innovation depend on the leaders' strategic long-term decisions. My model's third factor, the moral incentives expressed in the exploitation of moral panic about the "Venezuela model", captures the specificity of the historical context. It also depends on the leaders' ability to mobilize it.

1) Organizational decisions when building a party, including: a) new mediations with the core constituency when they have previous loyalties (with other parties) or distance with respect to established parties (particularistic and/or uncoordinated political behavior pattern, cf. Schneider, 2004). These devices adapt to the behavior pattern of the party's core constituency (especially foundations, think tanks and NGOs). In this sense, these mediations are related to the construction of "social worlds of belonging" (Vommaro, 2017) in which parties recruit activists and cadres, develop repertoires of action and discourse and build its "partisan environment" (Sawicki, 1997). b) Traditional mediations with non-core constituencies through the incorporation of local political groups -formerly members of other parties- or the deployment of territorial militancy (cf. Luna, 2010).

The new competitive right-wing parties invested in constituency building, both with their core constituency and with secondary constituencies. The literature on the transformation of parties since the 1980s showed that the weakening of political organizations was due in large part to parties' loss of ties with civil society (Katz & Mair, 1994). However, studies of Latin American cases such as Peronism in Argentina showed that some parties managed to recreate their grassroots, even when they assumed different organizational modalities than in industrial societies. Thus, Steven Levitsky argued that Peronism changed from being a union-based party to a territory-based party and that it thus managed to maintain its links with the working classes during a time when unions lost political power and the social significance of industrial workers declined (Levitsky, 2003). More recently, with the left turn, interest in party-society linkages focused on the study of "party movements" such as the MAS in Bolivia, which showed great vitality in establishing linkages with its grassroots members (Anria, 2018). The case of the Uruguayan Broad Front, meanwhile, shows that, under certain conditions, parties can maintain these ties with their grassroots members over time (Pérez, Piñeiro & Rosenblatt, 2019). In all cases, in comparative terms, investment in

grassroots organization is one of the components Levitsky, Loxton and Van Dyck (2016) identify in successful party-building in Latin America.

2) Leaders' strategic decisions to produce programmatic innovations in contexts of crisis of the neoliberal agenda and advances of a progressive cultural agenda, in both cases adverse to the traditional agenda of conservative parties. This factor refers to the strategic construction of a differentiated brand (Lupu, 2016) mobilizing a political cleavage (Lipset & Rokan, 1967; Levitsky, Loxton & Van Dyck, 2016; Roberts, 2016).

In the context of the hegemony of the left and national-popular government agendas (Levitsky & Roberts, 2011), programmatic renewal is one of the challenges facing competitive Latin American right-wing parties. These parties sought to strengthen themselves during a period when policy orientations traditionally opposed to those of the Right, such as redistribution and reduction of inequality, as well as value issues such as gender rights, predominated in society (Levitsky & Roberts, 2011; Luna & Rovira, 2014). As Alisha Holland argues, "rising secularism, Soviet collapse, and neoliberal economic policies have discredited many conservative programmatic appeals. The need to expand the right's natural constituency creates incentives to orient programmatic competition away from distributive politics" (2013: p. 52).

To understand the importance of this challenge, and the way in which right-wing parties solved it, I rely on two theories: the classical *theory of cleavages* (Lipset & Rokan, 1967) and its modern versions (Levitsky, Loxton & Van Dyck, 2016; Roberts, 2016) and *party branding theory* (Lupu, 2016). The notion of cleavage refers to a social conflict that divides citizens and becomes politically operative to the extent that it is mobilized by a party or a movement. Lipset and Rokan defined four fundamental cleavages that structured the party system in Western societies: center-periphery, State-Church, countryside-city, and labor-capital. According to the authors in this line of research, the structural nature of the conflicts expressed in these cleavages had produced, a "freezing" of party systems in industrialized societies; only a new division could result in a relevant modification. However, since the publication of Inglehart's (1977) study of the rise of post-material values, several authors have studied the "defrosting" of party systems (Dalton et al., 1984). Recent interpretations of the theory of cleavages show that these divisions not only reflect sociological distinctions such as class, ethnicity, religion or region (Roberts, 2014, 2016), but also are a vector for the production of divisions both by virtue of their potential to drive conflict and by virtue of their capacity to mobilize supporters (Levitsky, Loxton & Van Dyck, 2016). The

programmatic renewal of right-wing parties seeks both to mobilize structural divisions (Lipset & Rokan, 1967) and also to promote socio-cultural unrest that creates societal divisions to attract voters and produce new programmatic alignments. According to Roberts (2016: p. 59), the cleavages have significant programmatic content if they meet three conditions: 1) the parties must adopt clear programmatic positions in relation to the issues that divide the political body; 2) these positions must differentiate the party from its competitors; 3) once elected, these parties must carry out policies consistent with these principles (Adams, 2001). While the third requirement is associated with the performance of parties in office, a topic that I do not deal with in this volume, the first two conditions refer directly to the issue of party construction: the selection of issues deep enough to become the basis for a socio-cultural cleavage through which the parties build a programmatic position that differentiates them from their competitors.

Indeed, the construction of a party brand (Lupu 2016) involves developing a set of party attributes—certainly schematic—that distinguish it from competitors and that allow voters to feel close to that party and to identify with it. As Lupu argues, "When a party's brand is clear, voters form strong attachments to it, attachments that are resistant to retrospective evaluations" (2016: p. 11). Party brands lie at the heart of that lasting bond with voters, so they are central assets of the parties. Building an identifiable brand is, then, a fundamental task of the new parties. To have enduring success, the brand must be protected from fluctuations in the short-term orientations of the party's ruling coalition (Panebianco, 1988); that is, the brand must maintain some coherence over time so that voters can maintain their identification with it. In this sense, party brands can be thought of as a form of programmatic link that functions predominantly on an affective level.

Programmatic renovation constitutes a challenge for party systems in which parties were only weakly ideological before the formation of the new right-wing forces, responding to "subcultures," as in the Colombian case (Pizarro Leongómez, 2006), or where parties had experimented with ideological change processes, as happened in the Argentine case (Levitsky, 2003; Stokes, 2001). It also posed a challenge in cases of a historically more rigid Right in programmatic terms, such as the Chilean case (Alenda, 2014; Luna, 2010; Luna & Rosenblatt, 2017). Thus, to understand how these renovations were carried out, a relational perspective of the programmatic dimension is fundamental, such as the one proposed by Lupu (2016) for the construction of party brands. On the one hand, when parties create cleavages or fold into existing cleavages,

they are contrasted with competitors, either by similarity or by difference. On the other hand, while the parties need to build their own brand that distinguishes them from their competitors, the type of program building will be in relation to the existing electoral offer at the time the new parties carry out this process (Lupu, 2016).

I use the concept of renewal without a teleological sense, but rather to refer to differentiation with respect to the programmatic positions of the traditional Right in each country, or to the positions that the same forces defended in the recent past. Thus, renewal can be, in certain cases, a return to topics of the past abandoned by the traditional Right, such as the fear of collectivism or the defense of conservative values.

3) The strategic use of a conjunctural factor: the fear of the "Venezuela model" (more intent among the upper classes and the business world) and the advance of gender agendas that threaten the traditional family model (among conservative sectors). Right wing party leaders' strategic use of these threats - understood as "moral panics" (Cohen, 1972) – permits them to become a moral incentive for electoral mobilization (Sagarzazu & Mouron, 2019). These moral panics were effective because they were associated with perceived threats to free market economy, to the traditional culture (with the advancement of gender equality, cf. Biroli & Caminotti, 2020) or to security (Kessler, 2009). This is consistent with what prior relevant theory found on the importance of perceived threats as incentives for the conservative mobilization (Gibson, 1996; Middlebrook, 2000; Blee & Creasap, 2010; Ziblatt, 2017) as well as the importance of traumas (Rosenblatt, 2018) and polarized contexts (Levitsky et al, 2016) for party-building.

The contributions of social psychology and political psychology to political science regarding the role of emotions (Glaser & Salovey, 1998; Marcus, 2000; Stroud, Glaser & Salovey, 2005-2006) produced a confluence of concerns between political science and sociology, which, from the classic works of Durkheim and Weber, traditionally focused on studying the way in which what Elías (1994) calls the "spiritual economy" of actors influences their evaluations and political decisions. Recently, traumatic experiences have been identified as a factor that allows political organizations to coalesce and maintain their vitality even in the face of electoral or government failures. Rosenblatt (2018) defines "trauma" as a dramatic political experience shared in the past in which members of a party forge ties that allow them to cope with critical junctures in party life, such as inter-factional struggles, electoral defeats, etc. The maintenance of party membership is based on those affective ties forged in the past

(Rosenblatt, 2018: p. 33). For Levitsky, Loxton and Van Dyck (2016: p. 15 et seq.), meanwhile, conflict provides a context favoring party building, by strengthening ties between party members, promoting the mobilization of activists and generating incentives for organizational work. Specifically for the Right, Loxton (2016) argues that parties forged in an authoritarian past that lay claim to the dictatorial government's goals are successful cases of party building in Latin America. Although this is not evident in the case of PRO, it is clear that experiences associated with social and political fears constitute favorable conditions for the political mobilization of sectors that, at other times, would not invest time or resources in partisan life.

In my argument I analyze a specific type of moral action orientation. This is what Stanley Cohen (1973) called "moral panic." The classic concept refers to a threat perceived by a sector of society, frequently a dominant sector, with respect to the action of other social groups, generally minorities. The former perceives the customs, activities or opinions of the latter as a threat to the way society is organized. This threat is moral because it refers to the perception of an attack on dominant social values. In that sense, the youth subcultures studied in England in the 1970s were perceived as the engine of the moral decay of society. Moral panic is usually mobilized by what interactionist sociology calls "moral entrepreneurs" (Becker, 1963), actors concerned with maintaining the normative status quo in a society or group.

I adapt that concept to the study of political conflict. In our explanation, moral panic is a way of perceiving one's political adversary as a threat that leads to mobilization based on reactionary fear. Specifically, moral panic is expressed in the form of fear that a political movement, if it gains power, will destroy the social values defended by certain groups. That happens, for example, around the so-called "gender ideology," which mobilizes conservative activism and strong opposition to progressive governments, but also to right-wing parties with liberal agendas, as happened in Colombia around the peace plebiscite (Rodríguez Rondón, 2017). The image that summed up that fear, and that was strategically mobilized by right-wing political leaders, was the "Venezuela model," during the time that Venezuela expressed the most radical and most performance-impaired forms— in both political and economic terms— that the pink tide took in the region (Levitsky & Roberts, 2011). Unlike the canonical definition of moral panic, which is a transient state (Goode & Ben-Yehuda, 1994), political moral panic is a growing and persistent process of emotionally internalizing a threat. The moral entrepreneurs took care to convince their audiences of the real threat

posed by a process of political radicalization that would lead the countries studied to "become Venezuela."

Explaining the success of right-wing parties in adverse times: existing theories

In recent years, two types of explanations emerged: the corporation-based parties theory (Barndt, 2014; 2016) and the authoritarian successor parties (ASP) theory (Loxton, 2014; 2016). Both models seek to identify what resources right-wing parties utilized to expand (especially in Loxton's model) and become electorally competitive (the focus of Barndt's model).

The corporation-based party theory argues that when the social bases of parties in Latin America are declining, business conglomerates represent a powerful support for conservative electoral building. The origins of parties are not made clear, but Barndt defines corporate-based parties as led by at least one businessperson (2014: p. 7). According to the author, businesspeople find their companies to be indispensable resources to build an electoral organization. Modern companies—i.e. those with efficient management know-how—transfer organizational technologies (logistics, customer relations tools, qualified personnel) and ideational technologies (advertising) to their political parties. At the same time, parties also find in these companies a social anchor, in times in which, according to several studies, parties tend to be built with weak social roots (Luna & Altman, 2011; Luna et al, 2021).

According to Barndt, an ideal-typical corporation-based party would have five characteristics that correspond to the five basic resources provided by business corporations (Barndt, 2014: p. 5). First, a business' organizational infrastructure would heavily finance party activities. Second, the party would depend on the organizational infrastructure of that business, including office space, logistics, and information technology. Third, employees from the business corporation would be transferred into the party (not only leaders and staff, but also professionals specializing in marketing, law, and public relations). Four, the business would use its assets to maintain clientelist networks. And five, the party would develop advertising strategies using the publicity assets of its sponsoring business (2014: p. 10).

Barndt's theoretical framework sheds convincing light on the case of Cambio Democrático in Panama, a new party created by the owner of a nation-wide supermarket

chain. It also studies two cases of relevant parties in Andean countries in the 1990s: Unidad Civica Solidaridad in Bolivia and PRIAN in Ecuador. These parties have used their primary leaders' resources to build electoral strength. However, in this contribution, the relationship between corporate-based parties and right-wing parties remains unclear as the author does not focus on the parties' relationships with their conservative core constituency or with the ideas associated with that sector. Resources provided by business corporations are useful for any electoral party and obtaining these resources does not explain how the right-wing parties overcome the structural and historical challenges mentioned above. Moreover, two of the three parties are not adequate cases for the study of how the Right faces the historical challenges of post-neoliberal consensus and the advance of progressive cultural agendas: the Unidad Civica Solidaridad collapsed in 2002, a few years before the beginning of the left turn in Bolivia (Alenda, 2004); Ecuador's PRIAN met a similar fate and was displaced as a relevant opposition party at the beginning of the left turn in that country (Barndt, 2016: p. 361).

Parties that have been successful in achieving competitiveness in adverse times, such as the case of PRO, cannot be explained by Barndt's model. Although the party's founding leader is a businessman, Mauricio Macri's corporate ties were never a key source of provision of the five resources identified by Barndt. We must then consider a second theory: Loxton's authoritarian successor party model.

Loxton's theory of authoritarian successor parties (ASPs) finds that the fundamental resources for party-building for right wing parties are rooted in authoritarian periods. Specifically, conservative parties can mobilize inheritances from authoritarian periods to face the structural challenge of the construction of a multiclass electoral coalition. According to Loxton, ASPs obtain five resources from their authoritarian roots: clientelistic networks, organizational infrastructure, privileged ties to business elites, popular party brands, and leadership cohesion. The author argues that the importance of authoritarian resources is such that only parties of this type were successful after the third wave of democratization in Latin America.

However, since the crisis of the neoliberal consensus, right-wing parties not-ASPs have emerged and become competitive, even under adverse circumstances. Some have even failed to take root. ASPs that had been successful in previous years, such as Nationalist Democratic Action (ADN) in Bolivia, collapsed (Cyr, 2017), despite having the resources identified in Loxton's model. I argue that, in the post-neoliberal context,

these five resources no longer explain the success of right-wing parties. This is because the resources identified by Loxton's --as well as in Barndt's models-- are empirical manifestations of theoretical types of resources. Loxton's model describes the empirical manifestation of resources that (according to my theoretical definition) could have other empirical manifestations, as a necessary condition for a conservative party's success. Then, the author considers that these empirical manifestations can only be obtained from authoritarian roots. Therefore, only ASPs can be successful.

One of the problems with Loxton's theory is precisely that it has an (unrecognized) narrow historical scope: the years immediately following authoritarian regimes (the 1980s or 1990s, depending on the country). His theory can explain the success of the parties emerging after the transition from authoritarian regimes, but it is much less effective for the following periods when: 1) programmatic challenges arise due to the weakening of cleavages inherited from the authoritarian period (for Chile, see Huneeus, 2014; Rovira, 2019); 2) there is a resurgence of the left and progressive agendas in the economic and cultural fields (Levitsky & Roberts, 2011); and/or 3) many countries experienced a collapse of the party system as a result of economic and social crises (Cyr, 2017).

The five resources proposed by Barndt's model and Loxton's model could be equated from our conceptual point of view, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Barndt's model	Loxton's model	Own theoretical model
Infrastructure	Organizational infrastructure	Organizational resources
Clientelist/Mass networks	Clientelist networks	Organizational resources
Advertising and Publicity	Popular party brands	Ideational resources
Specialized personnel	Leadership cohesion	Organizational resources
Extensive financing	Privileged ties to business elites	Organizational resources

From these theoretical definitions we can return to Loxton's model to see how its five resources are empirical variants of my three factors model --programmatic renewal, organizational innovation, and the exploitation of moral panic. The first three resources in Loxton's model (clientelistic networks, organizational infrastructure and ties to business elites) are part of the organizational innovations that allow right-wing parties to maintain or arouse the support of their core constituency and extend electoral

mobilization to non-core constituencies. But there are other ways to achieve the same objectives, such as the incorporation at the local level of intra-party groups that come from traditional parties. These groups can provide ties with constituencies that right-wing parties find difficult to access.

The fourth resource, the possibility of having popular party brands, depends on the ability of the leaders to produce programmatic innovations that adapt to the crisis of the post-neoliberal consensus. Party branding requires party leaders' discourse to be consistent across time. Party positions must also be different from those of their opponents. Conversely, "parties can dilute their brands through inconsistency or convergence" (Lupu, 2014: p. 568). Defining a brand that is consistent and distinct from that of their opponents is a strategic decision. A party may inherit a brand from its authoritarian roots, but that inheritance is context-dependent, and particularly dependent on the electorate maintaining approval of the authoritarian government. Claiming the authoritarian past is not always profitable. If the electorate's approval of the authoritarian past declines, right-wing parties require programmatic renewal to garner broad voter support. In fact, to become competitive, parties may need to break with the authoritarian past in which they took root. Such was the case for Piñera in Chile in the 2000s. Against the opinions of party leaders, Piñera stopped openly supporting the Pinochet regime, which was losing favor in public opinion, (Huneus, 2014) and therefore set an electoral ceiling for the Chilean Right (Rovira, 2019).

Likewise, the party brand is more likely to achieve broad adherence when it relies on socio-cultural cleavages. The authoritarianism-democracy cleavage, as well as the ideological cleavages associated with years of political violence, generated initial accessions to ASPs in the countries in which the authoritarian governments ended with considerable social support. Furthermore, ASPs combined this attribute with the promotion of an economic agenda that gained consensus in Latin American societies, even among voters of non-conservative options. At the same time that the ideological cleavage associated with the authoritarian past lost significance so too did the neoliberal consensus also weakened. Both phenomena challenged right-wing parties, which had to carry out programmatic renewal. The renewal took different paths: 1) parties refused to decline their authoritarian legacy but incorporated progressive demands (as RN under the leadership of Piñera in Chile); 2) parties identified other non-economic problems compatible with authoritarian positions (for instance, security, see Holland, 2013) or

that eluded ideological marks (for instance, problem solving), as seen in the PRO in Argentina or Centro Democrático in Colombia.

Finally, parties developed strategies to build the cohesion necessary to mobilize the right-wing party. Levitsky et al (2016) develop a conflict-centered approach to party-building. However, ASP theory focuses exclusively on the counter-revolutionary struggle. In the context of the left turn and the rise of the progressive cultural agenda, conflict is no longer associated with political violence and the authoritarian past. However, it continues to play a crucial role. It is no longer necessary for cohesion to come from authoritarian roots, or from political conflicts linked to those roots. In fact, PRO inherited the UCEDE's break with authoritarian roots. Colombia lacks the type of authoritarian past that have marked the recent history of other countries in the region. However, the strategic ability to use moral incentives associated with threats in favor of right-wing parties, is nonetheless relevant. In these cases, “the Venezuela model” and “gender ideology” emerge as efficient threats to conservative publics; neither necessarily refers to authoritarian roots.

In sum, the five resources presented as part of the Loxton model are to some extent endogenous to the party strategy and can be subsumed to the three factors of my model. I maintain that the existence of resources that favor party-building is not necessarily a result of, or connected to the authoritarian roots of the parties, but rather is the outcome of leaders’ strategic decisions at two levels: organizational and ideational. The model seeks to explain the success of right-wing parties after the crisis of the neoliberal consensus and the rise of progressive cultural agendas (since 1998). Factors reflecting fears of the Venezuela model and the rejection of the gender agenda are, in fact, historical and could not be applied to other contexts.

I study constituency building by analyzing the organizational mediations and programmatic offers that allowed right-wing parties to mobilize their core constituency while attracting noncore constituencies. I combine a socio-political perspective that studies socio-cultural anchors (Sawicki, 1997) and the organizational life of political parties (Levitsky, 2003; Panebianco, 1988) with approaches that take into account the strategic dimension of political activity (Cyr, 2017). The strategic dimension recognizes that, within parties, ambitious politicians make programmatic and organizational decisions to increase their chances of accessing power (Aldrich, 1995).

Finally, this scheme does not seek to explain electoral success—which is attributable to contextual and cyclical factors in each case—but, rather, the rise of

competitive right-wing parties by virtue of investment in organizational mediations, the establishment of programmatic innovations and the mobilization of social fears, especially among elites, in response to a radicalization of political processes in the region.

Case selection

This work analyzes the PRO party as a core case, in comparative perspective with four other parties from three countries: National Renewal (RN) and Independent Democratic Union (UDI) in Chile, which function as an electoral coalition, Democratic Center (CD) in Colombia, and one of the main Bolivian regional party, the Social Democratic Party (MDS). PRO is a deviant case (George, Bennett, Lynn-Jones & Miller, 2005; Seawright & Gerring, 2008; Gerring, 2008) regarding the authoritarian successor parties theory. In Argentina, a new right-wing party managed to form despite the fact that right-wing parties were historically weak (Di Tella, 1972; Gibson, 1996) and the fact that, since the democratic transition, they had been absorbed by traditional parties (Vommaro, 2019). To expand its electorate, PRO abandoned the weight of the doctrinal dimension of previous right-wing parties and built a pragmatic and management-oriented party brand, based on problem solving (Morresi & Vommaro, 2014). Its early arrival to the Buenos Aires city government allowed PRO to finish building its partisan brand. Macri and his inner circle strategically avoided any definition in terms of the left-right axis and, once in the running for the presidential elections, accepted a good part of the left turn's social policies. Likewise, PRO built organizational mediations with particularist and poorly coordinated business elites through foundations and NGOs, and connected with popular and middle class electorates by including leaders of traditional parties (Peronists and radicals). Towards the end of the second Cristina Kirchner administration, PRO found the moral panic over the "chav-ization" of Argentina to be a trigger that could mobilize economic elites and upper social sectors to massively support the PRO candidate in the 2015 presidential election (Vommaro, 2017).

I test the applicability of the new model (Seawright & Gerring, 2008; Gerring, 2008) to other cases of "new right-wing competitive parties" in Latin America.

First, I take another case of a new, competitive, right-wing non-ASP (the Colombian CD) and show that my model also manages to explain the success of this party, even though it was born in a different context than the PRO. Alvaro Uribe

emerged as an alternative to traditional right-wing candidates and accessed power in the 2002 elections. After his departure from power, and after his break with his successor, Juan Manuel Santos, Uribe created a political party that allowed him to institutionalize his support and establish a national political organization. (Gamboa, 2019) He did so in a country where traditional right-wing parties had managed to survive the challenges of the third wave of democratization, a context unlike other countries, such as Venezuela (Wills Otero, 2015). CD was heir to two major innovations produced by Uribe and his inner circle. First, on a programmatic level, the party adopted a hard-line position regarding the Colombian armed conflict. The failure of the peace negotiations conducted by Uribe's predecessor, Andrés Pastrana (Dugas, 2003), allowed Uribe to distinguish himself from the traditional Right (Pachón, 2009) on an issue that had been central to public debate since the 1970s (Botero, Losada & Wills-Otero, 2016). Second, in the area of cultural issues, especially those concerning gender rights and roles, (Gamboa, 2019), the new party embraced positions that traditional right-wing parties had abandoned (Battle & Duncan, 2013), and managed to attract Christian electorates (Beltrán & Quiroga, 2017) as well as a significant part of the conservative constituency (Rodríguez Rondón, 2017). Regarding organizational mediations, CD exhibited less innovation because it was able to build on the organizational legacy of traditional parties at the local level: since his first term as president, Uribe has used social programs to attract and coordinate the local political networks of the traditional parties. His success in implementing a "democratic security" policy and his pro-market reforms earned him support from the business community (González G., 2011), which was channeled through informal links and through NGOs and foundations. Finally, fear of the "Venezuela model" (*Castro-chavismo* in this case) was successfully mobilized in the context of the peace process. According to CD publicists and leaders, the country would be left defenseless to the invasion of "Castro-Chavismo" and was especially vulnerable at the local level. The fear was connected to the issue of security, but also entangled with other "moral panics," including debates over "gender ideology" (Rodríguez Rondón, 2017).

Then, to avoid case selection bias by the dependent variable (Geddes, 1990), I apply the model to a negative case (Mahoney & Goertz, 2004), a major regional party in Bolivia (Eaton, 2007, 2011, 2014, 2016), the Social Democratic Party (MDS). Bolivian regional parties failed to become competitive in the context of the crisis of the neoliberal consensus because: a) the organizational devices rooting parties in their

constituencies (Pro-Santa Cruz Civic Committee) divided and weakened their partisan ties and regional parties didn't find alternative organizational mediations (Eaton, 2016). In addition, economic elites chose to stop investing in party-building to negotiate with the MAS government (Eaton, 2011). b) Based on the defense of regional economic interests, these parties did not carry out a programmatic renewal that might respond to the challenge of the MAS distributive agenda. Likewise, the divisions within the party elites and the discontinuity of party labels made it difficult to build a party brand (Eaton, 2016).¹⁰

Finally, I use my model to analyze two cases of authoritarian successor parties (UDI-RN in Chile). In Chile, the two right-wing parties that formed during the authoritarian regime of Pinochet established an electoral alliance that carried out both programmatic renewal and organizational innovations for the Chilean Right. In the first case, Sebastián Piñera's leadership represented the completion of a moderate turn that had been taking place in some sectors of the Right (Rovira, 2019), particularly in relation to the intervention of the state in economic and social life (Luna, 2017: pp. 128-129), to gender-related value issues (Castiglioni, 2010) and fundamentally in relation to the defense of Pinochet's authoritarian regime (Barozet & Aubry, 2005). His rejection of human rights violations abandoned a central cleavage in Chilean politics (Tironi & Agüero, 1999; Huneus, 2014: p. 423 et seq.) and allowed the Right to transcend the conservative space in which this cleavage had confined it. In organizational terms, the UDI, as an organic party, introduced the main innovation by establishing networks for the provision of public resources in working class neighborhoods. These networks allowed it to build political ties with constituencies traditionally closer to the Left (Luna, 2014). The strengthening of the Chilean Right began in the 1999 elections, when the UDI candidate Joaquín Lavín built a problem-solved based program. The center-left Concertación presented a non-Christian candidate for the first time, which rang the alarm bells among economic and social elites. However, it was not until the 2009 presidential elections that panic at societal changes spread among these sectors. Then, social mobilizations in general, and those of students in particular, were the primary source of a perceived threat by upper social sectors and economic elites (Castiglioni,

¹⁰ Another negative case is the Argentine party *Recrear*. It was born at the same time as the PRO. It grew rapidly (it obtained 3rd place in the 2003 presidential elections) but collapsed shortly after and ended up merging with the PRO: 1) it does not carry out programmatic innovation. Instead, it chooses a programmatic path that openly defends neoliberal ideas and that follows the discursive pattern of right-wing parties of previous decades; 2) it establishes relationships with conservative subnational parties (Cruz, 2019) but does not build mediations with non-core constituencies.

2010; Fairfield, 2015). The student movement triggered concern among Chilean business powers as to whether political elites would maintain Pinochet's policy legacies (Bril-Mascarenhas & Maillet, 2019). The "Venezuela model" was a campaign issue in the 2017 presidential election. Then, publicists and right-wing leaders stirred up a panic against leftist candidates by raising the specter of "Chile-zuela" (Rovira, 2019). This time, the Chilean Left was divided, due to the appearance of an electoral vehicle more radical than the moderate *Concertación*. This new vehicle facilitated the activation of fear that the Left was becoming more radical. This fear helped mobilize right-wing voters in the second round of the election (Cué & Montes, 2017; Guzmán Concha, 2017; Palacios Sanabria, 2017). My model's three factors complement the explanation provided by the theory of authoritarian successor parties to explain the success of the UDI-RN, since the use of the resources obtained in the authoritarian period is not enough to explain the competitiveness of these parties in the context of the neoliberal consensus crisis. The authoritarian successor parties built organizational mediations with non-core constituencies by virtue of strategic decisions of their leaders (Guzmán, for the UDI). Certainly, unlike the non-authoritarian successor parties -which incorporated local factions of traditional parties- they made organizational innovations based on authoritarian resources with which they were able to build territorial mediations (Luna, 2010). The authoritarian successor parties carried out programmatic renovation to get rid of the authoritarian "ballast" before the neoliberal consensus crisis, but they also had to carry out programmatic renovation as a result of that crisis -as did the non-authoritarian successor parties- by adapting to progressive agendas (moderation) or adopting new agendas (security and resolution of specific problems). The strategic use of fear of the "Venezuela model" applies in this case because it reactivated threats that had already favored the birth of the authoritarian successor parties (fear of pressure on the State from social mobilization and redistributionist programs).

At the same moment that the UDI and RN managed to become even more competitive in the context of the post-neoliberal consensus, the ASP AND, in Bolivia, went into crisis. It could not outlast the departure of its leader. (Levitsky, Loxton & Van Dyck, 2016: p. 4) As Cyr (2017) shows, its leaders could not manage party resources adequately to reinvent the party in the new post-neoliberal cycle. The absence of an activist base and social roots at the subnational level made the party fragile in the face of the departure of its founding leader (Cyr, 2017: p. 187). Likewise, ADN could not

respond to a context in which cultural cleavages, associated with the indigenous question, became central in the public arena and in the political conflict (Faguet, 2019).

Table 3. Case selection

		Authoritarian successor?	
		<i>No</i>	<i>Yes</i>
Politically successful?	<i>No</i>	Bolivian regional parties (Social Democrat Movement), Recrear	ADN
(after 1998)	<i>Yes</i>	PRO, CD	UDI/RN, ARENA

This case selection was theory oriented (Ragin, 2000). I focus mainly on the PRO case in Argentina in order to build a theoretical scheme (Ragin, 1994). PRO represents an extreme case on the independent variables (King, Keohane & Verba, 1994) because: 1) it had to overcome greater obstacles than did right-wing parties in other countries, because right-wing parties historically were electorally weak in Argentina and the consensus around State intervention in the economy and progressive gender agenda were widely popular; 2) As a party founded by an entrepreneur that quickly brought together traditional politicians, the tension between renewal and programmatic tradition was present from the beginning; 3) As a new party dominated by new politicians, building organizational bases was a critical issue.

Research design

This work develops a socio-political approach and a comparative perspective. The three factors identified in the model are grounded in long-standing research concerning the history and the main features of the PRO party. This model seeks to explain the construction of new right-wing parties that have become central to the political system of their countries. Challenging more established parties is a difficult task for right-wing parties, particularly 1) when right-wing parties are historically weak (Argentina); 2) when their agendas are delegitimized for a large part of the electorate, as in the case of the countries that experienced the left turn (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Uruguay, Venezuela); 3) when there are powerful traditional right-wing parties (Colombia). The use of comparison is intended to yield theoretical conclusions from the in-depth study of a few cases (Ragin and Becker, 2000; Ragin 2007, 2013). I adopted the concept of "multiple conjunctural causation" (Marx, Rihoux & Ragin 2014).

Our analysis employs mixed methods with a mainly qualitative approach. The data comes from long-standing research (2010-2017) on the PRO's party-building efforts—in organizational, sociological and programmatic terms—in the city of Buenos Aires, its territorial expansion strategies in other districts and its transformation in recent years. The selection of the City of Buenos Aires as a main district within which to study PRO party-building is based on the fact that the party was born there and Buenos Aires is its primary stronghold; PRO has governed the city since 2007. Thus, the party built its program and its main organizational mediations in Buenos Aires. Moreover, most of the Cambiemos government cadres at the national level, in 2015, and in other districts (at the sub-national level) come from the City of Buenos Aires.

The first stage of the research consisted of an in-depth quantitative-quantitative study of the social anchors, ideas and type of activity of PRO political cadres and activists in Buenos Aires (Vommaro, Morresi & Bellotti 2015; Morresi & Vommaro 2014; Vommaro & Morresi 2014). This work included a survey (2011), in-depth interviews, review of press and partisan archives, as well as ethnographical description of rallies and meetings. We then extended the study by comparing the PRO political elites with the political elites belonging to the other parties in city politics, especially with the Kirchnerist Peronists associated with the Front for Victory. Between 2014 and 2015, we conducted a second survey with local legislators, deputies and national senators representing the district, as well as with members of the fifteen community councils. In both surveys, the cases were selected in order to maintain a certain representativeness regarding gender, position and the party by which the leaders were elected. The surveys were administered in-person and via an online platform. Likewise, we conducted a series of in-depth interviews with partisan leaders. The comparison of PRO elites with those belonging to PRO's main competitor allowed us to establish how close PRO positions are to those of their opponents.

Finally, we conducted interviews with PRO leaders from other provinces, especially from Buenos Aires, Tucumán and Santiago del Estero. These data were combined with partisan documents and press archives to reconstruct the PRO party-building process beyond its stronghold, its strategies for expanding the party to the interior of the country and its evolution in programmatic terms, territorial mediations and electoral strategies.

In the case of RN and UDI, in Chile, CD, in Colombia and MDS in Bolivia, I conducted interviews with key informants (political leaders and scholars, in the Chilean

and the Colombian case, and scholars, in the Bolivian case). I consulted data from studies of parties in those countries; this data enabled us to describe these parties' organizational development efforts, their territorial mediations and their programmatic transformations, as well as their links with associations, NGOs and other civil society organizations that were part of their partisan environment.

In all cases, I consulted archives of the major national media outlets to reconstruct the critical junctures in the construction of party mediations, programmatic innovations and mobilization of the moral panic in response to the "Venezuela model".

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