

A COMPARATIVE APPROACH TO ANALYZING PARTY SYSTEM COLLAPSE

Venezuela serves as an empirically poignant and theoretically powerful case of collapse. But party system collapse is not a distinctively Venezuelan phenomenon. As demonstrated in chapter 2, other established party systems have suffered similar fates. Italy's party system collapsed in the early 1990s amid economic crisis and social change. The long-standing alliance between the Christian Democrats and the Socialists was discredited, the Communists lost relevance, and the old party system gave way to a combination of regional and personalist parties. In Colombia, as the Liberals and Conservatives faced mounting violence, unprecedented economic decline, and institutional reforms requiring considerable adaptation, the parties decayed and became increasingly irrelevant actors. Bolivia's old system lost its grip on power as much of the population languished in poverty and ethnic divisions became politicized, making way for Evo Morales's ascendance to the presidency in 2005. At the same time, other party systems have also faced serious challenges but managed to survive. In this third part of the book, I assess the generalizability of the theory of collapse elaborated in chapter 3 by examining a broader set of cases of collapse and survival. The cross-national analysis provides an opportunity to extend the argument beyond the Venezuelan case while also ruling out potential alternative explanations.

In the rest of this chapter, I identify the cases for cross-national analysis and detail how these comparisons facilitate a rigorous test of the theory and exclude other hypotheses. I begin by examining the four collapse cases—Bolivia, Colombia, Italy, and Venezuela—to identify areas of difference between them, which enables me to rule out these differences as rival

explanations of collapse. I then select negative cases for analysis, with the goal of assessing whether the theory also accounts for the divergent outcome of system survival. I pair each instance of collapse with a party system that shared many common features and faced the threat of collapse yet managed to survive. I conclude this chapter by discussing the process of structured, focused comparison that I employ to assess the theory consistently in each case.

In chapters 10 and 11, I carry out the cross-national analysis. Chapter 10 broadens the test, showing how the Italian, Colombian, and Bolivian party systems followed the theorized process of collapse detailed in the Venezuelan case. Each faced similar challenges to their linkage profiles, while specific contextual factors limited all the systems' ability to respond to these threats. Thus, the four cases align with the theoretical model of core threats to linkage in a context of adaptation-impeding constraints, which resulted in the failure of all forms of linkage and system collapse. Even as these party systems failed, other comparable systems faced similar obstacles and nevertheless endured. To assess how survival is possible, chapter 11 analyzes important moments of crisis in the paired comparisons of system survival in Argentina, Belgium, India, and Uruguay. I demonstrate that collapse was possible in these cases, but in each instance, at least one form of linkage was sustained, enabling the system to survive. Linkage endured either because it was not fundamentally challenged across all types or because contextual constraints did not limit adaptation. Examining instances of survival in this way clarifies the significance of each component of the causal process delineated in chapter 3.

COMPARING INSTANCES OF COLLAPSE TO ELIMINATE POTENTIAL ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS

To explore the extent to which my theory accounts for each occurrence of collapse, chapter 10 analyzes the three other collapses of established party systems in Europe and Latin America between 1975 and 2005: those of Bolivia (2005), Colombia (1998–2002), and Italy (1992–94). The four collapse cases vary on a range of institutional and party system factors, and features that differ across cases are unlikely explanations of the shared outcome of collapse. Therefore, this most-different systems element of the research design enables me to introduce variation across cases of collapse

on a range of variables, which represent potential alternative explanations, and thus rule them out (Przeworski and Teune 1970). Here I discuss how the four cases differ with regard to institutional features, like electoral rules and presidentialism versus parliamentarism, and party system effects, like number of parties and institutionalization, suggesting that these are not necessary conditions for collapse.

Theories emphasizing the importance of electoral rules for understanding party systems suggest that certain electoral institutions are incompatible with particular party system structures (Cox 1997; Duverger 1954). Specifically, changes away from proportional representation (PR) and toward single-member districts (SMD) might marginalize some smaller parties and could even put the system at risk. The cases of Venezuela, Bolivia, and perhaps Italy, which all moved away from pure PR around the time of party system collapse, might seem to align with this argument, but the Colombian experience directly contradicts the idea that party system collapse is caused by changes in electoral rules that encourage fewer parties.

Historically, Venezuela elected its national legislature with closed-list PR, but it switched to a mixed PR and SMD system for the 1993 legislative elections. Similarly, Bolivia moved from PR to a mixed system for the 1996 elections. Italian electoral law also changed to a mixed system from open-list PR, although not until 1994, when collapse had been under way for two years and was already nearly complete (D'Alimonte and Bartolini 1997). But the extent to which the new mixed systems squeezed the party systems toward bipolarity was limited because the overall composition of the legislature was still determined by the PR party vote; thus, the new electoral systems did not affect the translation of votes into seats (Gilbert 1995; Salazar Elena 2004). Despite this caveat and the indeterminate timing in the Italian case, these three cases might lead one to believe that the mixed system somehow undermined the parties and challenged system structure.

However, Colombia clearly contradicts this pattern. Colombian electoral laws historically employed a personalistic form of PR in which multiple competing lists ran under the same party label. In 1991, constitutional reforms *lowered* entry barriers and created a single national constituency for the Senate rather than multiple regional-level constituencies (Gutiérrez Sanín 2007). These changes opened the electoral process up to *more* competitors, rather than constraining it further, as could have occurred in the three other countries with the move from PR to mixed systems. The Colombian experience is at odds with the other collapse cases, suggesting that specific electoral rules do not themselves threaten party system survival in

a consistent way. Party systems with different electoral institutions that underwent diverse types of change all experienced collapse.¹

Comparing the four collapse cases also reveals that both presidential and parliamentary forms of government have experienced collapse, eliminating presidentialism as a possible causal variable. In his classic work, Linz (1990) argued that parliamentary systems are more stable and more effective for representation than presidential ones. However, of the four cases of collapse, only two were purely presidential—Colombia and Venezuela. Italy had a parliamentary system, and Bolivia had a parliamentarized version of presidentialism in which the legislature typically selected the president from among the top vote getters in the popular election (Mayorga 2005). This diversity suggests that presidentialism does not inherently imperil party systems, as systems under other forms of government are also vulnerable to collapse.

Furthermore, the four failed party systems differed considerably in their structure. Venezuela had a 2.5-party system, and the Colombian system was dominated by two parties. Italy and Bolivia stood at the other end of the spectrum with multiparty systems. In Italy, the communist left was pitted against three to five other parties, and in Bolivia competition revolved around three main parties and a handful of smaller ones.² Party discipline also varied across the four party systems. For instance, Venezuela's nearly perfect discipline in the legislature contrasts with the Colombian parties' extreme fractionalization.

Additionally, the four systems possessed different levels of institutionalization. Some scholars have suggested that institutionalization promotes stability and governance (Dix 1992; Mainwaring and Scully 1995a; Sánchez 2008), while others have argued that too much or too little institutionalization weakens party systems (Dietz and Myers 2007). Given the significance of institutionalization in existing arguments about party system stability, it is particularly relevant that the cases of collapse analyzed here provide variation across the entire spectrum of the variable. The Venezuelan system possessed high levels of institutionalization (Dietz and Myers 2007;

1. The theory I posit considers how other institutional reforms—namely political decentralization, which in some countries was concurrent with the shift away from PR—challenged clientelist linkage. The data for Venezuela in chapter 7, as well as the evidence for Italy, Bolivia, and Colombia in chapter 10, support the importance of decentralization in undermining linkage, but not the significance of changes in national-level electoral rules.

2. The average effective number of parties in the legislature's lower house during each country's pre-collapse era was 2.4 for Colombia (1978–94); 3.2 for Venezuela (1973–88); 4.8 for Bolivia (1985–2002); and 4.1 for Italy (1976–92).

Kornblith and Levine 1995), whereas Bolivia stood at the other end of the continuum with an amorphous and unstable system (Mainwaring and Scully 1995a). The Colombian and Italian systems had moderate levels of institutionalization. Boudon (2000) argues that institutionalization was only modest in Colombia, below Venezuelan levels, and that it was particularly weak in the areas of party organization and discipline. The Italian system also qualified as moderately institutionalized, without volatility but with low programmatic clarity (Farneti 1983). Neither high, nor moderate, nor low levels of institutionalization assured stability, as systems at all levels of institutionalization collapsed.

Thus, these cases of collapse manifested different party system characteristics and operated in distinct institutional contexts. Comparing the cases enables me to focus the analysis on factors and patterns that were similar across all four, rather than being distracted by competing explanations that are only relevant in some of them.

CONTRASTING INSTANCES OF SURVIVAL

In addition to extending my analysis to the three other instances of collapse, I examine cases in which party systems have been surprisingly resilient. By contrasting the processes of linkage failure that led to collapse in some countries against those systems that maintained linkage and survived, I assess whether my theory distinguishes between instances of system failure and success. Here I outline how I selected instances of survival for analysis. I identified relevant cases and created paired comparisons, matching each collapse case to a similar system that endured despite some comparable challenges. Based on this process, the negative cases I selected for analysis are Argentina in the 1990s and early 2000s, Belgium in the 1970s, Uruguay in the late 1990s and early 2000s, and India in the 1980s.³

Identifying Relevant Negative Cases

In selecting negative cases, or non-collapses, I had two major considerations. First, I included only relevant cases so as to avoid overrepresentation

3. With the survival cases, just as with the collapses, it is crucial to identify a specific time period for analysis. For example, Bolivia has not always constituted an instance of collapse; rather the analytical focus must be on 2005, when its system failed. The same logic is true for instances of survival. We should focus on critical moments when the system was particularly

of survival cases and reap the greatest benefit from the contrast between positive and negative observations. Typically, scholars recommend including negative cases that closely resemble positive ones, especially on hypothesized causal factors (Ragin 2000; Skocpol 1984). Mahoney and Goertz extend this recommendation, specifying that the most relevant cases are those that share at least one independent variable hypothesized to influence the outcome of interest, which in this case is system collapse. When choosing non-events, they advise that scholars should only consider cases “where the outcome of interest is *possible* . . . [while] cases that are *impossible* should be relegated to a set of uninformative and hence irrelevant observations” (2004, 653; emphasis in original).⁴

I implemented this guideline for negative case selection by only considering instances of survival that had positive values on more than one of the independent variables in the theoretical model of collapse. As specified in chapter 3, these central causal factors are the *challenges* posed by crisis, social transformation, and political decentralization, as well as the *constraints* imposed by contextual factors, specifically international policy guidelines that contradict party legacies, interparty agreements, organizational patterns limiting new group incorporation, and reforms preventing party access to clientelist resources. Table 9.1 displays the values of these factors in the four selected negative cases. As the table makes clear, I also designed the array of cases such that each independent variable was present in at least one negative case.

I intentionally chose cases in which collapse seemed possible or even likely but was nevertheless averted—in other words, these are surprising instances of survival. Near misses pose a particular challenge to theory, as the account of the causal process must be able to parse out the differences that resulted in divergent outcomes despite similar circumstances. Explaining how these at-risk systems survived moments of crisis allows me to test the importance of each hypothesized component of the collapse process.

vulnerable. So, when selecting negative cases for analysis, I specify both the country and a particular time period during which the system was at risk for collapse.

4. Goertz and Mahoney (2004) also specify that cases should be considered irrelevant if they possess a characteristic that is widely known from previous research to make the outcome of interest impossible. I considered this recommendation when selecting negative cases. But existing research on collapse is sufficiently underdeveloped, so identifying factors that make collapse impossible is not feasible and excluding cases based on consensus in the literature is not possible.

Table 9.1 Theorized independent variables present in selected cases of party system survival

	Argentina, 1990s	Belgium, 1970s	Uruguay, 1990s	India, 1980s
Crisis conditions	Economic crisis	No	Economic crisis	No
International policy constraints ^a	IMF agreements	No	IMF agreements	IMF loans, but considerable autonomy
Interparty agreements ^b	No	Christian Democrats always in coalition	Colorados and Blancos, but not FA	No
Social transformation ^c	Deindustrialization; deunionization; informalization	Regional and ethnolinguistic divides activated	Deindustrialization; deunionization; informalization	Ethnic cleavages activated
Organizational constraints on new interest incorporation ^d	Historical union ties; conflicting interests	Constraints that slowed, but did not prevent, new cleavage incorporation	No	Single-party incorporation not viable amid ethnic conflict
Electoral decentralization ^e	No	Autonomous regional governments created	Separation of local and national elections	Local elections implemented, but not until 1993
Reforms limiting party resource control ^f	Decentralized parties and partisan state spending assured access	40 percent of government funds regionalized, but public funds for parties increased	Subnational share of public spending up more than 50 percent	Regional variation, but extensive fiscal decentralization

Note: Gray shading indicates absence of factor; white equals presence. See chapter 11 for details and sources.

^a International agreement or intergovernmental organizations strongly limited policy latitude.

^b All the major pro-system parties participated in ideologically diffuse coalitions, pacts, or formal agreements at some point during the crisis.

^c Politically salient social cleavage(s) changed in either structure or type.

^d Newly salient interests conflicted with the goals of entrenched groups and/or did not fit established patterns of interest articulation.

^e New or newly separated elections were established for subnational offices such as governor or mayor.

^f State reforms like rationalization or decentralization cut parties off from resources they had manipulated for political ends. Data for Belgium from Heisler (1977); for Uruguay from Panizza (2004); for India from Crook and Manor (1998).

Creating Paired Comparisons

My second guiding principle in selecting instances of survival was motivated by the logic of Przeworski and Teune's (1970) most-similar systems design, in which cases are chosen based on similarities on relevant variables (also see Ragin 1986). I selected each negative case to pair with one positive case of collapse, matching them on variables with potential theoretical importance: party system features, linkage profiles, and threats to representation. By matching cases on party system features like institutionalization and system structure, I am able to rule out these variables as singularly sufficient causes of collapse. By pairing cases that shared similar linkage profiles and challenges, yet experienced divergent outcomes, I emphasize the significance of the hypothesized combinations of factors and causal pathways for understanding collapse. I matched Argentina to Venezuela, Belgium to Italy, Uruguay to Colombia, and India to Bolivia. I discuss the similarities between these cases here, while chapter 11 explores why they reached divergent outcomes.

I paired Argentina's party system survival with Venezuela's collapse because they possessed similar party system features and linkage profiles and faced many of the same challenges in the 1990s. In terms of party system features, both were institutionalized 2.5-party systems, with two major parties and several smaller ones. The two main parties in Argentina, the Justicialist or Peronist Party (PJ) and the Radicals (UCR), shared many similarities with Venezuela's AD and COPEI, respectively. All four were supported by multiclass coalitions and by the 1980s had moderate ideologies. The PJ and AD had populist traditions and maintained particular appeal among the working class, while UCR and COPEI had more conservative roots that attracted stronger support from the middle and upper classes. The linkage profiles of the Venezuelan and Argentine systems also paralleled each other, utilizing some programmatic appeals but relying especially on incorporation and clientelism. Finally, Argentina and Venezuela encountered many of the same obstacles to linkage. Argentina was embroiled in an economic crisis even more severe than Venezuela's, suffered under broad neoliberal reforms during the 1990s, and experienced significant social change via informalization of the economy.

Belgian party system survival provides an effective counterexample to Italian collapse. Both advanced democracies possessed moderately institutionalized multiparty systems with three to four parties.⁵ Belgium and Italy

5. Using Mainwaring and Scully's (1995a) criteria and operationalizations, the two systems fell into the institutionalized category with low volatility, strong ties to society, moderate levels of

each had large Christian democratic parties as well as significant parties in the social democratic family and smaller parties of the right. Their linkage profiles were also similar. While each system offered some ideological options to voters, the demands of coalition government frequently diluted these distinctions, and in both countries the Christian democratic party was a major player in almost every postwar governing coalition (Gilbert 1995; Hooghe 1991). So there were some programmatic appeals, but in neither case were they the only forms of linkage, as both systems incorporated class and religious cleavages and utilized clientelist exchanges. The Italian and Belgian systems also faced similar threats from extensive decentralization processes and social transformations that weakened the class cleavage and heightened the salience of other social divides.

I pair Uruguay's survival with Colombia's collapse because of similarities in the systems' institutionalization and structure as well as commonalities in linkage patterns and obstacles to linkage maintenance. Mainwaring and Scully (1995a) classified both systems as institutionalized, with Uruguay scoring 11.5 on their 12-point scale, and Colombia scoring 10.5.⁶ Additionally, the two were among only a handful of countries in Latin America where the earliest cadre-style parties remained important players into the late twentieth century. Despite all the parties being highly factionalized, Uruguay's Colorados and Blancos and Colombia's Liberals and Conservatives dominated their respective systems for over one hundred years (Morgenstern 2001). Their linkage strategies were likewise parallel, with clientelism being their chief means of attracting support (Luna 2008; Martz 1997).⁷ Colombia and Uruguay also encountered parallel challenges to linkage. Both struggled to sustain clientelism in the face of social transformation and political decentralization that heightened demand, and economic crisis and state reforms that limited resources.

Finally, I identified India as the most suitable relevant case of non-collapse to pair with Bolivia. Unlike other Latin American cases, India matched Bolivia on important party system features, linkage profiles, and threats challenging

legitimacy, and fairly effective party organizations. Using data from the *European Journal of Political Research*, I calculated the effective number of parties for each legislature. In the period analyzed here, the 1960s and 1970s, the Belgian legislature had three to four effective parties. Before its collapse, Italy also had three to four effective parties.

6. Boudon's (2000) recent recalculation places Colombia at a 9, marginally within the institutionalized category.

7. But as I will discuss further below, the emergence of the center-left Frente Amplio in Uruguay provided an ideological alternative in the system, infusing it with programmatic appeals that the Colombian system did not have.

the systems.⁸ India (1970s) and Bolivia (1980s–1990s) were both inchoate multiparty systems in which parties tended to coalesce around two major coalitions, making their system dynamics similar (Chhibber 1999; Mayorga 2005).⁹ In terms of linkage, both systems relied on clientelism augmented with programmatic appeals and incorporation (Salazar Elena 2004; Van Cott 2000; Wilkinson 2007). The major challenges confronted by the two systems were also similar. Each experienced major social changes during the period of threat, which heightened the salience of ethnic divides and also spurred demand for clientelism, and decentralization processes posed potential adaptation challenges for clientelist networks.

STRUCTURED, FOCUSED COMPARISONS

In the cross-national analysis, I employed structured, focused comparisons (George 1979). Based on the theory reviewed in fig. 9.1, I asked “a set of standardized, general questions of each case” (George and Bennett 2005, 69). For each step in the theorized causal process, I ask whether a case possessed the hypothesized explanatory factor. These questions are outlined in table 9.2, with separate entries for the causal process theorized to produce decay in each linkage type. If the theory provides an accurate explanation of why some party systems survive and others fail, all cases of collapse will affirmatively answer each relevant question in the table, while cases of survival will answer at least one negatively.

For each instance of collapse or survival, I begin by identifying the types of linkage employed in the system to build support. Based on the answer to

8. When choosing a comparison case for Bolivia, I was particularly concerned with finding a less developed, non-transitioning democracy that possessed an inchoate multiparty system in which the parties coalesced around two blocks. I also prioritized finding a country that faced the challenge of increasingly salient ethnic diversity. I considered Ecuador because of its ethnic diversity and inchoate party system, but the authoritarian interlude with the 2000 coup that toppled President Mahuad led me to reject Ecuador as a suitable match. Other countries in Central America were also excluded because of the transitional nature of their democracies and ongoing patterns of civil conflict into the 1990s. Because no Latin American country met the criteria outlined, I turned to Asia, where I found that the Indian experience paralleled the Bolivian case on these important facets and in other ways.

9. Bolivia scored 5.0 on the 12-point institutionalization scale (Mainwaring and Scully 1995a, 17). Following the same criteria, I calculated institutionalization in India as falling between 5.0 and 6.0. India scores poorly on stability (volatility is 30–40 percent), earning it a 1.0 on this criterion. It also scores low on ties to organized interests measured by party age, again receiving a 1.0, with most Indian parties founded after 1950. Indian party organizations are widely known for being weak (Krishna 2007), so the country scores a 1.0 or 1.5 in that regard. Finally, party legitimacy in India is moderate, resulting in a score of 2.0 or 2.5.

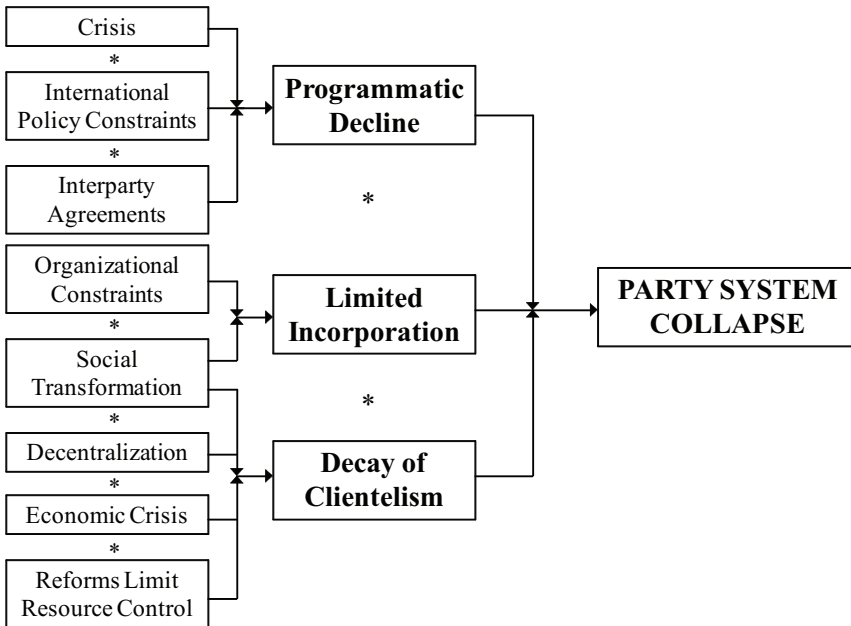


Fig. 9.1 Full model of party system collapse

Note: * stands for the logical AND. Factors in bold are part of the core theoretical model; factors in standard font are part of the secondary model. Joint arrows indicate a conjunction of necessary causes. Notation follows Goertz and Mahoney (2005).

this question, I explore, in turn, the causal path hypothesized to produce the decay of each relevant linkage type. If a system used programmatic appeals, I ask whether a crisis stemming from the shortcomings of the established policy model demanded a response. I also explore whether the presence of international commitments or pressures that conflicted with parties' legacies reduced capacity for appropriate programmatic adaptation and eliminated certain policy options. Then, to assess the extent to which policy unresponsiveness infected all the parties across the system, I ask whether ideological options were blurred by interparty agreements.

If interest incorporation was an important linkage mechanism, I examine whether relevant social divides experienced transformation either in the structure of the primary cleavage or in the type of salient divisions. I also examine organizational constraints on incorporating these new interests. Were they easily integrated through existing avenues of interests? Did new groups' concerns conflict with those of established interests?

Table 9.2 Questions asked of cases in conducting structured, focused comparisons

Asked of all cases:

- What types of linkage were significant parts of the system's representational profile?

If programmatic linkages were significant:

- Did the party system encounter a crisis of its policy model?
- Did international pressures constrain policy and conflict with parties' legacies?
- Did interparty agreements undermine potential alternatives to the status quo?
- Did policy responsiveness decay and ideological options disappear?

If interest incorporation was significant:

- Did salient cleavages transform in structure or in type?
- Did the new social structure challenge routinized incorporation patterns?
- Did new interests challenge the concerns of entrenched groups?
- Did interest incorporation narrow?

If clientelist exchanges were significant:

- Did social transformation increase demand for clientelism?
 - Were separate subnational elections established?
 - Did crisis conditions limit resource supply?
 - Did political reforms reduce parties' access to resources?
 - Did clientelism decay?
-

If the party system offered clientelist exchanges as a significant linkage strategy, I ask whether social transformation and the establishment of separate subnational elections resulted in more pressure for clientelism. With reference to resource availability, I examine whether crisis conditions restricted supply and whether political reforms constrained access to politicized funds for clientelism. Finally, for each linkage strategy employed in the traditional party system, I ask whether the parties' capacity to attract support via that strategy decayed in the period leading up to the system's collapse.

Exploring this series of questions enables me to systematically test the ability of the theory of linkage failure to explain why some party systems collapsed while others managed to survive. It is to this structured comparative analysis that I now turn.

BANKRUPT REPRESENTATION IN ITALY, COLOMBIA, AND BOLIVIA

When there is no longer any ideological or group foundation to the [party-voter] relationship, it is purely a market exchange, so if clientelist networks cannot meet demand, they are susceptible to failure.

—Paraphrased translation of Andrés Dávila Ladrón de Guevara and Natalia Delgado Varela, “La metamorfosis del sistema político colombiano”

The theory outlined in chapter 3 as well as the analysis of Venezuela suggests that linkage failure causes party system collapse. When a system faces threats to its core linkage strategies and contextual constraints limit its ability to adapt in order to respond to such challenges, linkage deteriorates and the system collapses. This was the causal process that produced collapse in Venezuela.

In this chapter, I explore whether the same process played out in the three other collapse cases. I assess whether the Italian, Colombian, and Bolivian party systems encountered similar challenges to their core linkage strategies and examine whether common constraints impeded adaptation, undermining linkage and producing collapse. I sketch each collapse, detail the system’s linkage profile, and trace the process that led to system failure. At the end of the chapter, I highlight the common patterns of threats to linkage and constraints on adaptation experienced in all four cases.

ITALY: THE END OF IDEOLOGY, FRUSTRATIONS WITH CLIENTELISM, AND BREAKDOWN

From the postwar era through the 1980s, the centrist Christian Democratic party (DC) dominated Italian politics. Although cabinets were unstable, the DC was the core party in every governing coalition from 1947 to 1992 (Daniels 1999; Waters 1994). Within Italy's multiparty system, the DC exercised influence as the locus of power among potential governing parties, which included the Socialists (PSI), the Social Democrats (PSDI), the Liberals (PLI), and the Republicans (PRI) (D'Alimonte and Bartolini 1997; Gilbert 1995). Outside these core governing parties stood the Italian Communist Party (PCI), the permanent opposition that consistently received about a third of the vote but was excluded from governing even though it was allowed access to positions in the state bureaucracy and had some influence in policy making (Colazingari and Rose-Ackerman 1998; LaPalombara 1987).¹ The stagnant configuration of DC- and PSI-led governments with communist opposition characterized the Italian system through the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s.

But by the mid-1990s, support for the DC and PSI had almost evaporated, and the PCI had splintered. Historically, these parties had typically won about 80 percent of the seats in the Chamber of Deputies. After the 1994 election, these major traditional parties were left with less than a third of the seats and the party system fractured, meeting the definition of collapse.² In their place emerged the coalition Polo della Libertà, which brought together media baron Silvio Berlusconi's Forza Italia, the regional autonomy party Lega Nord (LN), the Alleanza Nazionale (AN) of former fascist and conservative forces, and several smaller parties. This coalition controlled over 50 percent of seats, giving Berlusconi the prime ministership. Here I show how the hypothesized challenges and constraints produced linkage failure and led to the Italian collapse.

Linkage in the Italian *Partitocrazia*, 1970s and 1980s

The traditional Italian party system had a mixed linkage profile, which relied heavily on clientelism but also employed programmatic appeals and interest incorporation. Programmatic representation was largely based on ideological

1. Small neofascist parties were also excluded from governing.

2. PSI held 2 percent of seats; PPI (Partito Popolare Italiano; formerly the DC), 5 percent; PDS (formerly the PCI), 17 percent; and Refounded Communists, 6 percent.

differences between the centrist catchall DC and the leftist PCI. The PSI, initially a center-left party, offered little in terms of ideological distinction from the DC, as they both moved toward the center in the 1970s and 1980s (Gilbert 1995). Thus, the primary ideological divide centered around the communist issue (Carter 1998). The exclusion of the PCI from governance created a blockage in the system, prohibiting meaningful ideological alternation in government. But as long as communism remained a credible threat, the communist-anticommunist divide offered some programmatic options to voters (de Micheli 1997; Waters 1994). In terms of policy responsiveness, the Italian parliament generated more legislative output than many other European countries (Kreppel 1997). However, by the 1980s, a perception prevailed that Parliament was unable to produce substantive legislation dealing with important issues (Furlong 1990; Kreppel 1997, 328–29).³ Instead, most laws were insignificant *leggine* (small laws) that tended to be clientelistic (della Sala 1993). Some policy responsiveness occurred, but the ideological difference between the Communists and their detractors was the primary programmatic appeal.

The party system also incorporated the major class and religious cleavages that had traditionally shaped Italian society. Interest integration under the old party system was a mix of corporatism and pluralism. Although incorporation was weak and fragmented, major cleavages were represented, with the parties advocating for salient societal interests (Golden 1986; Shefter 1994). In terms of the class cleavage, the DC was pro-business, while the PCI was worker focused. The peak business association, Confindustria, channeled and represented business interests, and Coldiretti (National Confederation of Farmers) represented farmers, with both organizations closely tied to the DC and able to mobilize votes for the party (Waters 1994). Unions were important instruments for party appeals. The parties had considerable influence in their respective labor confederations—the Christian democratic CISL (Italian Confederation of Free Trade Unions), the left-leaning CGIL (General Confederation of Italian Labor), in which Communists and Socialists competed, and the Socialist-dominated UIL (Union of Italian Labor) (Golden 1986; LaPalombara 1987). Additionally, the DC's ties to the Catholic Church and its interest association Catholic Action captured the religious side of the religious-secular cleavage, while the secular side was represented by the PCI (Barnes 1974; Knutsen 2004). Aside from providing guaranteed channels for transmitting these major groups' interests to the

3. Legislative productivity declined almost monotonically in the postwar era until the early 1990s (Kreppel 1997).

state, the parties also offered group-based clientelism by extending material benefits to their members (LaPalombara 1987; Waters 1994).

The most important component of the Italian party system's linkage profile was clientelism (Gilbert 1995; Leonardi 1980; Rhodes 1997). Even policy, in the form of *leggine* that served microsectional concerns (Di Palma 1977), and interest incorporation, in the form of group-membership networks, enhanced clientelist tactics (della Sala 1997). The DC used clientelism to hold its diverse coalition together (Tarrow 1977; Waters 1994), and other parties likewise resorted frequently to this strategy to build support. The dominant DC and the PSI shared resources with each other and with their smaller coalition partners (Gilbert 1995). By the end of the 1980s, even the Communists participated in this resource sharing, receiving about 25 percent of available clientelist goods in exchange for providing legitimate opposition (Colazingari and Rose-Ackerman 1998; Panebianco 1988a; Pizzorno 1992). The parties exploited central government expenditures—particularly public works projects, which were comparatively large—to attract support (Golden and Picci 2008). Public sector employees were attracted by patronage, business owners by incentives and contracts, the urban poor through petty clientelism, and so on (Allum and Allum 2008; Chubb 1981; Waters 1994). In summary, at its height the Italian system provided diverse linkage options, including ideological choices and incorporation of major societal interests, with clientelism serving as a major mechanism for attracting support.

Italian Party System Breakdown

Given the three-pronged linkage profile of the Italian party system, exploring the process leading to its collapse requires analysis of the failure of each linkage type. The Italian system's collapse is in large part a tale of increasing reliance on clientelist exchanges as ideological distinctions disappeared and social structure changed. This dependence on clientelism became increasingly unsustainable in light of mounting demand and resource constraints, leading to the failure of the last vestige of linkage and thus party system collapse. I analyze the challenges and constraints that resulted in the failure of each linkage type in turn.

Programmatic Decline

Throughout most of the postwar period, the Italian economy was lauded as exemplary. Annual growth rates over 5 percent were not anomalous in

the 1960s and 1970s, and declining poverty pointed to Italian success (LaPalombara 1987). During these good times, the parties' limited substantive policy making kept pace with the country's needs, and appeals to communist and anticommunist ideology distinguished between those in government and opposition.

However, in the 1980s, a significant economic crisis undermined the Italian party system's ability to maintain programmatic appeals. With burgeoning budget deficits, the country developed one of the highest debt-to-GDP ratios among OECD members. Public debt escalated past 100 percent of GDP, and interest payments became the largest area of public expenditure by the 1990s (della Sala 1997). Unemployment increased steadily, reaching 12 percent by the mid-1990s (OECD, various years), and the Italian lira collapsed in September 1992, confirming Italy's status as "the sick man of Europe" (Gilbert 1995, 133).

Amid decaying economic conditions, people demanded a response. But the status quo of old policy tools, slow policy making, and limited substantive legislation could not address the mounting problems (Gilbert 1995; Kreppel 1997). And as the situation deteriorated, party leaders found their policy latitude constrained by the process of monetary union, set in motion by the 1990 Delors Report and specified further under the 1991 Maastricht Treaty on European Union (Bohrer and Tan 2000; ECB 2008). The Maastricht convergence criteria stipulated that countries wishing to enter monetary union had to attain public deficits below 3 percent of GDP, public debt levels at 60 percent of GDP, central bank independence, and inflation rates within 1.5 percentage points of the three most stable EMU countries (della Sala 1997, 20–21). Given the treaty demands, old patterns of dealing with economic pressures were no longer viable in highly indebted Italy, where achieving the convergence criteria required austerity. The old tactic of expanding the public sector to lower unemployment was not compatible with Maastricht goals, and oft-used strategies of manipulating monetary policy and inflation rates were not viable (Gilbert 1995; Rotte 1998; Sandholtz 1993). Instead, Italian governments in the early 1990s felt compelled to raise taxes and cut spending even as people cried for an answer to the deepening recession (della Sala 1997; Kondonassis and Malliaris 1994). Despite mounting frustration, the Maastricht criteria constrained government's programmatic response, and the governing parties could not adjust policy to combat pressing issues.

Programmatic decay reached the system level, as essentially all of Italy's "pro-system" parties governed jointly during this period and together contributed to the deterioration in responsiveness. Rather than just one or two

parties being discredited, the governing coalition included five parties: DC, PSI, PSDI, PRI, and PLI. Thus, all the parties of significance, with the exception of the “anti-system” Communists, were responsible for the policy inactivity. As responsiveness failed, Italians were increasingly dissatisfied, and because the pro-system parties governed together, none were insulated from growing discontent (Colazingari and Rose-Ackerman 1998; Fabbrini 2000; Morlino 1996). The five governing parties “proved themselves no longer capable of providing enough policy responsiveness,” harming the programmatic linkage capacity of the party system as a whole (Pasquino 1997, 46). The complicity of all the pro-system parties in the failure of policy to respond to pressing demands thus undermined programmatic representation throughout most of the Italian party system.

The Communists escaped some of this programmatic discrediting, but the PCI was never a viable party of government, which weakened its credibility as a meaningful alternative to the status quo that could be expected to deliver a response (Gilbert 1995; Hopkin and Mastropaolo 2001; Kertzer 1996).⁴ Nevertheless, deteriorating responsiveness would not have spelled the complete failure of programmatic linkage if the parties could have continued to draw on anticommunist rhetoric. Although the long-standing agreement among the pro-system parties, which excluded the PCI, made ideological differences between governing parties irrelevant (Daniels 1999), the communist-anticommunist divide remained a point of ideological distinction (Carter 1998). But with the fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the communist threat in Europe, fear of communism no longer served as a motivation to vote for the DC or its coalition partners. The governing parties lost their primary ideological appeal of anticommunism (Morlino 1996; Waters 1994), and the Communists lost their moorings (Eubank, Gangopad-ahay, and Weinberg 1997). Italians, particularly the northern middle class, ceased to support the unresponsive and now ideologically indistinguishable parties of the old system (Daniels 1999; Gilbert 1995).

The end of communism also led to the demise of the PCI, the only remaining programmatic alternative in the system. The PCI struggled with its identity in a post-Soviet world (Kertzer 1996), and the party divided. The soft-liners, who won control of the old PCI apparatus, renamed it the Democratic Party of the Left (PDS) to strengthen its moderate left appeal and shore up its democratic credentials. The hard-liners broke away from the

4. Following the historic compromise, the PCI also provided behind-the-scenes support to the government, which may have undermined its programmatic independence.

PDS and established the Refounded Communists (RC). The collapse of communism and this internal dispute left both remnants weakened and unable to regain former electoral successes (Daniels 1999). With the decay of communism, the governing coalition and the Communists lost any remaining distinctiveness, and voters saw no viable alternatives to the status quo.

The pattern of programmatic linkage decay in Italy closely follows the theoretical model of challenge and constraint. Crisis demanded a response, but conflicting international constraints and parties' ideological and policy-making legacies limited policy latitude and undermined programmatic responsiveness. Interparty agreements and decaying ideological distinctiveness eliminated meaningful alternatives and produced programmatic decay across the entire system.

Limited Interest Incorporation

At the same time, significant changes in the kind of salient cleavages threatened interest incorporation, while the parties' organizational structures limited their capacity to accommodate increasingly significant regional divides. The traditional framework for incorporation rested on two cleavages: religious-secular and worker-owner. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, two changes weakened the salience of these cleavages. Secularization undermined the importance of Catholicism, and deindustrialization and high unemployment limited unions' strength and appeal. In their place, regional divisions between north and south became increasingly relevant.

Secularization debilitated the Christian Democrats' incorporating capacity. Despite the fact that most Italians still identified themselves as Catholics, by the 1980s fewer than 30 percent reported attending church weekly, down from close to 70 percent in the 1950s (Leonardi and Wertman 1989, 177). The end of communism's atheist threat accelerated the demise of Italy's religious cleavage (Levite and Tarrow 1983). A Europe-wide analysis of religion and partisanship found that Italy experienced one of the most dramatic decays in the correlation between religious and political identities between the 1970s and 1990s (Knutsen 2004), as many non-practicing Catholics shifted their allegiance away from the DC toward non-confessional parties (Morlino 1996). The religious-secular cleavage lost political relevance, and the party system was increasingly unable to capture support through religious organizations or appeals to religious identity and values.

At the same time, deindustrialization and mounting unemployment weakened the traditional class cleavage and undermined the utility of unions and other work-based organizations for effectively incorporating broad swaths

of society (Daniels 1999; LaPalombara 1987). Both agriculture and industry shrank in the 1980s, while the service sector grew, accounting for 60 percent of the workforce by 1992, when the system began to collapse (World Bank, various years). Given weak union influence in the service sector, overall unionization declined (Santi 1988). From a peak of 49 percent, unionization rates dropped below 35 percent by the end of the 1990s, with most of the losses occurring in the late 1980s and early 1990s, immediately preceding the party system's collapse (Baccaro, Carrieri, and Damiano 2002). Also weakening the organized working class, unemployment nearly doubled over the course of the 1980s, reaching 12 percent (World Bank, various years), and the size of the public sector, a union stronghold, declined (LaPalombara 1987). Moreover, as the economy deteriorated, the parties and Confindustria forced Italy's workers to accept a collective bargaining agreement in which they sacrificed many of the gains that had been made over the past twenty years; most notably, wage indexation was abolished. The abandonment of workers' interests in this agreement suggests a general weakening of organized labor. The proliferation of autonomous unions without party ties further undermined the incorporating role of the three major union confederations in the late 1980s (Baccaro, Carrieri, and Damiano 2002). Deindustrialization and the major confederations' decline weakened party capacity to integrate significant swaths of society through traditional union-based strategies.

As religious and class cleavages faded, regional divisions emerged in their place (Daniels 1999; Morlino 1996). This newly salient cleavage pitted the more developed north against the more clientelistic and mafia-ridden south (Gilbert 1995). The parties' organizational structures made them ill equipped to incorporate the increasingly relevant regional divide. Specifically, the old parties lacked significant regional organizations. Within the DC, for example, power was centralized in the national party, and although there was considerable local autonomy, the most important locus of decentralized power was below the regional level. The DC had regional entities, but unlike the national, provincial, and communal levels, these regional branches were not part of the original structure established in the early postwar period. Instead, they were set up in the 1970s and were never imbued with many formal or informal powers (Leonardi and Wertman 1989). The Communist Party organization similarly placed little emphasis on the regional level of the party; rather, the central party apparatus and the local section were the most significant loci of power (Hellman 1988). Because of the relative unimportance of their regional organizations, the parties were poorly prepared

to accommodate increasingly influential regional interests and calls for autonomy. Furthermore, regional demands often took on the antagonistic tone of a zero-sum game in which satisfying the demands of one region meant sacrificing those of another. For parties attempting to win broad influence at the national level, regionally oriented appeals provided little opportunity for netting a gain across the entire country, alienating more people than they attracted.

Social transformation away from religious and class cleavages and toward regional divisions posed a serious challenge to the party system's maintenance of group incorporation. The parties' organizational structures made it particularly difficult to accommodate emerging regional concerns, and their interest-integrating capacities narrowed to such a point that most Italians no longer saw their group identities or interests incorporated in the system.

Decay of Clientelism

With the deterioration of programmatic appeals and incorporation, the Italian parties became heavily reliant on clientelism to furnish linkage (Gilbert 1995; Hopkin and Mastropaolo 2001), and the need for resources grew as more and more people were only attracted to the parties for the material benefits they offered (Waters 1994). But clientelism also came under stress in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The costs of providing clientelist linkage escalated, even as resources available to the parties for such exchanges diminished markedly. Increased costs stemmed from social changes and electoral decentralization, while state reforms and economic crisis shrank resources, producing clientelist shortages and mounting frustrations.

Social changes increased clientelist demand. Along with development and deindustrialization came an increase in the size and wealth of the Italian middle class (LaPalombara 1987), and petty clientelism became increasingly ineffective for attracting support from this growing group. Rather, the payoffs needed to win middle-class support, such as public works contracts or subsidies, were more expensive than traditional clientelist exchanges (Chubb 1981; Piattoni 2001a). Increasing unemployment also heightened pressure for clientelism as the unemployed sought patronage jobs in the public sector (Rotte 1998). But the public sector shrank in the early 1990s, further frustrating those demanding patronage employment.⁵

5. Public sector employment dropped from 22.5 percent of the workforce in 1990 to 16.3 percent in 1995 (ILO 2009).

Italy also implemented electoral decentralization in the early 1990s, which generated demand for clientelism while simultaneously reducing the gains that these exchanges brought to the central party. For the first time, in June 1993, Italians directly elected their own mayors (Gilbert 1995). The local elections occurred separately from national elections, which were held in 1992 and 1994. This new electoral process compelled the parties to provide additional material benefits to attract votes in repeated elections, requiring them to ante up three times in only three years to win support at the local and national levels.⁶ With separate electoral processes, resources expended in local races did not necessarily accrue benefits to the central party apparatuses. The decentralized elections, as well as the introduction of the mixed system for legislative elections, heightened the power of local politicians in relation to the party organization. As local leaders grew in stature, they had reduced incentives to use the resources they received to serve the party as well as their personal machines. The parties increasingly found themselves expending resources to win elections, yet receiving few benefits for their organizations in return (Hopkin and Mastropaolo 2001).

Other reforms undermined the availability of resources that the parties needed to meet the increasing pressures for material exchanges. The reform that struck most directly at the heart of the parties' resource stream was the 1993 referendum that eliminated public financing for political parties. With the passage of the new campaign finance law, individual candidates could apply for campaign expenditure reimbursement, but the party *organizations* could receive no public funds. This strengthened the power of individual politicians and weakened the parties. For the highly indebted traditional parties, the loss of this major revenue source was like a death knell for their clientelist networks (Rhodes 1997).

Additionally, state-rationalizing reforms stemming from efforts to meet the Maastricht criteria in the context of economic crisis limited the access points for rent seeking and made public resources less available for political ends (della Sala 1997). Privatizations designed to alleviate budget deficits and trim an overextended state apparatus reduced patronage jobs in the public sector and eliminated parties' ability to distribute state-owned industry funds as clientelist benefits (Chubb 1981; della Sala 1997; ILO 2009; Leonardi 1980). Efforts to reduce fiscal deficits and rein in inflation also led to cuts in public spending and welfare state retrenchment, shrinking funds for clientelism (Bohrer and Tan 2000; Carter 1998). Moreover, the economic

6. These three elections were in addition to the June 1991 and April 1993 referendums in which the parties also campaigned for their favored positions.

crisis itself limited clientelist resources (Gilbert 1995; Hopkin and Mastropaolo 2001).

In addition to the economic downturn and state reforms, which constricted both public and private resources, the parties faced an organizational context that exacerbated the demands for clientelism and stretched already scarce resources. By the early 1980s, as the hegemony of the DC declined, large multiparty coalitions became necessary for the pro-system parties to retain control of government. In fact, for much of the 1980s, the Socialist Bettino Craxi—rather than a Christian Democrat—led this coalition as prime minister. During this period, the Socialists shifted to the center and sought more clientelist resources for their supporters, mimicking the catchall DC (Hopkin and Mastropaolo 2001). The Socialists challenged the DC's control of the state apparatus, and "the great share out" of 1986 saw the PSI win control of hundreds of politically important jobs in the state bureaucracy (Gilbert 1995, 12). Smaller parties in the coalition and even the PCI received funds for their machines, stretching shrinking resources further (Colazingari and Rose-Ackerman 1998; Leonardi 1980).

These patterns of increased demand, stemming from social change and decentralization, as well as a constricting resource base caused by economic crisis and lost access, brought the parties to the point of desperation. All the traditional parties were running annual deficits and were deep in debt. By the time the system collapsed in 1994, the Christian Democrats, Socialists, and PDS (formerly the Communists) together owed almost 150 billion lira and were essentially bankrupt (Rhodes 1997).

To supplement their incomes and attempt to satisfy growing demand, the parties increasingly turned to illegal sources of funds in the form of bribes, kickbacks, and Mafia payments. But as their grasp on power weakened, the parties were no longer able to stave off investigations and even trials concerning these illicit activities, as they had in the past (Carter 1998; Waters 1994). When the Tangentopoli (Bribesville) scandal broke in 1992 and eventually produced Craxi's resignation, as well as an investigation into longtime DC leader Giulio Andreotti's Mafia association, it exposed crumbling clientelist networks. As scrutiny of the parties' finances intensified under the judiciary's Operation Mani Pulite (Clean Hands), the parties were no longer able to feed their clientelist machines with illegal sources of revenue, further weakening their capacity to reach citizens through clientelism (Gilbert 1995; Rhodes 1997).

These investigations did not suddenly reveal corruption and clientelism—Italians had known about these tactics for many years (Rhodes 1997; Waters

1994). But corruption had been tolerated because it brought many advantages. As these advantages dissipated, people grew frustrated (Carter 1998; Hopkin and Mastropaolo 2001). With the revelations of Tangentopoli, Italy's clientelist networks were no longer tolerable because the scandal revealed what many Italians had come to suspect: clientelism was not a mechanism of inclusion but rather "excluded the majority of citizens, the smaller sized firms and a large number of interest groups" (Waters 1994, 174). As clientelism reached a shrinking segment of the electorate, this shift in perspective spurred mounting condemnation of the entire party system.

Comparative Portrait of Collapse

Despite differences in party system structure and political institutions, the Italian party system collapse occurred in much the same way as the process in Venezuela. The party systems faced crisis, social transformation, and political reforms in a context of specific constraints that impeded necessary adaptation. As a result, all three types of linkage failed, and both systems collapsed. In Italy, economic crisis challenged the party system to address policy demands, but the contradictions between entrenched policy patterns and the constraints of the Maastricht criteria made ramping up responsiveness almost impossible. Coalition governments as well as the collapse of communism removed meaningful ideological options from the system, undermining the programmatic appeals of all the parties. Social changes attendant with secularization and deindustrialization weakened the importance of old religious and class cleavages and enabled the emergence of regionalism as a politically salient divide. This cleavage challenged the parties' organizational structures and contradicted their desire to exercise power at the national level, limiting their capacity to address regional concerns. In this context, the parties' clientelist networks faced increased demand resulting from social change and political decentralization, while economic crisis and reforms that restricted partisan access to the state shrank the funds available for distribution. Clientelism failed to benefit the majority of Italian citizens, and people abandoned the party system amid a blaze of accusations, which left only wisps of smoke where the Italian parties had once been.

COLOMBIA: CRUMBLING CLIENTELISM AND PARTY SYSTEM DISINTEGRATION

Throughout the twentieth century, two major parties, the Liberals and the Conservatives, dominated Colombian politics. After periods of violent conflict

between them and unsuccessful efforts to entrench single-party dominance by both, the parties agreed that joint rule was perhaps the only viable path to peaceful governance. The 1958 National Front (NF) agreement established a system of mutual guarantees and installed a limited democracy in which control of the presidency alternated. Cabinet offices, legislative seats, judicial posts, governorships, and mayoralties were divided equally between the parties, and passing legislation required a two-thirds majority. Reforms to the Constitution in 1968 eliminated some of the NF constraints within the legislative branch, but alternation in the executive remained in place until 1974, when the first competitive presidential elections were held (Hartlyn 1988). Even after the end of the NF restrictions on competition, the two parties remained the dominant legal political actors in Colombia for more than twenty years, and the remnants of coalition rule were not lifted until the 1991 Constitution (Hartlyn and Dugas 1999).

However, by the 1990s, conflict had escalated between the state, paramilitary organizations, guerrillas, and drug cartels. And as their clientelist networks fell apart, the parties began to decay. The Liberals and Conservatives, which had historically dominated the legislature, often winning 80 to 90 percent of the seats, were replaced by atomistic forces in 2002, marking the collapse of the Colombian system. With collapse, the two traditional parties controlled less than 50 percent of the seats in both houses of the legislature, and the number of parties in the system exploded from about 2.5 to more than six (Boudon 2000; Gutiérrez Sanín 2007). In the analysis that follows, I outline the Colombian system's traditional linkage profile and then analyze how linkage came under pressure and why the parties were unable to sustain ties between society and the state, producing collapse.

Linkage in Colombia's Two-Party System, 1974–1998

Colombia's return to open elections in 1974 marked the end of many National Front restrictions and the beginning of true interparty competition. After the NF, programmatic appeals and interest incorporation did not attract many voters to the traditional parties. Old reservoirs of partisan affect had begun to decay with the onset of the NF in the 1950s, and ideological differences dissipated over years of shared governance. Colombian civil society had always been weak and offered little in the way of linkage (Archer 1995; Kline 2004). Instead, clientelist exchanges dominated the system's linkage profile (Bejarano and Pizarro 2005; Schmidt 1980).

Before the NF, partisan differences between the Liberals and Conservatives were intense and often escalated into violence, but the power-sharing

agreement muted partisan strife. To achieve peaceful coexistence, the parties emphasized their commonalities, producing ideological convergence (Gutiérrez Sanín 2007). The agreements limited interparty differences and instead encouraged conflict within the parties as factions competed for status and access to clientelist resources (Archer 1995; Boudon 2000). By the end of the NF period, there were essentially no programmatic distinctions between the two parties, and factions across parties were sometimes closer ideologically than were factions in the same party (Archer 1995; Hartlyn 1988; Kline 1988). The parties also offered little in the way of policy responsiveness. They were unable to address important national issues (Martz 1997) and failed to meet one key programmatic promise: peace. Rather, policy making was particularistic (Escobar 2002), with 78 percent of legislation consisting of pork-barrel laws that treated local or regional issues while only 22 percent addressed national concerns (Pizarro Leongómez 2006, 92).

Interest incorporation also held an insignificant place in the Colombian linkage profile. The system did not reflect major cleavages in society, and both parties were heterogeneous in terms of socioeconomic and regional support (Archer 1995; Hartlyn 1988). Divisions along the religious cleavage, with Conservatives advocating for the Church, had disappeared by the end of the NF. During the era of partisan violence, autonomous civic associations were destroyed, and the National Front subsequently squelched associational life outside the parties (Hartlyn 1988). Although the parties maintained minor connections to unions, peasant groups, and producer associations, and unaffiliated groups emerged over time, neither the Conservatives nor the Liberals aggregated collective interests in a meaningful way (Bejarano and Pizarro 2005; Hartlyn 1988; Kline 2004). Instead, the parties divided class-based organizations along party lines to limit mobilization (Hartlyn 1988). Colombia had no peak producer association speaking for business, and there was no pattern of consultation with the private sector (Hartlyn 1988; Kline 2004).⁷ Workers' representation was even more disparate, enervated by internal divisions, with separate union federations for each party as well as several smaller organizations. In the 1980s, the two party-affiliated unions, CTC (Liberals) and UTC (Conservatives), represented only 34 percent of union memberships, and overall unionization rates were low (Kline 2004). The parties endeavored to integrate peasants through the Juntas de Acción Comunal (JAC) and later through the peasant

7. The two associations representing the largest business interests in Colombia were ANDI (Asociación Nacional de Industriales) and FEDECAFE (Federación Nacional de Cafeteros de Colombia). But these groups did not have formal ties to the parties (Kline 2004).

association ANUC (Asociación Nacional de Usuarios Campesinos), but these groups operated either as clients of the parties or independently from them, and the peasant groups declined with urbanization. Where significant interest associations existed, their influence often occurred outside the party system (Kline 2004; Rettberg 2005).

Programmatic appeals and interest incorporation did not attract many Colombians to the Liberal and Conservative parties. Rather, the parties maintained linkage almost exclusively through conditional clientelist exchanges (Boudon 2000; Schmidt 1980). “It was the underlying patron-client relationship . . . that provided the basis for the parties” (Martz 1997, 68). Most political disputes and legislation centered on resources, not policy (Hartlyn 1988; Pizarro Leongómez 2006), and internal party factions competed among themselves for benefits to distribute. Individual candidates established personal fiefdoms using clientelist resources, diluting the meaning of the party labels (Boudon 2000; Crisp and Ingall 2002). New parties that endeavored to enter the party system in the 1980s and 1990s were also co-opted into clientelist linkage patterns, sacrificing programmatic clarity for clientelist resources (Boudon 2001; Dix 1987; Escobar 2002). Clientelist exchanges were the centerpiece of Colombian party politics.

Colombian Party System Disintegration

Given the preeminence of clientelism in the Colombian system, exploring linkage failure and its role in precipitating the system’s collapse requires a focus on clientelist decay. In the post-NF period, programmatic appeals and interest incorporation were not significant components of the system’s strategy. Therefore, exploring their deterioration is not central to understanding the system’s failure, and my discussion of Colombia’s collapse centers instead on the deterioration of clientelism. However, before examining clientelism, I briefly demonstrate that even in Colombia, where programmatic appeals and interest incorporation were not important, the same general processes of economic crisis, social transformation, and contextual constraints reduced the linkage capacity of these strategies even further.

The NF and interparty collaboration after the end of the formal power-sharing agreement obliterated ideological distinctions between Liberals and Conservatives, and policy responsiveness was poor for some time. However, in the 1990s, as violence spiraled out of control and low and negative growth rates exacerbated the sense of crisis, demand for solutions escalated (Archer 1995; Dugas 2003). Lack of responsiveness became a matter of life

and death, but rather than elected leaders taking control, guerrilla groups seemed to be gaining the upper hand, controlling 40 percent of Colombian territory by the late 1990s (Boudon 2000). Additionally, despite mounting economic pressures, policy activity in this arena remained stagnant, and limited efforts to respond to the crisis failed (Chernick 1998; Martz 1997; Moreno 2005). International policy constraints also restricted the parties' policy latitude, as pressures from the United States on counternarcotics and counterterrorism often contradicted the concerns of domestic constituencies (Bejarano and Pizarro 2005; Gutiérrez Sanín 2007). Thus, escalating violence and economic decline heightened pressure for programmatic answers, while international demands limited responsiveness. Furthermore, the legacy of the NF, collaboration in government, and lack of distinction between the two parties made it difficult for Colombians to assign blame for this policy immobility, so frustrations with unresponsiveness undermined programmatic linkage across the entire system.

Limited interest incorporation in Colombia also narrowed further during the 1990s. The economic downturn and resulting neoliberal policies enervated already weak unions and damaged the coffee sector (Gutiérrez Sanín 2007; Kline 2004). Violence and the drug economy transformed society and accelerated urbanization, and in the 1990s, more than 1.2 million out of 40 million Colombians were forcibly displaced from their homes by the violence (Isacson 2002, 1). This displacement broke up the rural associations that had linked peasants to the parties, damaging one of their few group-based ties (Gutiérrez Sanín 2007, 407–8). The social transformation completely decimated the little interest incorporation that had existed in the Colombian system.

Decay of Clientelism

The Colombian party system was, therefore, heavily dependent on conditional exchanges to build support. However, in the face of increased demand and resource constraints, the parties were unable to sustain even this form of linkage. Social changes and political reforms heightened demands for clientelism, while the escalating security crisis, economic downturn, and state-rationalizing reform efforts limited the resources available to meet these rising costs.

Social changes, in the form of geographical displacement and destruction of collective identities, weakened collective clientelist networks and increased the number of clients seeking benefits, outpacing the parties' capacity to meet demand (Boudon 2000). From the end of the NF through

the early 1990s, clientelism featured politicians using state resources to feed networks based on community ties and sectoral interests (Dávila and Delgado 2002; Schmidt 1980). However, the negative effects of the drug trade and violence produced extreme dislocation. An estimated 2 million people were internally displaced between 1985 and 2000, giving Colombia the world's largest internally displaced population (Arboleda and Correa 2003, 831; CODHES, various dates). These processes uprooted communities and destroyed local networks (Arboleda and Correa 2003). Meanwhile, economic crisis undermined sectoral collectivities (Dugas 2003). With the erosion of communal and sectoral ties, parties could not achieve efficient distribution through existing networks (Gutiérrez Sanín 2007). The drug economy spurred "greater demands for material rewards . . . because there [were] increasing numbers of poor and marginal Colombians living without the 'protection' of a traditional *patron*" (Kline 1988, 37). The number of clients demanding benefits increased exponentially during the 1990s, and the expense of extending material appeals to individual Colombians far surpassed the costs of satisfying old networks (Dávila and Delgado 2002; Gutiérrez Sanín 2007). Linkage based on generalized vote buying became prohibitively expensive (Escobar 2002; Gutiérrez Sanín 2007).

Political reforms, namely the establishment of separate subnational elections for mayors and governors and the elimination of party-printed ballots, also strained clientelist linkage. These changes aggravated competition for funds and created uncertainty about their effectiveness, increasing cost and waste. Historically, the president appointed mayors and governors, promoting interdependence between different levels of government and generating loyalty between local and departmental officials and national party leaders. But a 1986 constitutional amendment established direct mayoral elections, held for the first time in 1988, and the 1991 Constitution instituted gubernatorial elections, removing centralized control over these offices (Chernick 1998; Escobar-Lemmon 2006; Martz 1997).

Creating separate elections for these positions escalated demand for clientelism and broke the pyramidal structure of the clientelist system (Archer 1995; Dávila and Delgado 2002). Under the old appointment process, a system of agreements between politicians at different levels of government allowed a party or faction to engage in a single clientelist exchange and gain access to office at all levels (Gutiérrez Sanín 2007). But with separate, direct elections, the effects of one clientelist exchange could not be multiplied to produce both national and subnational power. Voters now demanded clientelist benefits for every ballot they cast for mayor, governor, legislature,

president, and so on, escalating demand for clientelist inputs (Dávila and Delgado 2002). Also, as clientelist networks no longer spanned the local, departmental, and national levels, it became every candidate for him- or herself (Dávila and Delgado 2002). Neither party nor factional ties could hold coalitions together, as politicians became electoral entrepreneurs seeking resources to fuel their personal networks and win their own elections (Boudon 2000). As more leaders sought to develop their own client base, it became increasingly difficult to satisfy demand (Gutiérrez Sanín 2007, 275).

The elimination of party-printed ballots in the 1991 Constitution also exacerbated demand for clientelism by making it more difficult for politicians and parties to effectively target and monitor clientelism. Under the 1886 Constitution, the Colombian state did not provide ballots. Instead, parties and factions distributed their own—a valuable tactic in monitoring clientelist exchanges (Medina and Stokes 2007). Partisan ballots gave politicians considerable control over voting, helping to guarantee that when clients went to the polls, they cast their ballots for the party or faction that had sponsored their votes (Escobar 2002). The 1991 Constitution eliminated these *papeletas* (little paper ballots) and replaced them with a government-issued ballot, or *tarjetón electoral* (large electoral card), that contained all candidate names (Martz 1997). Without party-controlled ballots, patrons were less certain about the effectiveness of clientelist benefits, causing them to hedge their bets and spread out benefits to more clients to ensure victory (Dávila and Delgado 2002). As a result, politicians wasted more funds on voters who “robbed [them] by accepting the money and then voting for another candidate” (Escobar 2002, 37). The *tarjetón* increased the costs of vote buying and required more benefits to achieve the same outcome as before, intensifying the need for clientelist resources.

Even as social transformations and political reforms heightened demand, crisis conditions limited the resources available for clientelism, and other reforms reduced party access to state funds. In particular, violence and economic recession reduced clientelist resources available to the parties. The costs of fighting an internal war soared in the 1990s, as the boom in the drug trade expanded the magnitude of the conflict (Dugas 2003). Coca cultivation exploded, more than quintupling over the course of the 1990s (U.S. Department of State, various dates; U.S. General Accounting Office 2003). The scope of the conflict was so great that half a million people died violently between 1980 and 2000, and the homicide rate in the 1990s was higher than that of all other Latin American countries except El Salvador (Institute

of Legal Medicine and Forensic Sciences, cited in Bejarano and Pizarro 2005, 248). The homicide rate more than doubled between 1980 and the mid-1990s, reaching almost 80 per 100,000 people (Policía Nacional de Colombia, various dates). The resources expended in counterinsurgency and counternarcotics efforts reduced the funds available for clientelism (Bejarano and Pizarro 2005; Garfield and Arboleda 2003).

Furthermore, “in the second half of the 1990s, as the armed conflict and violence were dramatically increasing, economic growth slowed down, and toward the end of the decade there was a serious recession” (Garfield and Arboleda 2003, 45). By the late 1990s, Colombia faced its most dire economic situation since the 1930s. Although when compared with the economic troubles of its neighbors the crisis might be viewed as moderate, in the Colombian context it stood out as exceptionally severe. Negative growth rates, expanding fiscal deficits, and a growing debt burden challenged the parties’ ability to obtain the resources they needed for clientelism. Moreover, the standard neoliberal response to economic crisis, which was implemented in Colombia by Conservative party president Andrés Pastrana (1998–2002), reduced the flow of resources (Pizarro Leongómez 2006). Austere economic policies exacerbated resource constraints and undermined clientelist linkage (Boudon 2000).

In addition to the resource constraints generated by these crises, political reforms cut off the central party apparatuses’ access to resources, weakening the parties and strengthening individual candidates. The introduction of direct elections for mayors and governors eliminated patronage opportunities. As long as these offices were filled by presidential appointees, they had provided opportunities for party leaders to reward loyal followers with influential patronage jobs. But “the popular election of mayors weakened the party faction leader; now he no longer had 60 mayors that he could appoint at his whim, rather he had to fight for votes in 125 municipalities in order to obtain victories for loyal mayors” (regional party leader, quoted in Gutiérrez Sanín 2007, 259).

Replacing appointees with directly elected leaders also eliminated party control over local and departmental funds, which became especially problematic as fiscal decentralization advanced. The 1991 Constitution expanded the proportion of the national budget allocated to departments and municipalities (Escobar-Lemmon 2003), committing more than 40 percent to sub-national government transfers (Martz 1997, 296). Although the national government retained considerable authority over the specific policy areas and programs where this money was spent, the devolution of resources in

a context in which parties could not install loyal partisans as subnational executives severely constrained the capacity of the central party apparatuses to politically manipulate these funds. Instead, autonomous individual candidates used decentralized resources for their personal networks. This state restructuring contradicted the hierarchical logic of clientelist exchanges and limited the efficacy of distributed resources (Gutiérrez Sanín 2007). Over the 1990s, the parties' role in providing clientelism decayed, and electoral "microenterprises" replaced them (Gutiérrez Sanín 2007, 258; Pizarro Leongómez 2006).

The 1991 Constitution also significantly reduced the funds that could be easily channeled toward clientelism by eliminating individual legislators' control over *auxilios parlamentarios*, or pork-barrel funds. Before 1991, the Colombian budget process guaranteed national and departmental legislators pots of money purportedly to use in support of development projects in their districts. In reality, "politicians created hundreds of fictitious foundations and corporations countrywide to which they diverted most of the pork-barrel funds"; these were used to provide direct cash exchanges to support the politicians' clientelist networks (Escobar 2002, 34). The 1991 Constitution eliminated the *auxilios*, undercutting easy access to state funds for clientelism (Dávila and Delgado 2002; Gutiérrez Sanín 2007). In response, politicians tried to disguise *auxilios* within legislation, trading their support of the executive's legislation for clientelist resources, a method that was much more constraining and proved inadequate (Archer and Shugart 1997; Escobar 2002).

In a last effort to salvage linkage, some party factions sought out private, illegal funds furnished mostly by drug money (Escobar 2002). Despite ongoing suspicions about the use of drug money to finance campaigns, it was not until the parties were already considerably weakened that a series of scandals erupted in the mid-1990s, exposing the role of such funds in sustaining the parties (Gutiérrez Sanín 2007). In the second round of his successful 1994 presidential campaign, Ernesto Samper accepted unprecedented funding from illegal sources, namely the Cali Cartel, channeling these funds toward vote buying (Gutiérrez Sanín 2007, 380–83). Like the Italian Mani Pulite, Colombia's Proceso 8000 brought numerous politicians to trial for receiving drug money, although Samper himself retained amnesty and avoided prosecution. These revelations made it much more difficult for politicians to fund clientelism with illegal donations (Dávila and Delgado 2002). The resource constraints imposed on the parties, therefore, caused them to rely increasingly on illegal sources even as they were no

longer powerful enough to limit damaging publicity and prosecution. As scandals mounted and drug barons turned their support to local politicians rather than funding the central parties and presidential campaigns, this last source of funding dried up (Gutiérrez Sanín 2007). The taint of corruption contaminated the entire party system as fewer voters received benefits from clientelism and instead saw a corrupt system designed to prosper only a handful of elites.

Comparative Portrait of Collapse

In Colombia, the exhaustion of clientelism occurred in a context in which both programmatic representation and interest incorporation were weak. Like Venezuela and Italy, where the failure of other linkage forms accompanied clientelist decay, the Colombian parties' inability to sustain adequate clientelist linkage led to system collapse. In Colombia, as in the other two cases, the pattern of linkage failure follows the theoretical model. Significant social changes and electoral decentralization increased demand for material exchanges, while crisis conditions and resource-constraining reforms limited funds for clientelism. In Colombia, the growth of the drug economy, escalating violence, and urbanization created significant dislocation, removing people from traditional networks and causing them to seek exchanges directly from the parties. Establishment of separate subnational elections increased competition among politicians to find resources for their machines, and parties lost control of the distribution process. At the same time, fiscal decentralization and other reforms siphoned resources away from the central party apparatuses. As costs for fighting the internal war escalated and the economy deteriorated, there were simply not enough resources to satiate exploding demand for material benefits. As clientelism failed, the Colombian system lost its only vestige of linkage and collapsed.

BOLIVIA: POLICY CONVERGENCE, ETHNIC MOBILIZATION, STRAINED CLIENTELISM, AND COLLAPSE

When Bolivia returned to democracy in 1982, a moderate multiparty system emerged and was dominated by three sets of parties (Conaghan and Malloy 1994; Malloy and Gamarra 1988; Mayorga 2005). These were the party of the Revolution, MNR (Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario); the personalist party of military man Hugo Banzer, ADN (Acción Democrática Nacionalista); and left parties like MIR (Movimiento de la Izquierda Revolucionaria)

and PCB (Partido Comunista de Bolivia). A left coalition, UDP (Unión Democrática y Popular), won the presidency immediately following the democratic transition (Gamarra and Malloy 1995).

But soon after the transition, the region-wide debt crisis hit. Inflation soared, reaching annualized rates of over 20,000 percent in some months of 1985; fiscal deficits surpassed 75 percent of GDP; and debt service routinely exceeded 30 percent of exports (ECLAC 1987; Malloy 1991, 38). The disparate UDP, led by President Hernán Siles (1982–85, MNRI), made repeated failed attempts to deal with the crisis, initiating and halting at least six different stabilization packages. These failed attempts only intensified the crisis and delegitimized the governing left coalition (Conaghan and Malloy 1994, 108). In 1985, early elections turned the presidency over to founding MNR leader and former President Victor Paz Estenssoro (1985–89). Paz Estenssoro, with the support of Banzer's ADN, swiftly enacted an austere stabilization program to deal with inflation and fiscal deficits (Conaghan and Malloy 1994; Malloy 1991). The severity of the crisis under the UDP and the initial success of Paz Estenssoro's neoliberal agenda resulted in the decline of the left and the emergence of a pro-market consensus among elites. By the mid-1980s, all the major parties ascribed to the same basic neoliberal policies (Birner and Van Cott 2007; Van Cott 2003; Whitehead 2001).

But as neoliberalism's long-term ramifications, including unemployment, poverty, and negative growth, manifested in the 1990s, the parties did not abandon economic orthodoxy (Domingo 2001; Mayorga 2005). As a result of these policies, major social disruptions plagued Bolivian society. Labor and peasant movements weakened and were supplanted by groups excluded from traditional patterns of incorporation, such as informal sector workers, *cocaleros* (coca growers), and indigenous identity organizations (Barr 2005; Mayorga 2005; Van Cott 2003; Yashar 1999). Clientelist demand escalated, but resources could not keep pace (Gill 2000; Gray-Molina 2001; Mayorga 2005, 2006; Van Cott 2005). By 2002, the traditional parties barely held a majority of seats in the legislature, and 2005 marked the system's collapse, as the traditional parties lost control of the legislature and the moderate multiparty system transformed into one with only two major parties. After the 2005 elections, MAS (Movimiento al Socialismo), the party of President Evo Morales, held 55 percent of the seats in the Chamber of Deputies, and PODEMOS (Poder Democrático y Social), a right-wing coalition spawned partly from the old parties, controlled 33 percent.

Linkage in Bolivia's Neoliberal-Era Party System, 1985–2005

The Bolivian party system employed a multifaceted linkage strategy that amassed considerable support through clientelist exchanges but also integrated salient social cleavages and provided effective, albeit ideologically constrained, policy responsiveness on some significant national issues (Gamarra and Malloy 1995). The system initially offered ideological options, with parties ranging from the leftist UDP coalition to the centrist MNR to ADN on the right (Conaghan and Malloy 1994; Domingo 2001). However, after Siles's dismal administration, the left deteriorated and lost its ideological footing (Domingo 2001; Gamarra and Malloy 1995; Van Cott 2003). When Paz Estenssoro's neoliberal policies relieved hyperinflation (Whitehead 2001), the parties, including the old left, converged around a neoliberal consensus (Mayorga 2005, 2006). So no matter which party they voted for, Bolivians received the same basic policy prescriptions (Conaghan and Malloy 1994; Salazar Elena 2004). Programmatic representation was not furnished primarily via meaningful ideological options.

However, the parties did offer substantive policy answers to some of the country's most significant problems, resolving the untenable situation of extreme hyperinflation and heavy debt burdens (Conaghan and Malloy 1994). Addressing the economic crisis lent programmatic legitimacy to the party system (Mayorga 2006). Over time, the parties neglected other escalating issues, particularly social problems created by neoliberalism, but in the late 1980s and early 1990s, they responded successfully to at least some serious policy challenges (Barr 2005; Whitehead 2001).

The party system also integrated interests representing the class cleavage, which was politically salient at the outset of the neoliberal era. In Bolivia's corporatist system of interest integration, the peak business organization, CEPB (Confederación de Empresarios Privados de Bolivia), was particularly influential (Mayorga 2005). Worker concerns were also integrated via the central union, COB (Confederación Obrera Boliviana) (Barr 2005; Conaghan and Malloy 1994; Mayorga 2005). Labor and peasant interests found a voice through their affiliation with and organizational ties to parties of the left and MNR. The rural population held a strong allegiance to the party as a result of its agrarian reform policies (Conaghan and Malloy 1994; Domingo 2001), and there was a formal power-sharing agreement between MNR and the COB, which gave the union unique access (Barr 2005). Although the left deteriorated following the return to democracy and MNR's popular ties weakened when Paz Estenssoro repressed labor opposition to his neoliberal

policies, worker interests nevertheless continued to find some opportunity for linkage, largely through group-based material benefits. And through the 1990s, the system still dimly reflected the worker-owner cleavage that had polarized society since the 1952 Revolution (Gamarra and Malloy 1995). In this system of incorporation, indigenous concerns were largely absorbed under the general heading of peasant interests, which were represented through MNR and labor unions (Van Cott 2005). During the 1980s, the conflation of ethnic concerns with integrated class interests successfully downplayed indigenous identities and facilitated the system's capacity to absorb most of society through a single salient class cleavage (Salazar Elena 2004; Whitehead 2001).

The parties also used clientelism to maintain linkage (Gamarra and Malloy 1995; Malloy 1991), and in the neoliberal era, they became increasingly reliant on clientelism to hold the system together (Domingo 2001). Clientelism helped the parties maintain ties with the popular sector and the portions of the indigenous population not captured by the class cleavage (Barr 2005; Van Cott 2000). Over time, clientelism also became the centerpiece of governing coalitions (Salazar Elena 2004). Even new parties, like UCS (Unidad Cívica Solidaridad) and CONDEPA (Conciencia de la Patria), sought access to state resources for clientelism and were quickly co-opted through coalition politics (Barr 2005; Gamarra and Malloy 1995). Clientelism was an important means of linking society to the state, and together with policy responsiveness and incorporation, it rounded out the party system's linkage portfolio. Because the Bolivian party system employed programmatic appeals, incorporation, and clientelism, analyzing its collapse requires exploring the deterioration of each.

Bolivian Party System Collapse

Programmatic Decline

Following the disastrous UDP administration (1982–85), Paz Estenssoro's stabilization package, Nueva Política Económica (NPE), brought hyperinflation under control, reduced debt, and increased exports (Mayorga 2006). Subsequent governing coalitions led by different parties maintained similar policies. The economic crisis and uniform neoliberal response undermined ideological differentiation, as the parties governed together in an array of market-oriented coalitions. But some policy responsiveness remained, as the parties addressed the core elements of the crisis (Mayorga 2006). However, as inflation receded and other issues came to the fore, the parties made few

steps to resolve these new problems, and policy responsiveness, like ideological differentiation, evaporated.

By the late 1990s, a different kind of crisis, stemming from the long-term shortcomings of neoliberalism, threatened Bolivia (Salazar Elena 2004). Hyperinflation was no longer a problem, but “deep economic stagnation and deterioration of living conditions” demanded a response (Mayorga 2006, 157). Throughout the 1990s, economic growth was unimpressive, and by 1999 real growth deteriorated to less than half a percent and then stagnated around 2 percent in the early 2000s (Mayorga 2006; World Bank, various dates). GDP per capita declined between 1980 and 2000, entrenching Bolivian incomes as the lowest in South America (Barr 2005; Whitehead 2001). As a result, many Bolivians resorted to subsistence tactics, and over 65 percent of workers fell into the informal sector (Barr 2005; Mayorga 2006). Despite the macroeconomic achievements of neoliberalism, “vast numbers of ordinary citizens . . . believe[d] that the reform process [had] closed off, rather than opened up, their opportunities for self-improvement” (Whitehead 2001, 14). This new crisis was a catalyst for discontent, and the party system’s failure to address persistent poverty, inequality, and lack of growth eroded its programmatic credibility (Barr 2005; Domingo 2001).

International constraints limited the parties’ capacity to provide a policy response. The IMF and World Bank exerted considerable pressure on Bolivia to stay the neoliberal course (Salazar Elena 2004). However, their orthodox policy prescriptions provided no response to rampant social problems like unemployment and informality, and by the late 1990s, these inadequacies were undeniable, as over 60 percent of Bolivians lived in poverty (Van Cott 2003, 769). As conditions deteriorated, President Banzer (1997–2001), once a pro-market advocate, attempted to reverse the reforms. But international opposition prevented him from following through, highlighting the parties’ inability to move beyond neoliberalism and respond to the crisis (Mayorga 2005).

International influences also restricted Bolivian drug policy to coca eradication, which exacerbated the escalating crisis. Throughout the neoliberal era, coca provided an informal economic safety net, boosting rural incomes and generating employment (Alvarez 1995; Conaghan and Malloy 1994, 198). Drug-related exports provided influxes of foreign exchange (Malloy and Gamarra 1988), with the value of cocaine exports estimated to be twice that of legal products (Conaghan and Malloy 1994). Many workers lost jobs in the public and formal sectors, especially miners terminated when the state mining company COMIBOL (Corporación Minera de Bolivia) closed,

and they turned to the informal sector to survive (Van Cott 2005). A large segment of this sector resorted to growing coca (Alvarez 1995; Conaghan and Malloy 1994). Conservatively, 10 percent of the workforce supported itself through the drug industry in the 1990s (Alvarez 1995; Williams 1999). Coca eradication was, therefore, unpopular. But U.S. pressure to heighten eradication efforts was strong and dominated bilateral relations (Alvarez 1995; Salazar Elena 2004). Given Bolivia's dependence on aid, U.S. influence was profound, limiting economic policy options and closing off the safety valve of the coca economy (Malloy and Gamarra 1988). As eradication efforts intensified, destroying close to 90 percent of the coca crop in the late 1990s, frustration swelled (Van Cott 2003, 2005).

Furthermore, interparty agreements limited the possibilities for alternatives to these increasingly unpopular economic and drug policies. The institutional strictures of Bolivia's "parliamentarized presidentialism" (Mayorga 2005, 159) pushed the parties into a series of pacts, which eventually resulted in numerous parties of the status quo and no real opposition. Under the Bolivian Constitution, if no presidential candidate won a majority in the popular election, Congress selected the victor. Until Evo Morales, no Bolivian president won office outright, requiring multiparty congressional coalitions to determine a winner. This presidential selection process necessitated coalition building. Beginning in 1985, when Paz Estenssoro developed the Pact for Democracy, which included his own MNR and Banzer's right-wing ADN, coalitions with different constituent parties routinely crossed old ideological boundaries (Mayorga 2005). Between 1985 and 2005, governments were typically supported by two of the three major parties—MNR, MIR, and ADN—and the alliances were very pragmatic (Van Cott 2003). These pacts were formed without regard for the parties' original ideologies, and no significant policy differences distinguished one coalition from another. After the Pact for Democracy, a different configuration supported President Jaime Paz Zamorra (1989–93, MIR), with the formerly leftist MIR crossing the ideological spectrum and embracing the rightist ADN. When Banzer was selected president in 1997, his grand coalition consisted of ADN, MIR, CONDEPA, UCS, and NFR (Nueva Fuerza Republicana) (Mayorga 2006). And by the time Sánchez de Lozada was selected as president for the second time in 2002, his personal share of the vote was so low, at only 22 percent, that he had to put together a coalition with archrival Paz Zamorra's MIR to bar Evo Morales from office (Barr 2005). By the late 1990s, all the traditional parties, as well as CONDEPA, NFR, and UCS, had joined governing coalitions with one another at some point. Even former left and populist parties supported floundering neoliberal policies.

Bolivia's parliamentarized presidentialism pushed the parties to govern together. By 2002, none could credibly offer an alternative to neoliberalism because each had been complicit in maintaining the status quo. The Bolivian parties' efforts to reach consensus "resembled the efforts made by Venezuelan party leaders. . . . But just as Venezuelan *partidocracia* ended up isolated from popular opinion and vulnerable to exclusion by the Chavista movement, it appears Bolivia's . . . political class [had] reason to fear the same fate" (Whitehead 2001, 16). While the coalitions temporarily eased governability, they also eliminated programmatic alternatives.

In summary, then, as the theory expects, programmatic linkage in Bolivia decayed as a result of escalating crisis in the context of international policy constraints and interparty agreements. Although neoliberalism resolved the problem of hyperinflation, it created and then neglected other issues that reached crisis levels in the 1990s. International pressures limited the parties' ability to address these issues, and responsiveness decayed. At the same time, interparty agreements pushed once disparate parties toward common positions and eliminated ideological alternatives, causing programmatic linkage decay across the entire system.

Limited Interest Incorporation

The incorporation of major societal concerns also deteriorated markedly in the 1990s. The traditional class cleavage lost salience and was replaced by ethnic and regional divides. However, the traditional party organizations were ill equipped to absorb the emerging interests.

Since the 1952 Revolution, the Bolivian party system, particularly MNR, had structured interest incorporation around the class cleavage, integrating functional groups representing business, organized labor, and peasants (Barr 2005). The parties endeavored to depoliticize the cultural aspects of ethnic identity and incorporate the indigenous population based on socioeconomic status—typically as peasants (Yashar 1999). Ethnicity in Bolivia had always been highly correlated with life chances, enabling the parties to utilize class as a rough approximation for ethnicity. While many indigenous Bolivians did not feel represented through this system, class-based incorporation nevertheless captured enough people to lend it credibility.

However, as the debt crisis and neoliberalism undermined worker and peasant interests, the class cleavage decayed, and ethnic identities increased in salience. The crisis and neoliberal response crippled organized labor (Gill 2000; Mayorga 2005). The peak union COB first opposed the failed leftist government and then made a stand against Paz Estenssoro's neoliberal policies (Mayorga 2005). But the government squashed its former ally, jailing

labor leaders and undercutting one of the major pillars of the corporatist system (Conaghan and Malloy 1994). Jobs in the formal and public sectors were cut drastically—more than 50,000 formal sector jobs disappeared during Paz Estenssoro's administration alone (Conaghan and Malloy 1994, 186).

Historically, peasant organizations were a major means of incorporating the indigenous population, as most Bolivian Indians were concentrated in rural areas. But economic crisis, structural adjustment, and coca eradication caused severe dislocations in the mining and agricultural economies, producing substantial urbanization that resulted in more than half the indigenous population residing in cities by 2001 (Van Cott 2000, 2003). This migration process weakened peasant organizations and disconnected many urban migrants from traditional group-based linkage. These urban migrants served as an easily mobilized base for indigenous social movements that ran counter to class-based patterns of incorporation (Van Cott 2000). Furthermore, the benefits of MNR's agrarian reform during the Revolution had long since faded, weakening the party's sway over the indigenous people who remained in rural areas (Birnie and Van Cott 2007; Domingo 2001). These shifts made incorporating indigenous Bolivians into the party system through their class status as peasants an increasingly untenable strategy.

Bolivians who lost their formal sector jobs as a result of economic displacement or who moved to urban areas as a result of agricultural dislocation were either unemployed or resorted to basic subsistence tactics (Barr 2005). By the late 1990s, about 65 percent of Bolivians eked out a living in the informal sector (Mayorga 2005).⁸ In the informal economy, drug-related activity grew, with an estimated 350,000 employed in coca production and processing (Conaghan and Malloy 1994; Machicado 1992). Highland peasants and former miners, who had been displaced by closure of the state tin company, turned to coca to replace lost incomes (Mayorga 2005; Van Cott 2003). However, as coca eradication intensified under Banzer, this safety net was also threatened (Conaghan and Malloy 1994; Gill 2000; Van Cott 2005). Eventually, these former miners and peasants became a locus of *cocalero* and indigenous organizing (Van Cott 2003).

Because fewer indigenous Bolivians were part of the formal economy and many migrated to the cities, they no longer found their interests voiced through traditional functional organizations (Mayorga 2005; Van Cott 2000). Divisions between the shrinking formal sector and the growing informal

8. In the 1970s and 1980s before neoliberalism, the informal sector employed about half the workforce, suggesting that the informal sector increased by 15 percentage points in the neoliberal era (Casanovas 1986; Dora Medina 1986).

sector weakened popular sector solidarity and diminished the salience of class-based appeals (Conaghan and Malloy 1994). Unions and peasant associations were no longer adequate for integrating the indigenous population into the system (Salazar Elena 2004; Yashar 1999).

As the traditional class divide decayed, Bolivia experienced rapid growth in autonomous organizing. Neighborhood associations, informal workers' unions, indigenous groups, and *cocaleros* surfaced to form a fragmented civil society without connections to the party system (Barr 2005). Among these emergent groups, the "indigenous movements surged as crucial articulators of popular dissatisfaction" (Van Cott 2003, 753). Ethnicity replaced class as the major politically relevant divide in Bolivian society, pitting the impoverished, dark-skinned majority concentrated in the highlands and the outer rings of cities against the wealthy, lighter-skinned minority in lowland enclaves (Van Cott 2000, 769). Instead of ethnic issues being encapsulated within the traditional class cleavage, economic and social struggles became identity conflicts (Mayorga 2006). State reform had unintentionally politicized new cleavages and mobilized new social actors who challenged the party system's mechanisms of interest representation (Yashar 1999, 101). Indigenous leaders developed autonomous parties and interest associations in an effort to force the state to address demands being ignored by the party system (Van Cott 2000, 169). Indigenous and *cocalero* demonstrations swept the entire country in the late 1990s and early 2000s, overwhelming the Bolivian government and highlighting the party system's ongoing failure to accommodate their interests (Whitehead 2001).

It was imperative for the party system to accommodate politicized indigenous identities, with which more than 60 percent of Bolivians identified (Van Cott 2005). However, it "failed to integrate sufficiently the diverse social and ethnic-cultural identities" (Mayorga 2005, 158). The parties were unable to accommodate burgeoning ethnic demands, as they conflicted with the parties' nationalist perspectives and contradicted the class-based patterns of interest incorporation that they employed (Domingo 2001). Because the party organizations had built interest incorporation around the hierarchical patterns of the traditional class cleavage, the diffuse new grassroots forms of pluralist mobilization were not compatible with the parties' entrenched strategies. As a result, the traditional parties failed to reflect the increasingly salient ethnic identities that had come to replace old patterns of class-based incorporation. At their founding, it seemed that CONDEPA and UCS might provide an outlet for new interests, as they capitalized on the ethnic cleavage and attracted poor indigenous and mestizo voters without

threatening the major parties. But as these new parties joined the old in governing coalitions and resorted to clientelism, they also lost their appeal among excluded Bolivians, and the system remained unable to incorporate ethnic demands (Barr 2005; Mayorga 2006).

As the integrating capacities of class-based interest associations diminished, old patterns of incorporation became unviable. Emerging instead was a more pluralist system based on new cleavages that had been unintentionally politicized by neoliberalism's destruction of the formal economy. However, these new cleavages and the proliferation of grassroots organizations could not be easily accommodated within the parties' hierarchically structured organizational patterns, in which incorporation strategies relied on articulating class interests. As a result, incorporation deteriorated (Barr 2005; Yashar 1999).

Decay of Clientelism

Clientelism faced strains of its own in the decade leading up to the system's collapse. Social changes and electoral reforms heightened demand for material exchanges while economic crisis and fiscal decentralization limited the resources available to the parties. By the early 2000s, the parties could not sustain sufficient clientelist payouts, and the system collapsed.

Demand for clientelism escalated as the social ramifications of the economic crisis and the neoliberal response emerged over the 1990s. Neoliberalism was painful, particularly for low-income sectors hurt by job cuts, reductions in government expenditures, and declines in the real minimum wage (Conaghan and Malloy 1994, 186–87). Growth stagnated, leaving nearly 65 percent of the population in poverty (World Bank, various dates). Unemployment persistently plagued about 20 percent of the workforce throughout the 1990s (Conaghan and Malloy 1994; Mayorga 2005).⁹ As these issues went unresolved, a growing portion of the population relied on petty clientelist benefits to survive, heightening demand for material exchanges (Van Cott 2000).

Social dislocations also multiplied the pressures on the clientelist system. Similar to the Colombian experience of displacement, which resulted from internal conflict, in Bolivia structural adjustments like the mine closings and coca eradication also caused severe dislocations (Mayorga 2005; Van Cott 2003). Former miners migrated to coca-growing regions and peasants

9. Before neoliberalism in the early 1980s, unemployment was typically at or below 10 percent (INE 2008).

relocated to urban outskirts, driving numerous Bolivians out of traditional community networks (Birnie and Van Cott 2007; Van Cott 2005). In their new contexts, people became atomized and were less likely to benefit from functional or community-based clientelism (Barr 2005; Yashar 1999). Instead, they pressured the parties for individual benefits, heightening the number of demands on the system (Birnie and Van Cott 2007, 106; Conaghan and Malloy 1994). The same dislocation processes also reduced the geographical isolation of potential clients (Van Cott 2000), removing people from a context of scarcity where the only sources of clientelism were the major parties, and relocating them to environments where multiple patrons sought to purchase their support. As the parties competed for votes, the costs of successfully attracting support based on clientelism mushroomed (Birnie and Van Cott 2007; Domingo 2001).

Electorate reforms also amplified demands for clientelism, as new voters and electoral processes pressured the system. Although suffrage was extended to illiterates during the Revolution, many Bolivians remained excluded from political participation into the 1990s through isolation and race-based hierarchies (Van Cott 2000). In 1992, only 53 percent of men and 35 percent of women in rural Bolivia were registered to vote. At the extreme, only 19 percent of lowland Indians possessed voter identification cards in 1997 (Ticona, Rojas, and Albó 1995; Van Cott 2005). To rectify this situation, Bolivia's autonomous National Electoral Court (CNE) sponsored an intensive voter registration campaign concentrated in rural areas from the mid-1990s through 2002 (Mayorga 2005; Van Cott 2005).¹⁰ In the fourteen months leading up to April 2002 alone, the CNE registered over 1.1 million voters (Van Cott 2005, 87). Overall enfranchisement expanded from 1.88 million voters at the time of the democratic transition to over 4 million in 2002, increasing registration rates to 80 percent in urban areas and 60 percent in rural ones (Mayorga 2005, 163–64). This flood of typically poor and disconnected new voters who were likely to seek exchange-based linkage seriously strained the parties' efforts to sustain clientelism.

Other electoral changes also increased pressures on the clientelist system. Like the three other cases of collapse, Bolivia experienced an extensive process of decentralization beginning with the 1994 Law of Popular Participation (LPP). As in Italy, Venezuela, and Colombia, this process included fiscal decentralization as well as the establishment of directly elected local governments and executives. In Bolivia, the reforms were so profound that

10. The CNE was established in 1991. Upon its initiation, it pursued an aggressive registration campaign to promote the transparency and legitimacy of the electoral process.

one scholar has called it the “most ambitious decentralization program in the hemisphere” (Barr 2005, 82).¹¹ These reforms increased demand for and reduced the supply of clientelist resources.

The LPP created local governments where none had previously existed and established popular elections, first held in 1995, to select local officials, including mayors (Barr 2005; Grindle 2000). These reforms increased the number of electoral processes for which clientelist exchanges were necessary while also multiplying the number of candidates seeking resources to fuel their personal networks. Separate local and national elections made it difficult for parties to control resources through pyramidal clientelist exchanges between levels of government, which could have conserved resources by providing a single benefit to buy support for all the party’s nominees. Instead, individual candidates made direct appeals, heightening the resource strain.

Decentralization also reduced the resources available for partisan distribution. The LPP, as well as the Administrative Decentralization Law passed in 1994, increased the guaranteed fiscal transfers that local and regional governments received from the national government (O’Neill 2003). Between 1994 and 1999, the proportion of tax revenue being transferred to municipalities doubled from less than 10 to 20 percent (Mayorga 2005, 169; Van Cott 2000).¹² The reforms also decentralized the overall structure of public investment. In 1994, 75 percent of public spending was targeted to national-level programs; by 1997, 75 percent occurred at local and departmental levels (Gray-Molina 2001, 70). As local governments were granted autonomy over the use of these devolved resources, the parties quickly lost control of the funds and were unable to efficiently put them toward political ends (Barr 2005; Gray-Molina 2001). Moreover, participatory planning and budgeting processes strengthened the oversight capabilities of local grassroots organizations and weakened the parties’ ability to channel local resources for partisan ends (Gray-Molina 2001). In fact, one of the stated goals of decentralization was to undermine the patronage system (Van Cott 2000, 170). The traditional parties never had strong local organizations, and they operated in a hierarchical fashion (Gamarra and Malloy 1995; Mayorga 2005).

11. As in the other cases of collapse, decentralizing reforms were implemented under international and domestic pressures in an effort to bring government closer to the people and thereby enhance legitimacy (Grindle 2000). Unfortunately, in all four cases, the reforms only undermined the party systems’ last remaining vestige of linkage.

12. Before the 1994 reforms, only 61 municipalities had ever received transfers from the central government. Decentralization created 187 new municipalities, with all 311 receiving fiscal transfers (Gray-Molina 2001, 66).

Thus, shifting resources to the local level limited the extent to which the centralized parties could exploit them (Gray-Molina 2001).

Economic constraints also limited the resources available for distribution. When Paz Estenssoro first implemented his NPE, he protected clientelist resources from cuts and established a social emergency fund to provide temporary patronage jobs in an effort to secure support from his ally, the ADN, and dissident sectors of his own MNR (Conaghan and Malloy 1994; Gamarra and Malloy 1995). Therefore, initial public sector cuts were limited (Malloy 1991). Yet subsequent restructuring dried up clientelist resources (Birnie and Van Cott 2007; Mayorga 2005, 172). As Mayorga notes, “Key state institutions—the Central Bank, the Office of the Controller General, the National Electoral Court, and the former state-owned enterprises—were taken out of the spoils system” (2005, 172). Together, neoliberal restructuring, fiscal decentralization, and sustained economic deterioration limited funds for clientelism at the same time that social changes and electoral reforms heightened demand, causing decay of this last type of linkage.

Comparative Portrait of Collapse

Party system collapse in Bolivia followed the expected pattern of linkage failure also experienced in the other collapse cases. In Bolivia, economic stagnation, accompanied by extremely high rates of unemployment and poverty, challenged the parties to provide a programmatic response. But external pressures constrained policy to a narrow range of options, while internally, coalition governments, which included all the major parties in succession, eliminated ideological alternatives and led to the discrediting of all the parties. Programmatic representation disintegrated. At the same time, the significance of the traditional class cleavage waned, and ethnic identities increased in salience. The traditional parties were structured to emphasize class-based incorporation and depoliticize ethnicity, making the collective integration of these polarizing identities difficult, if not impossible. As a result, the parties’ capacity to integrate important groups contracted. Finally, mounting poverty, unemployment, and social dislocation increased demand for clientelism, as did the influx of new voters enfranchised by the CNE and the establishment of directly elected local governments. As the parties lost control of local governments and politicians, fiscal decentralization reduced their access to funds for clientelism. The economic downturn of the late 1990s and early 2000s and reforms to rationalize the state further constricted resources, and clientelism decayed. Without adequate programmatic appeals, interest incorporation, and clientelist linkages, the system collapsed.

BANKRUPT REPRESENTATION ACROSS THE COLLAPSE CASES

The theory of party system collapse developed here asserts that linkage decay, caused by core challenges and constraints, leads to collapse. Table 10.1 summarizes the key independent variables for each collapse case. The far left column displays the specific challenges hypothesized to jeopardize each of the three linkage mechanisms as well as the constraints expected to restrict the party system response to these challenges. If the relevant challenges and constraints are present, then the associated form of linkage is expected to decay. When all components of a party system's linkage profile deteriorate, the system collapses. All four cases of collapse experienced the anticipated pattern, and every linkage type that had once been present in these systems' portfolios deteriorated and produced collapse. As discussed above and reiterated in the table here, challenges to core elements of linkage threatened the maintenance of representation, while contextual constraints curbed adaptation, damaging linkage and resulting in system failure.

Where programmatic linkage once existed in Venezuela, Italy, Bolivia, and, to a much lesser extent, Colombia, crisis conditions stemming from exhausted policy models demanded a response. However, international constraints undermined responsiveness by restricting policy to options that contradicted ideological and policy-making legacies. Meanwhile, differences between parties evaporated as a result of interparty agreements that minimized programmatic distinctions between viable system parties and eliminated meaningful alternatives to the status quo.

Where major societal interests had been reflected in the Venezuelan, Italian, and Bolivian systems, social transformations challenged the parties' incorporating mechanisms. In Venezuela, the class cleavage was restructured around a formal-informal divide, while Italy and Bolivia experienced the decaying significance of class-based interests as new kinds of identities grew in salience. These new cleavage patterns contradicted existing incorporation strategies and entrenched interests were threatened, limiting the parties' ability to reach out to new groups. As a result, incorporation narrowed.

In all four cases, growing demands and inadequate resources produced the decay of clientelism. Social changes and various political reforms proliferated demand for clientelism. In particular, the creation of separate, sub-national elections in all four cases multiplied the need for clientelist inputs to purchase votes in repeated electoral contests, while also undermining the hierarchical logic of clientelist distribution and eliminating the central

Table 10.1 Theorized independent variables present in cases of party system collapse

	Venezuela, 1998	Italy, 1994	Colombia, 2002	Bolivia, 2005
Crisis conditions	Economic crisis	Economic crisis	Economic crisis; violence	Economic crisis
International policy constraints ^a	IMF agreements	Maastricht criteria; fall of communism	U.S. drug policy; neoliberal pressure	IMF agreements; U.S. drug policy
Interparty agreements ^b	Patterns of shifting alliances implicated all old parties	<i>Pentapartito</i> coalitions included all pro-system parties	National Front followed by interparty cooperation	Each party entered pro-neoliberal governing coalitions in 1990s
Social transformation ^c	Deindustrialization; deunionization; informalization	Secularization; deindustrialization; regional divide activated	Urbanization; internal migration; informal/illegal economy	Displacement; informalization; ethnic divide activated
Organizational constraints on new interest incorporation ^d	Strong union ties and set organizational patterns at odds with informal sector	Parties lacked regional presence; power centralized in national organizations	NA ^e	Ethnic identity conflicted with set patterns of national, class-based incorporation
Electoral decentralization ^e	Introduction of separate state and local elections	Introduction of separate local elections	Introduction of separate state and local elections	Creation of new local governments with separate elections
Reforms limit party resource control ^f	Loss of control over oil revenue; lost partisan control of state	Public funding for party organizations eliminated; cuts in public employment; privatizations	Neoliberal rationalization; 40 percent of national budget transferred to subnational level	Doubled subnational transfers; state reform reduces resources available to parties

Note: Gray shading indicates absence of factor; white equals presence. See each country section for details and sources.

^a International agreement or intergovernmental organizations notably limited policy latitude.

^b All the major pro-system parties participated in ideologically diffuse coalitions, pacts, or formal agreements at some point during the crisis.

^c Politically salient social cleavage(s) changed in either structure or type.

^d Newly salient interests conflicted with the goals of entrenched groups and/or did not fit established patterns of interest articulation.

^e New or newly separated elections were established for subnational offices such as governor or mayor.

^f State reforms like rationalization or decentralization cut parties off from resources they had manipulated for political ends.

^g Group-based incorporation was never a linkage strategy employed by the traditional parties in Colombia (Archer 1995; Kline 2004). Because this variable pertains only to the process producing the decay of interest incorporation, it is not relevant for the Colombian case. However, the social transformation variable has ramifications for clientelism and is therefore still relevant.

parties' access to patronage resources. At the same time, crisis conditions reduced resources for clientelism, and political reforms promoting fiscal decentralization and apolitical, market-based distribution limited the resources available to the parties for partisan manipulation. Escalating demand and shrinking resources stressed clientelist networks. As fewer people benefited from clientelism, those excluded from exchange-based relations saw corruption, not linkage. With the deterioration of clientelism, the last vestige of linkage, all four systems collapsed.

Ultimately, these party systems encountered serious challenges to their core linkage strategies, while constraints restricted appropriate adaptation, producing linkage decay and system collapse. In the next chapter, I explore how comparable party systems facing some similar challenges managed to maintain at least one form of linkage and survive.

SURVIVAL TACTICS IN ARGENTINA, BELGIUM, URUGUAY, AND INDIA

Having shown how the processes of collapse in Italy, Colombia, and Bolivia closely followed the Venezuelan pattern, in this chapter I compare each collapse with its paired instance of survival. I explore how a party system similar to each case of collapse in system structure, institutionalization, and linkage profile managed to survive despite facing some comparable obstacles. As detailed in chapter 9, I matched cases based on these party system features and on shared values on key independent variables, resulting in four paired comparisons: Venezuela versus Argentina, Italy versus Belgium, Colombia versus Uruguay, and Bolivia versus India.

Here I assess the challenges and limitations present in each instance of survival, comparing them to those faced by the paired collapse case. I show how the surviving system sustained at least one form of linkage, either because linkage did not encounter a foundational threat or because specific contextual constraints were absent. If all linkage deteriorates, the system collapses, but if one linkage strategy is maintained, the system survives.

ARGENTINE ENDURANCE VERSUS VENEZUELAN COLLAPSE: MAINTAINING LINKAGE DURING CRISIS

Following Argentina's return to democracy in 1983, the party system took on a form similar to that of Venezuela. Both were institutionalized 2.5-party systems dominated by one catchall party on the center-left and another on the center-right (Mainwaring and Scully 1995a; Szusterman 2007). The

systems also employed similar, mixed linkage strategies. Interest incorporation based on the traditional class cleavage was important in both (Levitsky 2003a; McGuire 1995), and they used clientelism to attract support from excluded groups (Brusco, Nazareno, and Stokes 2004; Levitsky 2001a). The Argentine system, like the Venezuelan, also offered some programmatic appeals, as differences between the Radicals (UCR) and Peronists (PJ) provided choices at the polls (Luna and Zechmeister 2005).

Furthermore, Argentina faced challenges similar to those that threatened Venezuela. Economic crisis and social transformation jeopardized linkage in both systems during the 1990s. In Argentina, the crisis and neoliberal adjustment were among the most relentless in Latin America. Inflation surpassed 3,000 percent, and growth rates and the balance of payments were commonly negative during the crisis (Burgess and Levitsky 2003). Argentine neoliberalism has been characterized as the most severe in the region (Gwartney, Lawson, and Block 1996). Peronist president Carlos Menem (1989–99) slashed regulations, subsidies, and tariff barriers, privatized almost all state enterprises, and cut hundreds of thousands of federal jobs (Burgess and Levitsky 2003, 890; Murillo 2001). The crisis provoked significant social transformations similar to those in Venezuela, including the loss of formal and public sector jobs and increased poverty and informality.

However, in a notable divergence from the Venezuelan experience, the Argentine PJ survived these threats, facilitating the adaptation of the party system rather than its collapse. Of the three linkage types in Argentina, only incorporation disintegrated in the 1990s. Despite the challenges confronting the system, it was able to continue offering some programmatic appeals as well as sufficient clientelist exchanges to sustain linkage and avert collapse. Here I examine how the Argentine system endured while its Venezuelan counterpart did not.

Deterioration of Group-Based Incorporation

As in Venezuela, Argentine incorporation suffered serious setbacks in the 1990s. Traditionally, the system had reflected the politically salient class cleavage (McGuire 1995), with worker interests encapsulated by the PJ and business and professional interests represented by the Radicals (Collier and Collier 1991; Gibson 1996). Peronist ties to organized labor were strong. Unions provided the party with financial and organizational resources through the extended authoritarian period and democratic transition (Levitsky 2003a). But during the 1980s and 1990s, the class divide decayed, as

economic crisis and neoliberalism provoked deindustrialization, deunionization, and informalization. “The passage of thousands of workers from factory work to informal and precarious jobs [was] the most significant economic phenomenon” of the 1990s (Cieza and Beyreuther 1996, cited in Auyero 2000, 31). By 1999, unionization had declined nearly 50 percent since the 1980s (*Latin American Weekly Report* 2000). Unemployment soared to over 20 percent by 1995, and many poor and unskilled Argentines joined the ranks of the structurally unemployed (Auyero 2000; Stokes 2001, 47). In Buenos Aires, households living in poverty increased from 11.5 percent in 1980 to 25.8 percent in 1995 (Golbert 1996). The Argentine parties, like their counterparts in Venezuela, saw their traditional bases erode as the middle class was impoverished, unions lost influence, and workers fell into unemployment and informality. The class cleavage was restructured around the formal-informal divide.

Both the Argentine and Venezuelan party systems faced considerable obstacles to incorporating these emerging social groups. The goals of unemployed and informal workers often ran counter to the interests articulated by those in the formal economy. And although organized labor lost ground within the PJ throughout the 1990s, which provided the party some maneuvering room, like the Venezuelan parties, it did not incorporate these new subordinate sectors (Levitsky 2003a). Not only did the concerns of these new groups contradict the goals of labor, but organizing and representing the disparate and heterogeneous interests of the poor, unemployed, and informal sector challenged the party systems’ customary incorporation mechanisms (Burgess and Levitsky 2003; K. Roberts 1998). Moreover, the impoverished and unemployed often preferred tangible, individual benefits, which they relied on to survive (Auyero 2000). As the worker-owner divide lost salience, the party system was unable to organize and channel concerns of the informal side of the new class cleavage.¹ The parties instead relied on clientelist exchanges to foster popular sector support (Auyero 2000; Levitsky 2007). Thus, as in Venezuela, social transformation increased the size and significance of unincorporated sectors whose interests contradicted those of established groups and whose (lack of) structure ran counter to existing mechanisms for incorporation through peak unions and business

1. This is not to say that the parties did not establish other mechanisms for linking to emerging groups. They used clientelism to draw support from informal workers and the urban poor (Levitsky 2003a), although the parties did not provide them with group-based incorporation. Following the debt crisis and the 2001 economic crisis, some efforts to reach out to these groups, such as the *Jefes y Jefas* program for the unemployed, were made, but not until after the threat to the party system had passed.

associations. This core challenge to linkage in a constrained organizational context resulted in significant narrowing of incorporation in both systems.

Persistence of Programmatic Representation

Unlike the Venezuelan experience, however, the Argentine party system sustained other forms of linkage as incorporation failed. Programmatic representation was never the most significant linkage strategy in Argentina, but the system did offer some programmatic appeals. Although Argentina faced an economic crisis and international policy constraints that were arguably more severe than those in the Venezuelan case, different party structures and patterns of interparty interaction mediated these threats in Argentina and exacerbated them in Venezuela. This allowed the Argentine system to sustain some programmatic links despite these challenges, while the Venezuelan system did not.

First, the elasticity and decentralized structure of Peronism enabled Menem to enact neoliberal reforms without completely abandoning the party's historical legacy. Although some PJ activists saw Menem's pro-market policies as an abandonment of the party's roots (Auyero 2000), others accepted his nationalist rhetoric, particularly surrounding the Convertibility Law, as following the general contours of Peronism (Corrales 2002). Ultimately, the Peronists provided Menem with his primary legislative support, typically approving softened versions of his legislation that protected their clients' interests while still advancing his neoliberal agenda (Burgess and Levitsky 2003; Corrales 2002). The ideological flexibility of the PJ permitted implementation of the reforms necessitated by the domestic crisis and demanded within the international context without directly contradicting the party's historical legacy and without alienating all the party's supporters (Corrales 2002; Szusterman 2007).² Thus, Menem was able to provide some successful policy responses to pressing economic concerns, which did not directly violate all elements of the Peronist legacy (Stokes 2001). These policy appeals were particularly successful among upper-class voters who benefited from the neoliberal reforms (Burgess and Levitsky 2003; Levitsky 2001b). This stands in contrast to Venezuela, where international policy constraints contradicted the parties' established policy legacies, limiting programmatic latitude to unpopular policies that ran counter to

2. Unlike the PJ and both Venezuelan parties, UCR's ideological legacy coincided with international policy goals, facilitating its eventual acceptance of neoliberalism.

their traditional ideologies and strategies. Furthermore, because Argentina's provinces retained long-held control over public spending and employment in subnational governments, many local Peronists did not implement the rationalizing reforms of neoliberalism or even expanded provincial spending to counter the most painful effects of the policies (Benton 2003; Corrales 2002). While Menem adopted neoliberal policies at the national level, this local autonomy allowed states and localities to distance themselves from the policies if they proved unpopular with their constituencies, offsetting potential negative consequences that could have resulted from Menem's decision to follow international policy prescriptions for addressing the crisis (Burgess and Levitsky 2003; Levitsky 2001a).

Second, the nature of interparty interactions in Argentina helped preserve programmatic representation through maintenance of some ideological distinctions between parties. In Venezuela, the parties repeatedly engaged in pacts and governing agreements, which eased governability but sacrificed diverse representation (Coppedge 1994a; Morgan 2007). As the Venezuelan parties joined openly pragmatic coalitions in the 1990s, they converged ideologically; voters saw no distinctions between them and lost patience with the lack of meaningful policy alternatives. In Argentina, however, agreements between the major parties were generally absent from interparty relations. Quite to the contrary, animosity and distrust long characterized the relationship between the Radicals and Peronists, making collaboration unlikely (Corrales 2002). Although Peronist president Menem and Radical president Fernando de la Rúa (1999–2001) made efforts to build bipartisan support for their policies, in neither case were they successful in convincing opponents to join long-standing, grand coalitions (Chen 2004; Corrales 2002, 58).³ In de la Rúa's case, failure to win PJ support led to rapid economic decay and his resignation in late 2001 (Chen 2004). But even amid this extreme governability crisis, the parties refused to collaborate in constructing any sort of agreement. Critics might suggest that this

3. One apparent exception was the 1993 Pacto de Olivos between Menem and Raúl Alfonsín (UCR), which enabled the passage of a constitutional reform and allowed Menem to seek immediate reelection. However, several features of this arrangement suggest that it was not indicative of long-standing patterns of interparty agreements. First, the pact constituted a temporary *détente* in a prolonged conflict between two political *leaders*; it did not mark an ongoing accord between *parties*. Second, the pact was an expression of Alfonsín cutting his losses in the conflict with Menem. In this way, it was, in practice, an outcome of conflict, not cooperation (Carrizo 1997, 393–94). Third, the scope of the agreement was narrow and pertained only to the issues surrounding the constitutional reform. It did not constitute a wide-ranging agreement, nor did it entail policy cooperation on economic or social issues (Cheresky 1996, 1998). Thus, the pact did not obscure the parties' policy positions and was not part of a pattern of interparty agreements.

lack of cooperation undermined stability. However, by acting independently, the parties ensured that Argentine voters would continue to have some meaningful alternatives at the polls into the early 2000s.

Some identifiable differences between the two major parties persisted throughout the crisis period. UCR opposed Menem's policies, initially adopting an anti-reform stance (Corrales 2002, 68). Even as most of the parties came to accept different versions of market economics, UCR, in its alliance with the new center-left party FREPASO (Frente País Solidario), provided alternative programmatic offerings on non-economic issues (Levitsky 2000). When analyzing party systems' ideological structures, Mainwaring and Torcal (2006, 212–15) found differences between Radical and Peronist voters in the mid-1990s. Additionally, FREPASO offered the frustrated middle class an outlet that did not threaten the system (A. Seligson 2003). Although the ideological differences were not large, they were statistically significant, and Mainwaring and Torcal's ranking of programmatic structuring placed Argentina ahead of all other Latin American countries except Chile and Uruguay. Alternatively, they found no ideological differences between AD and COPEI, which aligns with my account of programmatic convergence between the major Venezuelan parties. Another study examining the ideological structuring of Latin American party systems found that Argentina remained one of the most programmatically differentiated party systems in the region through the late 1990s, with the parties providing meaningful alternatives to voters (Luna and Zechmeister 2005).

Despite economic crisis and international constraints that pressured programmatic linkage in Argentina, the lack of interparty agreements permitted differentiation between the Peronists and Radicals. Also, PJ's flexibility allowed Menem to enact internationally prescribed policies without completely contradicting the party's legacy. The parties in government addressed some significant issues, while voters who disliked one party's response could turn to a different option in the system.

Clientelism as a Safety Valve for Linkage Maintenance

More significant than the maintenance of programmatic appeals, the Argentine system preserved itself by continuing to deliver clientelist exchanges. The parties had always employed clientelism to appeal to the poor and marginalized. However, as the structure of society transformed and interest incorporation lost effectiveness, material exchanges replaced sectoral ties as a central base of party support (Auyero 2000; Levitsky 2001a, 2001b).

The growing number of Argentines in the informal sector who lacked basic resources turned to political networks to survive (Auyero 2000), and the parties relied more heavily on clientelism as a means for attracting support from those who were otherwise excluded (Brusco, Nazareno, and Stokes 2004; Gibson and Calvo 2000). As a result, demands for clientelism intensified in the 1990s, even as economic crisis and neoliberalism complicated accommodation of these demands.

However, in contrast to Venezuela, where clientelist networks crumbled under the weight of unmet demands, the Argentine parties were able to deliver enough material incentives to sustain this form of linkage. In large part, the absence of resource-constraining and demand-heightening reforms enabled the maintenance of clientelism. Unlike the four collapse cases, in which the establishment of separate subnational elections exacerbated competition for resources, in Argentina no comparable changes were introduced. Argentine elections had been decentralized since the nineteenth century, and with the return to democracy, this pattern resumed (Benton 2003; Willis, Garman, and Haggard 1999). In the collapse cases, the introduction of subnational elections proliferated demand and undercut resources, but the Argentine parties faced no such pressures. They were already accustomed to decentralization, and lack of reform allowed them to avoid one major source of increased demand.

Rather than facing new clientelist pressures, the Argentine parties were accustomed to this form of electoral competition, and they employed strategies that took advantage of decentralization. Their organizational structures emphasized local party affiliates and used them as building blocks for the national party. Local base units delivered clientelist benefits such as health care, food, and jobs in exchange for votes, which bolstered support for local, provincial, and national party candidates (Auyero 2000; Levitsky 2001a; Seawright 2007). Clientelist benefits in Argentina were frequently delivered on a geographical basis, rather than the functional one common in Venezuela. The shift away from union linkages toward locally based clientelism was not a major challenge for the Argentine parties, as it had been for the more hierarchical clientelism of the Venezuelan parties (Benton 2003; Szusterman 2007). Therefore, while the parties in Venezuela, as well as Bolivia, Colombia, and Italy, faced new subnational elections and struggled to meet resource demands from increased local and state competition, preexisting decentralized patterns in Argentina eliminated this source of pressure on clientelism.

In fact, the Argentine parties' decentralized structures enabled them to use fiscal decentralization strategically to direct resources to the base. For

the hierarchical Venezuelan parties, fiscal devolution cut them off from funds for political use. But in Argentina, Menem used it to channel resources to local PJ machines, targeting decentralized resources to PJ-controlled areas (Rumi 2005). At the same time, base units had always played important roles in organizing local, provincial, and national campaigns, and local clientelist networks benefited all levels of the party. Extensive fiscal transfers to the states, which increased during the 1990s, facilitated provincial party leaders' ability to repay loyal activists and brokers, cultivate personal support, and build a base for the party in national elections (Benton 2003, 122; Jones 1997). For instance, although public employment at the national level declined, the number of people employed by the states increased, with provincial employment surpassing national employment (Benton 2003, 122). Social service spending at the provincial level also skyrocketed, providing local party branches with "ample opportunities for patronage" (Corrales 2002, 207). Because traditional ties of mutual interdependence among national, provincial, and local leaders were not disturbed by new patterns of electoral decentralization, subnational resources continued to benefit all levels of the party electorally (Benton 2003; Willis, Garman, and Haggard 1999). So while the national share of public expenditures declined by at least 10 percentage points with decentralization, these devolved funds were channeled into subnational organizations that fostered support for the national party (López Murphy 1995; Willis, Garman, and Haggard 1999).

Specific features of the neoliberal reform process in Argentina also protected clientelist resources, rather than undercutting them as rationalizing reforms did in Venezuela. Menem employed a deliberate strategy of funding social spending over other programs, and he granted the PJ politicized access to these funds, allowing traditional Peronists to control the Ministry of Labor and Social Security's expanding budget (Corrales 2002, 205–7). This contrasts with Venezuela, where Carlos Andrés Pérez rationalized social spending and cut AD off from clientelist resources by choosing technocrats, not loyal partisans, to head his social programs.

The Argentine parties also had a structural advantage over their Venezuelan counterparts. In Argentina, party access to the state was an uncommon luxury that only emerged with redemocratization. Any access to state resources after the 1983 transition was a financial improvement for the Argentine parties. Even in the context of a shrinking state, they were better off than they had been under authoritarianism (Corrales 2002; Levitsky 2003a). The Venezuelan parties, on the other hand, had become accustomed

to and dependent on state resources during the country's forty years of democracy, so fiscal austerity delivered a severe blow.

Therefore, while social transformation increased demands for clientelism and economic crisis conditions created resource constraints in both systems, only Venezuela experienced significant political reforms that simultaneously heightened demand and undercut funds available for clientelism. In Argentina, where electoral decentralization was already in place and other reforms guarded rather than siphoned off resources for distribution, the parties were able to sustain clientelism.

Absence of Institutional Constraints and System Survival

Despite intense economic crisis and dramatic social restructuring in Argentina during the 1990s and early 2000s, the party system avoided collapse. Although incorporation decayed, the system sustained other forms of linkage. In the face of economic turmoil, PJ's flexibility enabled the governing party to adopt policies in line with international parameters, while not contradicting all aspects of its historical legacy nor alienating its entire base. The interparty agreements present in each collapse case were absent from Argentina, thus preserving ideological alternatives and protecting the programmatic structuring of the party system.

Additionally, the party system in Argentina sustained clientelist exchanges. Because the Argentine parties were free from the pressures generated by electoral decentralization in the collapse cases, they did not have to worry about heightened clientelist demand from burgeoning electoral competitions. Furthermore, the preexisting autonomy of the parties' different organizational levels shielded local machines from state-shrinking reforms and enabled the use of fiscal decentralization as a mechanism for channeling resources to the base rather than draining them away. Other political reforms that restricted partisan manipulation of state resources in collapse cases, such as the rationalization of both social funds and the bureaucracy, were not enacted in Argentina, preserving clientelist resources and protecting this linkage form. In Argentina, a distinct institutional context and sustained party access to state resources facilitated the maintenance of programmatic and especially clientelist linkages, even while the system confronted the same economic and social challenges as those experienced in Venezuela. The comparison between Argentina and Venezuela emphasizes the theoretical claim that crisis conditions, international policy constraints, and social change are important but not sufficient to produce collapse. Only

when these threats emerge along with electoral decentralization and in the context of specific institutional constraints does linkage completely decay and the party system fail.

BELGIAN ADJUSTMENT VERSUS ITALIAN BREAKDOWN: TRANSFORMING TO SUSTAIN INCORPORATION

Like its counterpart in Italy, the postwar Belgian party system was institutionalized with three major parties. Both systems employed mixed linkage strategies, extending programmatic appeals but also incorporating politically salient religious and class cleavages and offering clientelist exchanges (DeWachter 1987). However, in the 1970s, the Belgian party system encountered considerable challenges that threatened linkage maintenance. Economic restructuring resulted in the escalating significance of Belgium's ethnolinguistic divide, jeopardizing a national party system built on class and religion, and incorporation suffered as the parties struggled to adapt to this new social structure. But lack of economic crisis and few international policy constraints enabled the system to sustain programmatic and clientelist linkage and survive as the system adjusted to the newly activated cleavages.

New Cleavage Activation Threatens Incorporation

Throughout the 1970s, the political relevance of the religious-secular and worker-owner divides declined in Belgium (Pilet 2005). Instead, ethnolinguistic and regional cleavages swiftly became salient (Frognier 1978). This dramatic social transformation challenged the system's patterns of interest intermediation. As in Italy, the Belgian postwar party system effectively integrated religious and class cleavages (Lipset and Rokkan 1967; Urwin 1970). The Christian Democratic Party (CVP-PSC) reflected the concerns of the religious, the Socialist Belgian Workers' Party (BSP-PSB) encapsulated worker interests, and the Liberal Party (PVV-PLP) represented anti-clerical views (DeWachter 1987; Noiret 1994; Urwin 1970).

However, the structure of the Belgian economy changed in the 1960s. The once prosperous French Walloon region stagnated, while historically poorer, more rural Flanders underwent rapid growth and industrialization. Flanders's population and economy surpassed the historically more developed Wallonia, while the Walloon economy contracted (DeWachter

1987; Heisler 1974; Urwin 1970). With this shift, class and ethnolinguistic cleavages no longer coincided but rather conflicted. Flanders was not simply the poor, Catholic periphery, but experienced economic development, which changed class and religious identities in the region. At the same time, Walloons began to fear economic discrimination, becoming more protective of their regional interests (DeWinter 2006; Heisler 1974). Ethnolinguistic issues were increasingly distinct from religious and class divides, and competition between the regions escalated (Hooghe 1991; Rudolph 1977). But even with the emergence of the ethnolinguistic cleavage, class and, to a lesser extent, religious cleavages remained significant. As society became more segmented, incorporation required continued accommodation of old concerns as well as efforts to address new ones (Heisler 1974; Urwin 1970).

Just as the activation of regionalism challenged the Italian parties in the 1990s, Belgium's increasingly salient regional and ethnolinguistic divides threatened the system's incorporating capacity. In fact, the extent of social transformation and the associated challenge to incorporation was greater in 1970s Belgium than in 1990s Italy. Moreover, the Belgian parties were even more reliant on incorporation than their Italian counterparts, making threats to this linkage form more problematic for the maintenance of linkage overall (DeWachter 1987, 311; Hooghe 1991).

Gradual Accommodation of the Ethnolinguistic Divide

However, in dealing with this threat to linkage maintenance, the Belgian system possessed several advantages over the Italian, enabling the Belgians to avert collapse while the Italians did not. In part, different party organizational structures allowed Belgian adaptation. The Italian parties lacked regional presence, so as regional issues became significant, they were ill equipped to respond (Hellman 1988; Leonardi and Wertman 1989). In Belgium, on the other hand, the parties' regionalized structures facilitated accommodation of increasingly salient regional/ethnolinguistic divides.

Initially, the Belgian parties tried to maintain the existing system structure and integrate these new cleavages through their regional organizations (Heisler 1974). The parties granted considerable autonomy to their regional wings, allowing local and regional party leaders to control candidate selection and seat distribution (DeWachter 1987; Urwin 1970). The parties also integrated the regional and ethnolinguistic divides within their central party organs (Frogner 1978). The Christian Democrats always had

two ethnolinguistic wings with two co-equal party presidents—one Walloon, one Flemish (Deschouwer 1994). The Socialists established regional constituencies for national party leaders and then provided regional leaders with seats on the national party Bureau. Only the Liberals, the smallest of the three parties, originally lacked significant regional or ethnolinguistic structures (Deschouwer 1994). But by 1968, even they were allowing their regional wings to operate virtually independently (Urwin 1970).

Eventually, the extent of ethnoregional conflict made it impossible to house both sides of the cleavage within national party organizations, no matter how much autonomy they granted to regional wings. But the parties' regionalization eventually allowed them to divide along ethnolinguistic lines and create six regional parties that mirrored the original three national ones. The parties' geographical splits accommodated the ethnolinguistic cleavage without undermining the traditional parties' survival and allowed continued representation of class and religious interests (Smith 1979). Although these divisions were not painless and occurred after extended attempts to maintain national parties, they were facilitated by regionalized structures and acknowledgement of ethnolinguistic interests in the parties (Deschouwer 1994). Furthermore, the linguistic component of the divide, while undermining unity, made clear exactly how the parties would split, encouraging cooperation and limiting ongoing contestation over the boundaries of the new "traditional" parties (Pilet 2005).

The division of the three traditional parties transformed the system from moderate pluralism to a more extended multiparty system, as the effective number of legislative parties jumped from about three in the 1960s to more than six by the 1980s. But because the parties were gradually able to reflect the new cleavage by successively dividing along ethnolinguistic lines (CVP-PSC in 1968, Socialists in 1972, Liberals in 1978) (Deschouwer 1994), they averted the complete and simultaneous collapse of their organizations, and the new regionally based traditional parties retained control of the legislature, preventing system collapse.⁴ The party system essentially divided into two regional subsystems that mimicked the old national system (DeWinter 2006). Patterns of interparty interactions in the divided system did not deviate significantly from those of the unified system, as governing coalitions since the divide have been symmetrical. That is to say, if a Walloon party is

4. As discussed in chapter 2, the division, unification, or renaming of existing parties does not constitute the disappearance of those entities, but rather their reconstitution. The major Belgian parties remained intact after their divisions, meaning that the Belgian system transformed but did not collapse.

included in a coalition, then so is its Flemish counterpart, and vice versa (Deschouwer 1994). The party divisions, therefore, facilitated the incorporation of ethnolinguistic interests without sacrificing the traditional parties or the system they formed.

Maintenance of Programmatic and Clientelist Appeals

The adaption needed to integrate Belgium's ethnolinguistic cleavage took more than a decade, despite a felicitous organizational context. During this period, the party system was vulnerable, as incorporation temporarily narrowed until all the parties split and the system reflected ethnolinguistic interests. Fortunately, incorporation was not the system's only linkage mechanism, and in the 1970s, when the system was susceptible, other linkage forms remained intact.

Crisis did not challenge programmatic representation in the 1970s. As the salience of ethnolinguistic divisions increased, Belgium experienced relative prosperity and stability (Heisler 1974). The absence of crisis facilitated policy responsiveness that was adequate to maintain programmatic linkage. Belgium's stagnant governing coalitions were similar to the invariable coalition structures of Italian politics—the Christian Democrats in both countries were almost always in government. But without crisis and accompanying international policy constraints in Belgium, these coalitions did not completely undermine programmatic linkage as they did in Italy (DeWachter 1987; Hooghe 1991). Limited alternation in government and patterns of repeated Christian democratic coalitions weakened ideological distinctions between the Belgian parties. But the system did not confront an especially challenging policy environment in the 1970s, making it possible to sustain policy responsiveness, which compensated for coalitions that limited ideological options. Belgian maintenance of programmatic representation contrasts with Italian decay in the 1990s, where economic crisis demanded a response but international constraints and interparty agreements limited both responsiveness and ideological alternatives.

Lack of economic crisis also enabled the preservation of clientelism in Belgium. Although demand for clientelism increased in the 1970s, resources remained adequate to satisfy this demand. Pressures for clientelism stemmed from social transformation and political decentralization. As in Italy a decade later, social change associated with economic development and a growing middle class contributed to escalating costs for successful clientelist exchanges in Belgium. Additionally, in an effort to address

ethnolinguistic and regional issues, the parties implemented decentralizing reforms, including the creation of autonomous, elected regional governments (Swenden, Brans, and DeWinter 2006). As a result, the number of elections in the 1970s almost doubled in comparison to the 1960s, exerting financial pressures on the parties (DeWachter 1987). The reforms also shifted funds to the regions, with 40 percent of central government expenditure being regionalized by 1976, somewhat limiting the parties' ability to manipulate these funds (Brzinski 1999; Heisler 1977). However, because the economy remained stable, the parties were able to sustain adequate inputs and satisfy growing demand. In fact, government funding for the parties increased in the 1970s and 1980s (DeWachter 1987). And in 1971, at the height of ethnolinguistic stresses on the system, the parties secured increased resources for their apparatuses by establishing state funding of their parliamentary delegations (Deschouwer 1994). Unlike Italy, then, Belgium did not encounter clientelist shortages resulting from economic crisis or reforms that constrained resource access. Instead, the parties were able to expand their resource pool, protecting clientelism and filling the linkage gap.

Thus, the Belgian system maintained linkage through programmatic and clientelist ties even as incorporation was seriously threatened. A party organizational context that did not inhibit accommodation of increasingly salient ethnolinguistic divisions also enabled the system to respond appropriately, albeit slowly, to dramatic social change. The absence of economic crisis in this adjustment period protected programmatic linkage from significant challenges and, together with sustained and expanding partisan access to the state, facilitated resource provision for clientelist appeals. Therefore, despite facing some similar challenges as Italy—namely, new cleavage activation, stagnant coalition governments, and increasing strains on clientelism from decentralizing reforms—Belgium's party system sustained linkage and transformed in such a way that enabled it to survive.

URUGUAYAN ADAPTATION VERSUS COLOMBIAN STAGNATION: SURVIVAL DESPITE CLIENTELIST DECAY

In Uruguay and Colombia, two parties monopolized moderately institutionalized party systems for more than a century. Colombia's Liberals and Conservatives and Uruguay's Colorados and Blancos⁵ survived by building

5. National party adherents are called Blancos.

multiclass support based on clientelist exchanges (Lanzaro 2007; Luna 2008). Uruguayan parties and their fractions established themselves in every locality throughout the country via *clubes políticos*, where voters interacted directly with candidates and received partisan benefits (Luna 2008). At its peak, clientelism “touched almost every family in the country in some way,” with approximately one out of every four Uruguayans receiving some kind of service or payment from the parties (McDonald and Ruhl 1989, 102).

In both countries, incorporation and programmatic appeals were not historically significant. In Uruguay, neither religious nor class cleavages were politicized. The primary distinction was that the Colorados were stronger in and around Montevideo, while the Blancos drew more support from rural areas (González 1995; Moreira 2000). But even this slight difference waned as Uruguay industrialized and urbanized. The parties possessed no clear ideological identities. Voters typically located both at the center-right, and there were no statistically significant differences in the ideological self-placement of their supporters (González 1995; Lanzaro 2007, 22; Mainwaring and Torcal 2006, 212). Furthermore, like Colombia, electoral incentives led to considerable fractionalism in Uruguay’s parties (Morgenstern 2001). Fractionalization allowed different groups in the same party to espouse conflicting policy goals, obscuring any ideological appeal (Blake 1998; González 1995). Fractionalization also inhibited policy making, limiting substantive responses to social problems (McDonald and Ruhl 1989). Thus, programmatic appeals and incorporation were never important tactics employed by the Colorados and Blancos.

As in Colombia, clientelism instead dominated the traditional Uruguayan parties’ linkage profile, and both party systems faced similar challenges to clientelist linkage. Social transformation and electoral decentralization escalated demand for clientelism, while crisis conditions and rationalizing reforms removed much-needed resources from party control.

But a significant factor distinguished Uruguay from Colombia. The Colombian left operated outside the electoral arena, opting instead for militant opposition and providing no alternative to the traditional parties at the polls. The Uruguayan left, on the other hand, pursued the electoral route. Even before Uruguay’s authoritarian period (1973–85), the left had forayed into electoral politics. To contest the 1971 elections, disparate groups on the left and center-left formed Frente Amplio (FA), a coalition that included Communists, Socialists, Christian Democrats, and splinters from the Colorados and Blancos. The FA won 18 percent of the vote in these last elections before the 1973 coup (Moreira 2000; Piñeiro and Yaffé 2004). The left, like

the Colorados and Blancos, was excluded and repressed under authoritarianism, but the military government did not fundamentally alter the country's political structures (Luna 2008). So with the return to democracy, FA reemerged as the third party in the system and made gains throughout the democratic period, eventually winning the presidency in 2004.

As Frente Amplio grew in significance, the Uruguayan system expanded its linkage portfolio to options not available in Colombia. FA encapsulated working-class interests, which had never been incorporated by the two traditional parties, and integrated other emerging subordinate sectors (Lanzaro 2007; Luna 2007; Moreira 2000). FA also provided an ideological alternative to the vaguely center-right Colorados and Blancos (González 1995, 158; Mainwaring and Torcal 2006). As FA's center-left orientation crystallized in the democratic era, it supplied a clear, but not extreme, statist alternative to the more pro-market status quo espoused by the two traditional parties (Alcántara Sáez and Luna 2004; Lanzaro 2007). FA introduced ideological differentiation and interest incorporation into the Uruguayan system, where Colombia had neither. As clientelism in Uruguay became increasingly unsustainable in the 1990s, these additional components of linkage sustained the party system, whereas in Colombia clientelist decay spelled system collapse.

Decaying Clientelism

The most significant threat to the Uruguayan system's survival in the 1990s came from clientelist decay. Social changes and electoral decentralization increased demand, while political reform and fiscal crisis limited resources, heightening pressures on clientelism. As in other Latin American countries, the economic crisis of the 1980s and subsequent neoliberal reforms produced social adjustment in Uruguay. Although state reforms were not as profound as in some of its neighbors, Uruguayan social structure nevertheless changed in ways that escalated demand for clientelism. Unemployment grew through the 1990s, reaching 18 percent by 2003 (INE 2005). Poverty afflicted almost a third of the population by 2002, and union membership declined by 50 percent over the 1990s (Luna 2007, 14). The pressure for clientelism grew as the traditional parties tried to combat this malaise with patronage (Luna 2008).

The 1996 constitutional reforms also created new challenges for Uruguay's clientelist networks. The separation of local and national elections heightened demand and hindered the efficiency of clientelism, exacerbating

resource strain (Luna 2004, 2008). Before the reforms, local and national elections were held concurrently, and the prohibition on split-ticket voting constrained people to cast one vote for offices at all levels (Espíndola 2001). This system enabled patrons to offer a single clientelist exchange and obtain a vote in all races (McDonald and Ruhl 1989). With separate elections, voters demanded additional benefits each time they returned to the polls. Local leaders were reluctant to use resources for national-level races at the risk of not having a sufficient supply for their own elections. As one party leader explained, local leaders “reserved their political machine for local elections” (quoted in Luna 2007, 16). The separation of elections undermined the pyramidal structure of clientelist networks, eliminating interdependence between local and national leaders. As a result, the parties saw control over resources slip away and fall into the hands of individual local leaders who did not employ them to the central party’s benefit (Luna 2004, 2007).⁶

In a context of declining party/fraction control over local officials, fiscal decentralization limited the clientelist resources available to their networks. The funds transferred from central to subnational governments increased by 50 percent over the 1990s (Escobar-Lemmon 2001; IMF 2004; Panizza 2004). And as national leaders lost local influence following the 1996 reforms, they were unable to direct these decentralized resources toward efficient clientelist distribution that benefited entire hierarchical networks. Additionally, as FA gained hold of major local governments, like Montevideo, the traditional parties lost access to important resources they had previously used to win support (Lanzaro 2007; Luna 2007).

The economic crisis that struck Uruguay in 2002 further restricted the funds available for clientelism beyond the cuts introduced in the 1990s (Lanzaro 2007; McDonald and Ruhl 1989). The crisis, “which mirrored that of neighboring Argentina in terms of its economic scope and social effects,” limited the parties’ ability to feed their clientelist machines (Luna 2007, 14–15). Embroiled in arguably the worst economic and fiscal crisis to ever confront the country, the parties lost resources, and their ability to offer selective incentives deteriorated (Altman and Castiglioni 2006; Lanzaro

6. Another 1996 reform increased demand for clientelism by ending the double simultaneous vote (DSV) to select the Senate. Under DSV, national elections served simultaneously as party primaries and presidential and legislative elections, and voters were required to cast a single vote that linked candidates for president and the lower and upper houses (Altman and Castiglioni 2006; Morgenstern 2001). When the Senate elections were de-linked from DSV, competition between party fractions increased, also escalating clientelist demand (Luna 2007).

2007; Luna 2007). Moreover, efforts to modernize and rationalize the state in response to the crisis further restricted opportunities for partisan manipulation of state resources (Luna 2004). As the model of clientelist decay predicts, social change and electoral decentralization escalated demand for clientelism in Uruguay, while at the same time economic crisis, as well as fiscal decentralization and rationalization, enervated the parties' capacity to deliver. These dynamics produced the decay of clientelism in Uruguay in much the same way that they did in Colombia (Lanzaro 2004).

Emergence of a Programmatic Alternative

However, unlike Colombia, Uruguay was not dependent on only one linkage form. As clientelism became unsustainable, the Uruguayan system also offered programmatic and group-based appeals via FA. Although programmatic linkage and incorporation faced some challenges in the late 1990s and early 2000s, the Uruguayan system was able to sustain these linkage strategies as clientelism dwindled (Lanzaro 2007; Luna 2004).

Uruguay suffered economic crisis, as the country saw GDP per capita decline each year from 1999 through 2002 and experienced negative balance of payments and unemployment that reached 18 percent (ECLAC 2009; INE 2005). But the party system maintained programmatic linkage despite this challenge by offering ideological options at the polls. Although the Blancos and Colorados failed to provide a successful policy response to the economic crisis and extensive interparty agreements between the two led to their joint discrediting, their deliberate exclusion of FA from these agreements preserved programmatic options in the system. Because FA did not participate in these agreements, the system followed a logic of traditional parties versus left opposition. Therefore, FA continued to provide an alternative to the cautious neoliberalism advocated by the Colorados and Blancos (Alcántara Sáez and Luna 2004; Luna 2004). Even though the two traditional parties did not offer much by way of policy responsiveness, the presence of FA ensured that voters could reject the status quo and still remain within the system (González 1995; Luna 2008).⁷ This alternative, which provided a distinct ideological vision and remained untarnished by failed governance, enabled Uruguay to avoid the decline experienced in the collapsed

7. The role of FA is quite distinct from that of MAS in Venezuela. MAS, the most significant left party, was complicit in governing agreements with AD and COPEI and even joined in supporting neoliberalism under Caldera. MAS did not provide a meaningful, or viable, alternative to the Venezuelan status quo, as did FA in Uruguay.

systems, in which crisis, international constraints, and interparty agreements combined to delegitimize programmatic representation across the entire system (González 1999).

Broad Incorporation

Frente Amplio was also able to integrate important societal interests not articulated by the two catchall parties. Since its establishment, FA had received strong support from the intellectual left and subordinate sectors that benefited from ISI, like labor and pensioners (Luna 2007), integrating one side of the class cleavage. But as ISI came to an end and crisis set in, neoliberalism undermined working-class interests. Even Uruguay, where neoliberalism was more measured than in other countries, experienced deunionization and informalization (Lanzaro 2007; Luna 2008). But almost 40 percent of the electorate remained either beneficiaries of state assistance or state employees, offsetting the political effects of some of these changes (Luna 2007). FA was thus able to continue drawing support from its traditional formal sector base, which lost some ground but was not decimated.

Furthermore, the fractionalized nature of Uruguayan parties, which allowed competing interests to coexist in a single party, facilitated FA's ability to reach out to the growing informal sector while maintaining support from traditional popular sector groups. FA formed as a coalition unified primarily by the goal of providing a left alternative to the Colorados and Blancos. But by the early 2000s, its fractions included traditional left parties like the Socialists and Communists as well as newer groups like Asamblea Uruguay and Movimiento de Participación Popular (Piñeiro and Yaffé 2004). While the old left appealed to established working-class interests, other fractions in FA reached out to new constituencies such as unemployed and informal sector workers and the disenchanting middle and upper classes (Luna 2007). Typically, the group-based goals of formal and informal workers are difficult to harmonize, but fractionalization facilitated diversity in FA, which permitted these different groups to exist within the same party. Organized labor could cast votes for traditional left parties, and emerging popular sectors could align with newer movements built on their concerns. Yet because these votes aggregated to support FA overall, the popular sector's strength was not divided by competition but was loosely unified. FA therefore sustained support from its historical constituencies and also courted other sectors, helping it shore up support as its traditional base began to decline (Lanzaro 2007; Luna 2007).

In Uruguay, less dramatic social transformation and an institutional structure that facilitated accommodation of diverse interests enabled the parties, specifically FA, to provide interest incorporation reflecting both new and old elements of the class cleavage. Unlike Venezuela and Argentina, where more structured party organizations built around traditional class interests had difficulty linking the burgeoning informal sector except through individual clientelist exchanges, in Uruguay fractionalization facilitated the integration of potentially competing formal and informal sectors in a single left party.

Competition Facilitates Adaptation and Survival

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, Uruguay and Colombia faced serious challenges to the maintenance of their primary linkage strategy—clientelism. Both countries saw crisis conditions, social change, the introduction of separate subnational elections, fiscal decentralization, and other rationalizing reforms create a situation in which available resources could no longer satisfy clientelist demand.⁸ However, in Uruguay, “FA’s growth helped to contain popular discontent while it also enhanced the level of interest aggregation in society and the significance of programmatic linkages for party competition” (Luna 2007, 11). FA exclusion from governing pacts provided an alternative within the system that was not programmatically discredited. Additionally, fractionalization enabled FA to appeal to potentially contradictory interests among the subordinate classes, successfully uniting union members, pensioners, informal workers, and the rural poor. The presence of a meaningful opposition to the Colorados and Blancos contributed to “maintaining the integrity of the party system and its aggregational capacity” (Lanzaro 2007, 131). The failure of clientelism in Uruguay, therefore, was offset by the presence of a programmatic alternative and the maintenance of interest incorporation, allowing the system to survive.

INDIAN SURVIVAL VERSUS BOLIVIAN DECLINE: CLIENTELIST DELIVERY PRESERVES LINKAGE

From the time of Indian independence in 1947 through the 1960s, the Indian National Congress (INC) party dominated politics, typically winning

8. In fact, the crisis conditions in Uruguay were more severe than in Colombia, as Uruguay experienced lower growth and higher inflation. Only on employment did Colombia perform slightly worse than Uruguay (ECLAC 2009).

an outright majority in parliament, holding the prime ministry, and controlling government (Kothari 1964; Morris-Jones 1978). Despite Indian society's diversity, the party was able to encapsulate a wide range of interests, primarily through distribution of state patronage (Chhibber 1999; Manor 1988; Park 1975). Additionally, INC leader and India's first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru emphasized a national secular identity for the party, seeking to promote a unified Indian society as opposed to one divided along sectoral, regional, religious (communal), caste, or other lines (Das Gupta 1988; Manor 1988). Emphasizing a national secular character over specific identities helped depoliticize potentially divisive identity politics, at least at the national level.⁹ This incorporation strategy used by the INC integrated those who identified with the national secular appeals of the party, although it often excluded those who prioritized narrower ethnic, caste, or religious distinctions. As long as the party was able to depoliticize contradictory ethnic interests and focus on integrating the national side of a cleavage that pitted secular unity against subgroup identity, this strategy facilitated incorporation. The party also offered some programmatic appeals, particularly to urban voters (Brass 1994; Chandra 2004, 215; Manor 1988; Wilkinson 2007). Similar to the Bolivian system, then, the Congress-dominated party system of the 1950s and 1960s employed a mixed linkage strategy that relied heavily, but not exclusively, on clientelist exchanges (Maheshwari 1976). Moreover, despite considerable diversity, ethnic cleavages were depoliticized in both post-independence India and in post-authoritarian Bolivia, as national secular appeals in India and class-based appeals in Bolivia helped minimize potential ethnic cleavages.

However, in the 1970s and 1980s, the Congress party, under the leadership of Indira Gandhi and her son Rajiv Gandhi, faced increased competition and eventually lost its position as the dominant party in the system (Brass 1984; Manor 1988). During the 1977 elections that followed on the heels of a two-year general state of emergency imposed by Mrs. Gandhi, Congress faced an opposing coalition, which ran as the Janata Party. This loose coalition, which incorporated elements of the noncommunist left, the center, and the right, as well as Congress defectors, united in their opposition to Congress and pulled off a victory (Brass 1994; Manor 1988). Although Janata disintegrated into its component parts within a few years, Congress was no longer the only relevant player in the system (Narain

9. Identity-based appeals built around different ethnic groups were often used at the sub-national level, especially in contexts where one group predominated, but in national-level politics the party tried to downplay ethnic identities.

1979). By the late 1980s, the system had evolved further, such that INC and components of the old Janata coalition, most notably Janata Dal (JD) and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), together with smaller and regional parties, formed a moderate multiparty system with three to four major coalitions (Brass 1994). Despite these significant changes, the Congress party did not collapse and remained an important actor. The survival of India's Congress party and the gradual adaptation of the system it once monopolized into a multiparty system stands in contrast to Bolivia's party system collapse, in which the parties that had dominated politics disintegrated. Unlike the major Bolivian parties, Congress was able to weather the growing political salience of ethnic cleavages as well as decentralization.

Politicization of Ethnic Cleavages Challenges Incorporation

During this period of turmoil and party system change from the late 1970s through the 1980s, increasingly salient communal and caste divides posed a significant threat to the Indian party system (Manor 1988). Similar to post-transition Bolivia, ethnic cleavages were not highly salient in the national politics of post-independence India, despite the presence of diverse cultural identities (Kothari 1964; Malik and Vajpeyi 1989; Manor 1988). Caste, religious, and tribal considerations were often significant in shaping subnational politics, particularly in areas where single ethnic groups were highly concentrated. But at the national and even provincial levels, the Congress party minimized ethnic divides and promoted a secular, non-caste-based polity built around national identity (D. Vajpeyi, personal communication, 17 September 2010; Varshney 2000). The INC played a balancing act, using ethnic-based representation to attract support at state and district levels while the party's national strategy relied on limiting the political significance of these identities. However, in the 1970s and 1980s, ethnic tensions mounted, and communal and caste divides grew in salience (Das Gupta 1988; Varshney 2000). As India experienced the activation of identity politics, it became increasingly difficult for Congress to build support around a unified secular identity, even at the national level. Conflicts among caste, communal, and regional groups proliferated in the 1980s, escalating well above 1960s levels (Manor 1988, 89). As ethnic politics were manifested, India experienced a steady rise in communal violence. Clashes between Hindus and Muslims more than doubled between 1975 and 1983, resulting in thousands of deaths (Das Gupta 1988; Malik and Vajpeyi 1989, 318; Manor 1988). The increase in parliamentary seats won by caste-based

parties, from less than 5 percent in 1980 to more than 25 percent in 1989, evidences how the growing salience of caste identities reached the national political stage (ECI, various dates; Varshney 2000).

Because the Congress party (at least at the national level) had traditionally promoted a single Indian identity and secular values, the increasing significance of caste and communal cleavages challenged its strategy of incorporating those who identified with its national unity appeals while excluding subgroup identities (Chhibber 1999; Manor 1988). Just as the Bolivian parties subsumed ethnicity within class-based organizations, INC had endeavored to minimize ethnic identities within a national secular paradigm. In both contexts, the activation of ethnic divides challenged the logic of these strategies. Therefore, as conflict between Hindus and Muslims and Hindus and Sikhs escalated in India and increasingly pervaded national politics, identity-based parties emerged to challenge Congress's dominance. Many people no longer saw their interests captured in a single party that wanted to downplay communal identities and unify all three major groups under the banner of Indian nationalism (Malik and Vajpeyi 1989). Thus, instead of Congress supremacy in the 1980s, the party system experienced the growth of Hindu chauvinist parties, such as the BJP, as well as smaller, more regional parties appealing to Sikhs and Muslims (Kapur 2000; Manor 1988; Sen 1993). Caste tensions also exploded, limiting the feasibility of accommodating these competing groups within Congress, and intermediate castes, which were not captured in the INC, increasingly supported opposition parties (Kohli 1988). Congress made some efforts to counter these losses. For instance, in an attempt to offset the growth of the BJP, Congress moved to the right and even exhibited some signs of embracing Hindu chauvinism—a far cry from its tradition as a catchall secular party—but the BJP broadened its appeal and continued to grow (Kapur 2000; Malik and Vajpeyi 1989; Manor 1988). As the political relevance of ethnic issues spread beyond local politics and infiltrated national dialogue, Congress could not easily smooth over these divides and sustain a national secular position, which did not resonate with many voters. Old tactics, like nominating co-ethnic candidates to represent constituencies with a high concentration of a specific group, were no longer adequate. These issues ultimately altered the structure of the Indian party system. Congress surrendered its position as the only major party, and others grew in importance as they capitalized on these newly politicized cleavages (Sisson and Majmundar 1991, 111–12).

In India, as in Bolivia, the politicization of ethnic cleavages endangered the dominant pattern of integration. The traditional Bolivian parties focused on

class divides, and the INC, which dominated the post-independence Indian system, emphasized national secular unity. Both strategies were designed to downplay potentially flammable ethnic tensions. So as this cleavage increased in salience and intensity, neither could accommodate ethnic interests using established strategies. In fact, in both cases, the activation of ethnic identities threatened the very foundations of the major parties.

Sustaining Clientelist Resources to Meet Demand

This significant threat to Congress's efforts at national secular integration produced a transformation of the party system. But in India the core party that monopolized the old system structure remained a major actor, preventing the system's collapse. In fact, after the Janata victory in 1977, Indira Gandhi returned as head of a Congress-controlled government in 1980, and after her death, her son Rajiv Gandhi led the party to victory in the 1984 elections, governing until 1989. Thus, the Congress party endured as a major player in the new system. Although it has seen its dominance wane and it faces many electoral competitors in a multiparty system (Sridharan 2010), the survival of this pivotal party facilitated the adaptation and transformation of the Indian party system. The growing salience of ethnic cleavages undermined Congress's national integration strategy, but it sustained other linkage forms, which enabled the party system to evolve and avoid collapse (Brass 1984).

Pivotal to the survival of INC and the Indian system was the maintenance of a steady stream of clientelist exchanges. Clientelism had been a central linkage strategy since independence, and although this linkage faced some stresses in the 1980s as the party system transformed, resources kept up with demand (Wilkinson 2007). In particular, heightened social tensions created strains on clientelism (Manor 1988, 72; Wilkinson 2007). To smooth over communal- and caste-based conflicts, Congress needed to provide clientelist benefits to ever-widening swaths of society, including the poor, the landless, Muslims, and scheduled castes, in order to keep them among its ranks (Brass 1984; Das Gupta 1988).

Political reforms also had the potential to place pressure on the clientelist system by decentralizing resources and power. In the 1980s, India continued a process of devolution that had been an important feature of politics since the development of the federal system under the British. Fiscal decentralization increased the amount of resources in the hands of state and local governments (Crook and Manor 1998). But the national party apparatuses

retained considerable control of decentralized resources by exercising, through the prime minister's office, nearly exclusive influence over the president's nomination of state governors (Brass 1994). Furthermore, if the national parties lost ground to opponents at one subnational level, the central government could use its power to circumvent unfriendly officials and allocate resources directly to supporters at other levels (Brass 1988; Crook and Manor 1998). For instance, in an effort to skirt rival networks at the subnational level, Congress created Centrally Sponsored Schemes that channeled resources directly to pivotal segments of the electorate (Wilkinson 2007, 116). In essence, many so-called decentralization efforts were attempts to control lower levels of government and manage clientelist distribution (Brass 1994, 141). In fact, controlling important subnational governments facilitated continued access to clientelist resources, even when the party was out of power at the national level (E. Sridharan, personal communication, 28 September 2010). Ongoing decentralization of resources, therefore, created some stress on clientelist linkage mechanisms, but did not compromise the adequacy of clientelism because the national party enacted decentralization in ways that guarded its control of these resources.

In terms of decentralizing power through subnational elections, the founding Constitution had allowed for the possibility of local elections, but it left implementation up to state governments.¹⁰ However, state officials reluctant to surrender power to local authorities had not established local elections following independence, and with a few exceptions, like Karnataka, voters did not select local leaders (Crook and Manor 1998). But as regional opposition parties began to gain the upper hand in state governments during the 1990s and increasingly controlled local development funds, the Congress party endeavored to circumvent state officials from opposing parties and to empower loyal local leaders through legislation requiring direct elections for local authorities, called *panchayati raj* (Nayak, Saxena, and Farrington 2002; Wilkinson 2007). After a circuitous process, the Congress-led government passed the 73rd amendment to the Constitution, which took effect in 1993 and required implementation of direct elections to the *panchayat* within a year (Singh 1994). However, as we have observed in other instances of political decentralization, subnational elections did not have the effect of increasing national party influence, which was the

10. State assemblies, although not governors, have been continuously elected since Indian independence. Thus, here the subnational unit relevant to new efforts at political decentralization is at the local level (*panchayat*) (A. Krishna, personal communication, 16 September 2010).

Congress party's intent. Instead, the central party gradually lost control over the panchayat and their resources (Wilkinson 2007).

But unlike Bolivia and the other collapse cases, in which electoral decentralization occurred simultaneously with social turmoil, economic crisis, and state-rationalizing reforms, in India the timing of subnational election implementation limited their debilitating impact. By the time local elections began to be held in 1993, threats from social change had subsided, because the system had adapted to reflect diverse ethnic identities by shifting toward a multiparty system that included ethnic-based parties. Additionally, economic crisis was not a serious issue in India during the 1980s and early 1990s. IMF influence on policy was minimal and domestic actors retained autonomy (Chaudhry, Kelkar, and Yadav 2004), such that spending on many programs exploited for clientelist ends actually increased (Chandra 2004; Krishna 2007). So while the maintenance of clientelism may have been challenged by increased demand stemming from political decentralization, the timing of the reforms, which occurred absent other significant threats to clientelism, limited the danger for overall linkage maintenance.

The lack of economic or fiscal crisis in India was particularly important for maintaining clientelism. Although social conflict increased clientelist demand, fiscal decentralization eroded the parties' resource monopoly in the 1980s, and political decentralization escalated resource pressures in the early 1990s, the Indian party system did not encounter significant budgetary limitations at the same time (Wilkinson 2007).¹¹ The economy expanded, with growth averaging 6 percent over the 1980s and 1990s (World Bank, various dates). Central government spending generally increased over the same period, and state government expenditures remained steady (Pattnaik et al. 2005). Investment in rural development schemes, a major source of clientelism, increased sevenfold between 1980 and 1995 (Krishna 2007, 150), and public employment also grew (Chandra 2004, 117). These overall budget expansions mitigated the effects of decentralization and social turmoil on clientelist distribution (Pattnaik et al. 2005). Even as the party system faced other threats, economic stability and fiscal latitude enabled the parties to increase the stream of government resources directed toward clientelism and thereby accommodate growing demand.

As in Bolivia, then, the Indian party system encountered the activation of ethnic divides, which threatened party strategies built on minimizing these

11. India did not experience a serious crisis in the 1980s or 1990s and, in fact, saw stable economic growth (Panagariya 2004).

identities. In both countries, the dominant parties could not accommodate the concerns of competing interests. But unlike Bolivia, the Indian system sustained other linkage forms. The lack of economic crisis and the expansion, rather than contraction, of public goods available for partisan manipulation allowed the Indian system to protect resources for clientelism. Moreover, the timing of local election implementation mitigated the ramifications that electoral decentralization might have had for linkage maintenance. The steady flow of resources, as well as some programmatic appeals, enabled the Indian party system to sustain linkage and survive.

COMPARATIVE EVIDENCE ON THE CENTRALITY OF LINKAGE FAILURE

As expected based on the theoretical model introduced in chapter 3, in all four instances of collapse, threats to each element of the system's linkage profile and constraints on adaptation prevented the parties from providing adequate linkage between society and the state, which caused the failure of the system. Alternatively, the paired instances of survival, which had similar party system features and linkage strategies as well as some comparable challenges, maintained at least one form of linkage and avoided collapse. The Argentine party system preserved some programmatic appeals and protected crucial clientelist exchanges. In Belgium, the party system faced serious threats to incorporation, which ultimately forced the existing parties to split along ethnolinguistic lines. But as the agonizing divisions occurred, the system sustained programmatic and clientelist appeals. In Uruguay, old clientelist strategies became untenable, but a left alternative to the discredited status quo and incorporation of popular sectors enabled the system to avoid collapse. Finally, the Indian system faced considerable threats from the violent activation of ethnic cleavages but averted collapse by expanding resources for clientelism.

Programmatic Decline

Tracing processes of programmatic linkage failure versus maintenance reveals patterns consistent with the theory. In every instance of programmatic decline, the party system faced an economic crisis. Venezuela and Bolivia encountered severe economic emergencies, and Italy and Colombia suffered historically significant recessions in the years preceding their collapses.

Other crisis-generating conditions were also present in some cases, with Bolivia facing social unrest and Colombia battling escalating violence. But in all four cases, economic crisis stemming from the exhaustion of established development strategies challenged the parties to provide a programmatic response, highlighting the significance of this variable.

In each case of programmatic decay, the parties also operated within important constraints on their capacity to respond successfully to the crisis. International pressures limited the parties' options to paths that were unpopular or that contradicted their ideological legacies and traditional policy patterns. The Bolivian parties were restricted by their dependence on the IMF and the United States, placing alternatives to neoliberalism and coca eradication out of reach. In Italy, the Maastricht criteria limited the parties' latitude, removing standard policy tools like deficit spending from their arsenal. The Venezuelan parties encountered international pressures toward neoliberalism despite strong statist legacies. And in Colombia, an international neoliberal consensus limited responses to the economic crisis, and U.S. anti-narcotics policies complicated the task of addressing domestic security problems.

Additionally, in every collapse case, interparty agreements undermined programmatic distinctions between major parties, eliminating the system's ability to offer viable, meaningful alternatives to the discredited status quo. Venezuela had a long tradition of interparty cooperation that began with the democratic transition and remained a mainstay of government through the 1990s, when the parties entered into a series of governing agreements with one another. These agreements blurred the distinctions between them and removed options for voters. In Italy, the parties' efforts to rule without the anti-system elements of the left and right produced governing coalitions throughout the postwar era that generally included the same cast of characters and never excluded the Christian Democrats. The Colombian National Front agreement and subsequent patterns of collaboration had the same effect, explicitly constraining electoral choices and removing ideological competition from the party system. In Bolivia, parliamentarized presidentialism created strong incentives for the parties to form coalition governments throughout the 1980s and 1990s. By the early 2000s, these coalitions had included (and damaged) every major party at some point, implicating all of them in the failed neoliberal consensus. In each case, these interparty accords resulted in the joint discrediting of the major parties and the elimination of meaningful ideological options from the party system. To find an alternative to the status quo of unresponsiveness, voters had to look outside the system.

By contrast, although Argentina faced an economic crisis arguably more severe than any of those experienced in the cases of collapse, the major parties never engaged in significant collaboration. The absence of such agreements enabled voters to find an alternative within the existing system. Likewise, Uruguay encountered a fiscal crisis in the early 2000s, but the interparty agreements there only included the Colorados and Blancos, leaving Frente Amplio unscathed and able to present a clear ideological option distinct from the center-right status quo of the two traditional parties. In these contexts, frustration with lack of performance was channeled within the system rather than directed outside it. Alternatively, the Belgian parties repeatedly resorted to coalition governments, which almost always included the Christian Democrats, following the Italian pattern. However, because Belgium did not face economic crisis or international constraints in the 1970s, the parties were able to furnish policy responses adequate for ordinary times. The lack of alternation in government did not threaten the system because the status quo was acceptable. Together, economic crisis and constraints imposed by interparty agreements and international policy limitations make programmatic representation untenable. Yet if any of these factors is absent, as in Argentina, Uruguay, and Belgium, the system is able to preserve programmatic linkage.

Narrowing Incorporation

The comparative analysis reveals important patterns concerning the narrowing of incorporation. The same basic process undermined interest incorporation in the three instances of collapse where the parties employed this form of linkage—Venezuela, Italy, and Bolivia—and in the two cases of survival where incorporation deteriorated—Argentina and India. All five experienced dramatic social transformations in either the structure or the type of salient social cleavage. These transformations in the cleavage structure generated new kinds of conflict, as interests that were historically excluded and identities that were traditionally downplayed became increasingly significant and threatened incorporation.

In each instance, these social changes also challenged existing organizational patterns. Strategies traditionally used to encapsulate the worker-owner divide, for example, proved ineffective for representing the competing interests of formal and informal sectors. In Venezuela and Argentina, the party systems' incorporation strategies had been built around the worker-owner cleavage, relying on unions, business associations, and the like to integrate

major interests. However, with the processes of economic opening, deindustrialization, and informalization, the salience of the traditional class cleavage waned, and society was restructured around the formal-informal divide. The parties found it difficult to incorporate the growing ranks of unemployed and informal workers through old hierarchical corporatist mechanisms, particularly given the often competing goals of the formal and informal segments of the popular sector. Similarly, party systems with incorporation patterns built on class divides or national identity could not easily encapsulate newly activated ethnic and regional cleavages. When regional and ethnic cleavages supplanted traditional class cleavages in Bolivia and Italy and obliterated nationalist unity in India, the traditional parties' established organizational structures were ill equipped to channel these new kinds of conflict.

In all the cases in which societal change activated new cleavages (Italy, Bolivia, India) or restructured existing ones (Venezuela, Argentina) in ways that contradicted entrenched organizational patterns, incorporation narrowed and left out wide swaths of society. When established organizational structures conflicted with the patterns of new interests or when entrenched and emergent groups held conflicting goals, the system was unable to accommodate new interests and incorporation deteriorated. In Belgium, where the parties' regionalized structures facilitated gradual accommodation of increasingly salient ethnolinguistic divides, incorporation narrowed temporarily as the parties adapted, and the system had to be sustained by programmatic and clientelist linkage until incorporation could recover.

Clientelist Decay

Important patterns also emerged concerning the deterioration of clientelism in the four cases of collapse—Venezuela, Italy, Colombia, and Bolivia—and in Uruguay, a case of survival in which clientelism decayed. In each case, social changes heightened clientelist demand, while economic crisis limited the parties' capacity to expand supply. Additionally, in all five cases, significant political reforms increased competition for resources and constrained party access to resources for political ends. The reforms that undermined clientelism were similar in all five cases. Each country established separate subnational elections in the years leading up to party system collapse. Separate electoral contests increased the need for clientelist resources, as new exchanges were demanded for each return to the polls, and created competition for resources at the local and/or state level, where there had not

been competition before. Political decentralization also removed subnational offices from central party control, eliminating an important source of patronage and undermining party influence over clientelist resource distribution at the subnational level. Quite contrary to most of the reformers' intent, the new subnational elections escalated demand for clientelism and, in the cases of collapse, threatened the only remaining form of linkage.

At the same time, other reforms limited parties' ability to manipulate state resources to fund clientelism. A resource-constraining reform common in the cases of clientelist decay was fiscal decentralization, which, when preceded by new political decentralization that weakened traditionally centralized party organizations, removed resources from the parties' control. In all five instances of clientelist decay, the central party apparatuses lost access to resources that were devolved away from the central government and toward subnational levels, which the parties no longer monopolized. State-rationalizing reforms—such as the shrinking of the state bureaucracy in Venezuela, Uruguay, and Bolivia, the removal of partisan considerations from social fund distribution in Venezuela, changes in campaign funding laws in Italy, and the elimination of pork-barrel earmarks in Colombia—also limited the parties' access to resources for clientelism across all five cases.

Together, these reforms exacerbated the pressures that social change and economic crisis placed on the parties' clientelist networks, producing the deterioration of clientelism. In countries like Argentina, where subnational elections were not new and parties retained access to state funds, or Belgium and India, where economic stability enabled the expansion of clientelist resources despite decentralization, clientelism remained intact as a significant form of linkage. But in Venezuela, Italy, Colombia, Bolivia, and Uruguay, where economic crisis, social transformation, political decentralization, and resource-limiting reforms were simultaneously present, clientelism reached fewer voters. This created frustration with a system that was increasingly perceived as corruptly benefitting only a select few rather than providing material exchanges for many.

Explaining Collapse, Attaining Survival

The cross-national analysis of both collapse and non-collapse cases provides considerable leverage in answering the question of why some party systems collapse while similar systems facing some comparable challenges survive. The four paired comparisons isolate the role and significance of each component of the theoretical model. This allows me to show how core challenges

and specific constraints on adaptation produce the decay of each type of linkage and to demonstrate that when all linkage types decay, collapse results. The comparisons across the four cases of collapse make clear that the causal process detailed for Venezuela parallels the experiences of other countries that also suffered party system failure. Four diverse party systems in distinct contexts underwent highly analogous processes, which underscores the significance of linkage failure in producing collapse. The instances of survival suggest that absent either substantial challenges to all the core elements of a system's linkage profile or specific constraints on adaptation, a party system may sustain linkage and survive.

These findings emphasize the significance of both challenges and constraints in understanding why some party systems fail and others survive. Arguments focused on structural challenges, like economic crisis, only account for why a party system comes under stress, but cannot explain the response to this pressure. Alternatively, theories that privilege particular institutional configurations do not consider the kinds of challenges that might provoke a need for the adaptive efforts that such theories seek to explain. Only when we consider the specific constellations of core challenges to linkage and key constraints on adaptation can we fully explain linkage failure and party system collapse.

INSIGHTS INTO COLLAPSE AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

[Under Chávez] there has been a broadening of participation to new sectors of society. Before, many people were marginalized, but we have incorporated them into politics.

—Member of MVR Comando Táctico Nacional, *interview with author, December 2003*

Party system collapse is a rare but important phenomenon. Collapse creates profound shock waves that disturb the very foundations of political order. The failure of well-established party systems in Italy and Venezuela in the 1990s and the subsequent breakdown of party politics in Colombia and Bolivia were monumental events that marked significant turning points for each country. But while considerable scholarship has explored the deterioration of individual parties or changes in party systems, few efforts have been made to understand why decay aggregates to topple entire party systems. To explain this most extreme form of party system transformation, I theorized that collapse is caused by a party system's inability to fulfill its fundamental task of providing linkage between people and their government. Then, moving back the causal chain, I built an explanation of system-level linkage failure. I argued that such failure occurs when a system's core linkage strategies are threatened within a context that limits its ability to confront these challenges. An extensive body of empirical evidence elaborated throughout the book delivered consistent support for this theory.

This concluding chapter underscores the book's major findings concerning the processes of linkage failure and party system collapse. Through this review, I highlight how the book advances the literatures on representation and linkage, party adaptation, and party system structure and change. I also draw attention to some of the central empirical insights concerning

Venezuela and the seven other cases of collapse and survival analyzed here. Finally, to emphasize the real-world importance of understanding party system collapse, I detail the consequences of collapse for representation and for democracy and offer some suggestions for facilitating adaptation and avoiding collapse.

CHALLENGES, CONSTRAINTS, LINKAGE DECAY, AND TOTAL SYSTEM FAILURE

Explaining Linkage Failure and Collapse

My argument has focused on linkage provision as the central task of party systems. I hypothesized that when a system fails to connect with a majority of voters, it will collapse. Linkage may be achieved through three major strategies: programmatic representation, group-based interest incorporation, and clientelist exchanges. I argued that when systems lose the ability to attract support through all of these mechanisms, linkage fails and the party system collapses. Indeed, we observed how the loss of linkage capacity produced system failure in Venezuela, Italy, Colombia, and Bolivia, whereas the ability to sustain some form of linkage facilitated survival of the Argentine, Belgian, Uruguayan, and Indian systems.

These findings reiterate the importance of linkage delivery for party and party system survival, building on the growing literature that views parties through this analytical lens (Barr 2009; Kitschelt et al. 2010; Lawson 1980). The analysis here suggests that identifying party systems' linkage profiles is critical to understanding an array of important political dynamics. When we understand the linkage profile, we obtain substantive insight into the ways that parties connect people to the state. We are also able to recognize the avenues that are available for citizens to speak into the political process, thereby identifying opportunities for voice and influence that are feasible within the existing system, as well as those the system excludes, which therefore only occur outside conventional patterns of linkage. Perhaps most important, knowledge of a system's linkage portfolio illuminates vital information about party and system durability and the nature and quality of democracy. And because different linkage mechanisms are susceptible to different challenges and constraints, awareness of the strategies that a party or system employs draws our attention to the places from which the most fundamental threats are likely to originate.

Linkage maintenance is thus crucial for party systems, and understanding linkage profiles offers important theoretical and empirical insights. But my argument does not end with the claim that linkage failure causes collapse. I also theorized about the factors that undermine linkage. I made the case that linkage deteriorates when party systems are confronted with challenges that jeopardize their core strategies at the same time that their ability to deal with these threats is constrained. I then specified the exact constellations of threats and constraints hypothesized to cause deterioration in the effectiveness of each of the three possible linkage strategies. In the case of programmatic representation, I theorized that crisis conditions pose challenges to maintenance of policy-based appeals, demanding innovative responses to pressing problems. When crisis occurs in a context where international constraints require governing parties to pursue policy solutions that conflict with their ideological legacies, policy responsiveness decays. If all the parties are implicated in this failed responsiveness through interparty agreements, then programmatic representation deteriorates across the entire system. Interest incorporation is threatened by transformations in the structure or kind of salient social cleavages. When emergent groups' concerns or structures do not align easily with those of entrenched interests, party organizational constraints make it difficult and costly to accommodate new groups, resulting in the narrowing of incorporation. Finally, clientelism decays under the challenge of meeting increased demand if resources are simultaneously limited. Increased demand stems from social changes and political decentralization, while economic crisis and reforms that limit partisan access to resources undermine parties' ability to satisfy this demand. In each case, the theory suggests that we will observe decay when structural changes jeopardize a linkage strategy and institutional or international constraints limit appropriate adaptation.

The empirical evidence from Venezuela and from the comparative cases decidedly supports these propositions. In all four collapse cases, programmatic linkage decayed when the parties experienced crisis conditions, which stemmed from the exhaustion of established policy models, in contexts where international constraints limited policy options to those that conflicted with governing parties' ideological legacies, while patterns of interparty cooperation removed meaningful alternatives from the party system. Alternatively, the four cases of party system survival each sustained programmatic representation because at least one of these three conditions—crisis, international constraints, or interparty agreements—was absent.

I noted the deterioration of incorporation in five cases—the two survival cases of Argentina and India and the three collapse cases of Venezuela, Italy, and Bolivia. Across all of them, we observed how transformations in the structure or kind of salient social cleavage created incredible pressures on all the system parties to accommodate new kinds of interests. Because the demands and organizational structures of these new groups contradicted the parties' entrenched patterns of incorporation, adapting to reach out to emerging interests was costly and risky, and incorporation narrowed. However, in the counterexample of Uruguay, societal restructuring around newly salient group interests did not pose the same threat to incorporation because the parties' fractionalized organizations facilitated accommodation of potentially competing established and emergent interests.

Finally, we saw that where clientelism deteriorated in the four collapse cases as well as Uruguay, social changes heightened demand while economic crisis shrank the supply of resources. Furthermore, in all five cases, clientelist demand increased when the establishment of separate sub-national elections proliferated the number of electoral contests and, therefore, also multiplied the inducements needed to entice people to return repeatedly to the polls and vote for traditional party candidates. This created competition for resources across the levels of government, where there had previously been centralized control and (enforced) cooperation. Simultaneously, other reforms that rationalized the state and limited partisan manipulation of resources closed off clientelist resource flows. In the face of escalating demand and dwindling resources, clientelism reached a rapidly shrinking number of voters. On the other hand, in cases of successfully sustained clientelism, economic stability (India and Belgium) or sustained partisan access to state resources (Argentina) allowed the parties to maintain or augment benefit flows in order to meet demand. Thus, analyzing cases of both collapse and survival underscores the importance of each element in the causal process that produces linkage decay, thereby emphasizing the significance of both structural challenges and institutional constraints for understanding the dynamics of party system change and collapse.

Theoretical Insights

These findings suggest several implications for our understanding of party and party system change. First, the analysis here accentuates the importance of adaptation for party and system survival. Previous studies on party or party system change have often pointed to (un)successful adaptation

efforts as crucial in shaping party and system outcomes (e.g., Levitsky 2001b; Panebianco 1988b). This book lends support to this perspective by showing how massive failures to respond to new demands (breakdowns in adaptive capacity) undermined linkage and caused collapse in Venezuela, Italy, Colombia, and Bolivia.

Second, more than simply reiterating the necessity of adaptation, the analysis sheds light on the reasons why change may be required and clarifies why appropriate modifications may or may not be possible. Much of the existing literature on party and system change emphasizes either structural changes that demand a response or institutional constraints that impede necessary adaptations. This book has demonstrated the utility of a synthesized approach that draws from both of these literatures to consider the kinds of structural changes likely to threaten different linkage strategies as well as the sorts of constraints liable to impose limitations on suitable responses to these challenges. This theoretical perspective provides leverage in understanding when adaptation is necessary, what kind of adjustments are needed, and why parties and systems are likely to succeed or fail in achieving the changes crucial to their survival. By combining insights from the literatures on structural challenges and institutional constraints, I have developed a comprehensive theory of collapse that effectively elucidates common patterns of party system failure across very diverse contexts. My work thus builds on previous scholarship (e.g., J. Aldrich 1995; Coppedge 2001; Kitschelt 1994) that highlights the importance of uniting structural and institutional explanations of party and party system change, by demonstrating how threats from structural changes and incentives/constraints generated by the institutional context are together necessary for party systems to experience complete linkage failure and collapse.

Third, in specifying the precise challenges and constraints that combine to undermine each linkage strategy, the book has heightened our awareness of each tactic's vulnerabilities. Thus, the analysis not only helps us understand why party systems collapse but also offers insight into the details of the linkage decay process. By theorizing and then empirically demonstrating the vulnerabilities of each linkage mechanism, the book underscores the idea that parties and party systems are susceptible to different sets of structural challenges and institutional constraints depending on their linkage portfolios. In delineating the exact constellations of challenges and constraints that undermine each linkage strategy, the book also contributes to literatures that examine how parties and party systems are shaped by specific structural and institutional factors, such as economic crisis, social

cleavages, party organizations, international institutions, and political reforms like decentralization and market-based rationalizations. For each of these independent variables, which previous scholarship suggests may play a role in influencing party or party system change, I detailed the challenge it posed to linkage maintenance or the constraint it imposed on adaptation. In this way, the analysis shed light on exactly how these factors create pressure for change or shape a party system's capacity to adapt.

Fourth, parsing out the weaknesses of each linkage strategy adds nuance to the typical view that programmatic representation is normatively superior to other forms of linkage. All linkage mechanisms have the potential to deteriorate when confronted with the perfect storm of challenges and constraints. So while policy-based appeals may enhance opportunities for meaningful representation in a democratic system, even this linkage strategy is not immune to deterioration in the face of crisis when the system also faces limitations on adaptation created by international constraints and interparty agreements.

Fifth, the book emphasizes the value of viewing party systems' linkage strategies as having three possible components. While party systems may rely almost exclusively on one linkage mechanism (as in the case of the Colombian parties' dependence on clientelism), most party systems employ multiple strategies for connecting people to the state. Often such diversity facilitates adaptation and system survival. When one linkage tactic deteriorates but other mechanisms remain in place—a process we observed in Argentina, Belgium, Uruguay, and India—parties are able to shore up support through other strategies and thereby survive. Additionally, by identifying three possible linkage tactics, the book moves beyond the common programmatic versus clientelistic dichotomy. I am not the first to suggest the importance of linkage achieved by sectoral appeals to major groups in society (see Kitschelt and Wilkinson 2007a, as well as Collier 1995; K. Roberts 2002a; Schmitter and Lehbruch 1979). But interest incorporation often does not receive the same systematic treatment given to clientelism and especially programmatic representation. This book has illuminated how interest incorporation is analytically distinct from the other two linkage strategies and highlighted its importance for parties as they try to capture and sustain support. While there may be some empirical overlap between the various linkage strategies, such as policies directed to core constituencies and loyal supporters or material benefits that help certain sectors of the population, some strategies for pursuing incorporation cannot be captured neatly in the programmatic-clientelist dichotomy. For instance, reserved

places in party apparatuses for certain sectors of society, like trade unions or business associations, and special access to party or government decision-making processes for major interests are ways that parties may build linkage around group identities and organizations, which are not captured by our typical understandings of programmatic representation or clientelism. Furthermore, by adding the dimension of interest incorporation to our view of linkage portfolios and to our analysis of linkage decay, the book builds on the work of Lipset and Rokkan (1967) in exploring how important societal transformations cause either significant adaptations or major restructuring in party systems because they create demands for new kinds of interest incorporation.

Sixth, the book enhances our understanding of individual cases of collapse by placing them in a common theoretical framework and tracing the key steps in the causal process that led to their demise. The most important contribution along these lines pertains to our understanding of Venezuelan politics. I have spelled out in considerable detail how programmatic representation, interest incorporation, and clientelism deteriorated, thus causing Venezuelan collapse. Applying my theory of bankrupt representation to Venezuela underscores the utility of the approach I have developed and illuminates important empirical nuances in the dynamics of Venezuelan politics before and after collapse. In similar, albeit less detailed, ways, the analysis also highlights the central causal process that produced collapse in Italy, Colombia, and Bolivia.

The final contribution that I wish to highlight here pertains to the conceptualization of party system collapse and the level of analysis that is necessary for understanding this phenomenon. Collapse is a system-level event that involves both the decay of the major parties *and* the transformation of the party system. (And collapse has profound ramifications for other system-level outcomes, such as democracy and representation, which I detail below.) Therefore, theories of collapse must be able to explain not only the deterioration of individual parties but also the aggregation of this failure to the system level. In the theoretical exposition and empirical analysis presented in this book, I have elucidated the process through which linkage failure contaminates entire party systems and leads to their demise. For each type of linkage, I have shown not only why individual parties might find it difficult to sustain this strategy but also why the system as a whole experiences decay in the utility of the tactic. Programmatic representation evaporates across the party system when people reject the policy status quo and interparty agreements obscure distinctions between government and

opposition, removing programmatic alternatives from the party system and requiring voters to look outside the system for credible policy options or meaningful ideological choices. Loss of interest incorporation threatens the entire system only when the very logic of the dominant social cleavage is fundamentally transformed in structure or in type, undermining the incorporating capacity of not just one party but all the parties in the system because none successfully reflects the new cleavage patterns. Finally, clientelist decay infects the party system as a whole when no party has enough resources to meet demand. As dissatisfied clients move from one party to the next, this only increases the pressure on each party's shrinking pool of benefits for distribution. If system-level deterioration occurs across all components of a party system's linkage portfolio, then linkage is entirely bankrupt and the system collapses. By detailing how entire party systems lose linkage capacity, the theory of collapse developed in this book appropriately treats it as a system-level phenomenon and provides important insights not only into the shortcomings of individual parties but also into the dynamics that undermine entire party systems.

POST-COLLAPSE POLITICS: TRAGEDY OR OPPORTUNITY?

Thus far, I have detailed the origins of linkage decay and demonstrated how system-level linkage failure causes party system collapse. But what is left behind after collapse? What (or who) fills the void? What challenges do democracies face following party system failure? With party system collapse in Venezuela, Italy, Colombia, and Bolivia, politics changed in overt and subtle ways. In Venezuela, one of Latin America's oldest democracies, voters elected former coup plotter Hugo Chávez, and two of the region's most developed parties withered away. With the Italian collapse, the once dominant DC was replaced by a right-wing coalition (Polo delle Libertà) that included a media baron, a regional autonomy party, and neo-fascists. In Colombia, elite bargaining gave way to aggressive leadership by right-wing independent Álvaro Uribe. In Bolivia, collapse brought Evo Morales, a *cocacero* and Bolivia's first indigenous president, to power, giving representation to a long-excluded sector of the population.

Party system collapse clearly has the potential to transform political processes and patterns. This final portion of the book emphasizes not just the theoretical significance of explaining collapse, but reiterates the real-world importance of understanding this phenomenon by spelling out its dramatic consequences, both positive and negative. I consider what takes

the place of failed party systems and demonstrate that the successors to collapsed systems rose to power by promising linkage where their predecessors failed. I also explore some of the features of post-collapse systems, highlighting patterns in how successor systems shape the quality and stability of democracy in their respective countries.

How Failed Party Systems Shape Their Successors

When a party system collapses, something new takes its place. Citizens turn to new parties or to electoral movements developed around individual leaders. In all four cases of collapse, successful heirs to the failed party systems initially offered linkage in the precise areas where the old system had not responded to demands. These new actors made programmatic appeals by offering ideological alternatives and pledging to resolve important problems that the old parties had not sufficiently addressed. They also extended promises to neglected groups that reflected newly politicized cleavages. Eventually, some new actors also turned to clientelism, but as political outsiders, most lacked the resources to credibly offer clientelist benefits during their initial rise to power.

New Parties Offer Policy Answers and Ideological Options

In each of the four collapsed party systems, the old parties ceased to provide policy responses to important national problems, even as crisis conditions intensified the need for action. The heirs to the failed systems won support by pledging to tackle these very issues. In Venezuela, the traditional parties did not respond to the country's most pressing concerns in the 1990s, including cost of living, unemployment, crime, and corruption. In fact, as the crisis escalated, relevant policy efforts declined. As responsiveness floundered, Chávez, the primary beneficiary of the old parties' shortcomings, promised to address the issues seemingly abandoned by the traditional parties (Interviews 30, 44, 52, 77). A former AD president explained, "Over time the party system lost its vigilance in resolving people's problems. . . . This opened the door for Chávez to say that he was going to do what the parties were no longer doing—resolving people's problems" (Interview 51). In the 1998 campaign, he railed against corruption (Interview 46). His military background lent credibility to his assurances that he would address escalating crime (Interview 3). And he promised to confront the economic crisis, especially poverty and unemployment (Interviews 2, 21, 27); these commitments resonated with Chávez's supporters, who were

significantly more optimistic about their economic possibilities under his leadership than under the old parties (Morgan 2007).

Once in office, President Chávez and his supporters in the legislature took steps to fulfill people's expectations. Extending my analysis of legislative responsiveness to the Chávez era, I examined the amount and significance of legislation dealing with important problems passed during Chávez's first six years as president. About 12.5 percent of all legislation passed between 1999 and 2004 dealt with cost of living, unemployment, crime, or corruption, which represents a fourfold increase over the proportion of legislation dealing with the most important problems during the last two administrations of the old party system. Significant legislation addressing these issues also experienced a fourfold increase in the post-collapse era.¹ Much of the policy activity in these first years can be attributed to Chávez's efforts to restructure Venezuela's legislative framework, and his detractors and some legal scholars have suggested that this legislation was poorly written and ineffective. Regardless of these criticisms, however, Chávez clearly attracted support based on promises to address the country's problems, and upon taking office, he made attempts to follow through on these pledges.

The successful heirs to the failed party systems in Italy, Colombia, and Bolivia also came to power promising to address problems unresolved by their predecessors. In Italy, the most serious issues included (organized) crime, corruption, and recession (Bohrer and Tan 2000; Carter 1998; Gilbert 1995). The new parties of the Polo delle Libertà, which controlled the Italian Parliament after the 1994 elections, pledged to resolve these very concerns. The Lega Nord (LN), for instance, had a strong anticorruption appeal, based on small government rhetoric and party leaders' perceived asceticism (Daniels 1999; Gilbert 1995), and the neo-fascist Alleanza Nazionale (AN) maintained a strict anti-crime stance. Forza Italia, the largest new party, promised a second "Italian miracle" (Sznajder 1995), and the business successes of its founder, Silvio Berlusconi, lent credibility to this appeal.

In Colombia, the most important issues preceding collapse were violence, guerrillas, and unemployment (M. Seligson 2001), concerns unresolved by the Liberals and Conservatives. But former Liberal turned independent Álvaro Uribe campaigned as a hard-liner who advocated restoring order and confronting the guerrillas. As Dugas notes, "More than anything, Uribe's platform was notable for its unyielding stance on the issue of public security" (2003, 1127).

1. Based on analysis of survey data and legislation. For details, see chapter 5 and appendixes B and C.

Finally, in the year before the Bolivian system's 2005 collapse, survey respondents identified poverty, corruption, unemployment, and natural gas concessions as the country's most pressing problems (LAPOP 2004a). Evo Morales built a following by leading strikes protesting the government's gas policy and other issues, and he promised to increase income from gas and exert state control. He also positioned MAS as the voice of the oppressed (Singer 2007), and MAS voters were optimistic about the economy under a potential Morales government (Seligson et al. 2006, 94).

Successors to the failed systems also offered ideological alternatives to the decaying parties' consensus, allowing ideological distinctions to reemerge. In Venezuela, Chávez's Movimiento Quinta República (MVR) was ideologically left of AD, COPEI, Convergencia, and even MAS, which had all cooperated in governance at different points throughout the 1990s.² The movement of AD toward the right and the discrediting of MAS opened up space on the left, which Chávez stepped in to fill. Chávez's primary opponent in the 1998 elections, Henrique Salas Römer of Proyecto Venezuela, was the center-right option. Venezuelans considered these ideological positions when voting in 1998. Of those who placed themselves on the right side of the ideological spectrum, 69 percent voted for right candidates, while 76 percent of those on the left voted for Chávez (Molina 2002).

Ideological distinctions also reemerged in Italy, Colombia, and Bolivia. After the Italian collapse in 1994, Polo delle Libertà occupied the center-right, while the left was represented by the Progressive Alliance, which later became the Ulivo (Olive Tree) coalition (Carter 1998; Gilbert 1995). In Bolivia, Evo Morales's MAS became the main left party, embracing voters abandoned by the traditional parties' abdication of the left. On the right, a haphazard coalition formed under the banner of PODEMOS. In the 2005 election, MAS voters were significantly left of both PODEMOS and traditional party supporters (Seligson et al. 2006, 95). In Colombia, where ideological distinctions had been long subsumed by the National Front, Álvaro Uribe staked out a place on the right, advocating tough anti-violence and pro-neoliberal positions (Dugas 2003). Some left options also emerged. Polo Democrático attained a respectable second place in the 2006 presidential contest, providing electoral options on the part of the spectrum historically dominated by anti-system guerrillas (Rodríguez-Raga 2007; Ulloa and Carbó 2003). In each case, collapse opened up ideological options.

2. Source: RedPol98.

New Parties Reach Out to Neglected Groups

Furthermore, in Venezuela, Italy, and Bolivia—the three collapse cases in which incorporation had once been important but had deteriorated—the heirs to the failed parties structured themselves so as to reach out to newly salient interests that the old systems had disregarded.³ In Venezuela during the 1990s, major social transformations undermined the traditional class cleavage and restructured it around the formal-informal divide. But the old system only integrated formal sector groups, neglecting the informal side of the cleavage and excluding large sectors of the population. Chávez and MVR catered to the informal sector and urban poor abandoned by the traditional parties. As Chávez said in a 1998 interview, “We must combat the root of social problems, hunger, unemployment, [and] abandoned children” (quoted in Blanco Muñoz 1998, 626–27). These sorts of appeals to the poor and marginalized constituted a central part of his campaign (Canache 2007, 41). In interviews, many MVR party leaders acknowledged how the old parties’ inability to integrate these groups gave Chávez an opening by providing a critical support base. One MVR leader explained, “The [traditional] parties favored the interests of the oligarchy and excluded the population, but we made a promise to the people; we are obliged to serve their interests” (Interview 20).

Those who were previously excluded—like the poor, the informal sector, and the indigenous—formed the base for Chávez’s rise to power. In the 1990s, the poor consistently held more positive views of Chávez than the wealthy (Canache 2002). Survey data suggest that poor Venezuelans were significantly more likely to express intent to vote for Chávez, while the wealthy were more inclined to support other options (Molina 2002). And although Chávez was elected in 1998 with the backing of various sectors, he captured the votes of the poor and lower-middle sectors by the widest margins (Hellinger 2003; López Maya 2003; K. Roberts 2003b). When Chávez faced serious challenges from an April 2002 coup attempt and then a general strike in late 2002 and early 2003, the poor provided a critical reservoir of support (Canache 2007). Informal sector workers protested the coup and subverted the strike’s effort to shut down the economy (Interviews 2, 77).

Once in power, Chávez implemented programs designed to maintain support among the poor. His Misiones provided benefits such as job training, literacy classes, and affordable foodstuffs (Penfold-Becerra 2007) and

3. As discussed in chapter 10, the Colombian system did not use incorporation as an important linkage strategy.

reached groups that the old parties had excluded (Interview 15). Chávez also capitalized on racially based exclusion by appealing to dark-skinned Venezuelans, who were impoverished at much higher rates than their light-skinned neighbors (Hellinger 2003). The 1999 Constitution, written by Chávez's allies, reserved seats for the indigenous in the National Assembly. Indigenous leaders blamed the traditional parties for mistreating, neglecting, and taking advantage of the indigenous population and credited Chávez with making tangible, albeit small, steps to promote indigenous interests (Interviews 29, 33). Thus, Chávez used the traditional parties' neglect of these groups to his advantage, as "MVR encompass[ed] a majority of the excluded classes" (Interview 29). Meanwhile, the remnants of AD and COPEI and the new right parties spoke for the traditionally incorporated sectors. Together, the chavistas and the anti-chavistas attracted support based on the major new social divide.

In much the same way, the successors to the failed party systems in Italy and Bolivia rose to power with the backing of groups that had been ignored by the old parties. Both countries experienced the politicization of new cleavages in the decade preceding collapse. In Italy, deindustrialization and secularization weakened the worker-owner and religious-secular cleavages, which had formed the foundation for old incorporation patterns (Daniels 1999; Leonardi and Wertman 1989; Morlino 1996). Instead, regional issues took on increasing importance (Gilbert 1995). In Bolivia, economic crisis and neoliberalism produced poverty and informality, eviscerating the class divide that the system had historically incorporated (Barr 2005; Conaghan and Malloy 1994; Mayorga 2005). As class divisions lost relevance, the ethnic cleavage became increasingly divisive and significant (Mayorga 2006; Van Cott 2003).

In both Italy and Bolivia, these unincorporated groups formed a base for successor parties' ascent to power. In Italy, regional demands were particularly significant in the north, where people disdained the south (Gilbert 1995). The LN, a major coalition partner in the first government after collapse, capitalized on these frustrations. LN built a following based on calls for increased autonomy, devolution, and federalism. Its presence in the governing coalition provided an answer to the increasingly salient north-south divide (Sznajder 1995, 95–96). In Bolivia, the indigenous sought representation after decades in which the traditional parties minimized ethnic identities and emphasized class interests. Several indigenous-based parties took advantage of this opening, including ASP (Asamblea por la Soberanía de los Pueblos), MIP (Movimiento Indígena Pachakuti), and MAS (Van Cott

2005). MAS was the most significant beneficiary of the old parties' failure to accommodate ethnic cleavages. Its leader, Evo Morales, was of mixed Aymara and Quechua origin and rose to prominence as the head of the cocalero movement, which protested U.S.-prescribed eradication policies (Singer 2007). Morales came to power by attracting substantial indigenous support, calling for protection of their cultural heritage and identity and demanding an economic model that benefited them, not just the white elite (Van Cott 2005).

Thus, where the traditional parties had neglected linkage, opportunities opened up for new parties or leaders to seize upon these gaps and build support by promising to fill them, using programmatic representation and interest incorporation. Chávez, Berlusconi, Uribe, and Morales each pledged to address the issues their predecessors had abandoned and extended promises to groups excluded under the old system. Understanding the linkage failures of collapsing systems reveals the sorts of strategies likely to be employed successfully by emerging leaders in their initial ascent to power. It is not a coincidence that Chávez came to power on promises to jumpstart the economy, confront corruption, and listen to the excluded. Rather, these were the exact areas where the traditional party system had fallen short, providing an opening that Chávez successfully exploited. The failings of old systems molded the linkage strategies of their successors.

Clientelism was the only linkage form not common in the initial appeals of successful challengers to the failed systems. Over time, clientelism became important in some of the new systems' linkage profiles. In Venezuela, for instance, clientelist distribution of oil income through differential access to various social programs like the Misiones has become a mainstay of the chavista strategy (Penfold-Becerra 2007). Likewise, in the new Italian party system, vote buying has resurfaced as a significant avenue for drumming up political support, especially in the south (Allum and Allum 2008; Heller and Mershon 2005). But in no case was clientelism central in the successor system's strategy for winning office in the first place. In fact, during their initial ascent to power, the new parties typically spoke out against their predecessors' clientelist practices. The lack of clientelist appeals at the point of transition between old and new systems is likely due to the fact that new parties lacked the ability to make credible clientelist commitments (Warner 2001) and to the discrediting of clientelism as corrupt (Hawkins 2010). Most new parties do not have the resources required to offer clientelist exchanges before elections, so their capacity to fulfill clientelist promises is contingent on the uncertain prospect that they will win and thereby gain access to resources

needed to follow through (Warner 2001, 124). Therefore, parties' initial ascents were built largely on programmatic pledges to resolve pressing problems, new ideological options, and reaching out to excluded groups.

Successor Party Systems and Their Relationship to Democracy

The nature of linkage is only one of several characteristics likely to change as a party system collapses. Although the successor systems to the four collapse cases differed in important ways, they had several common features. These shared characteristics suggest that both the process that produces party system failure and the collapse itself pose specific, identifiable risks and opportunities. Here I detail some of the parallels across the four successor systems, including personalism, deinstitutionalization, instability, and conflict, and I discuss the challenges that these shared features imply for post-collapse democracy.

In each of the four collapse cases, the traditional party systems were not replaced by institutionalized parties or even established civil society organizations. Rather, in all four, the most successful heir to the collapsed system was an individual political leader who constructed a personal following that propelled him to power: Venezuela's Hugo Chávez, Italy's Silvio Berlusconi, Colombia's Álvaro Uribe, and Bolivia's Evo Morales. Although their individual characteristics varied, each of these leaders developed a strategy based at least in part on his own persona.

In Venezuela, Chávez did not invest in developing a party organization (Hawkins 2003; Mejias Sarabia and Tarazón Rodríguez 2000). In fact, he has utilized various party vehicles since his first election in 1998 and has now completely replaced MVR with a new party, PSUV (Partido Socialista Unido de Venezuela). Efforts to develop either party as an entity separate from Chávez have been negligible. Even the primary alternatives to Chávez rely largely on individual leaders. As one major opposition politician reflected, "Many [of the new party] organizations are born around a single person instead of around ideas and programs" (Interview 68).

Similarly, Italy, Colombia, and Bolivia manifest patterns of reliance on personal image and charisma. The Italian prime minister after collapse, Berlusconi, was a media baron, one of the nation's wealthiest businessmen, and owner of a top Italian soccer club (Diani 1996). He established Forza Italia, which translates to "Go Italy!," as his personal electoral vehicle (Sznajder 1995). He used his own fortune to establish party clubs, much like soccer fan clubs, throughout the country and, once in office, seemed unable to

separate his business persona and interests from his political duties (Gilbert 1995). Likewise, in Colombia, Álvaro Uribe wielded personalist power (Posada-Carbó 2006). Uribe resisted developing a party organization, opting instead to use an electoral vehicle in support of his candidacy and cobbling together ad hoc congressional coalitions in support of his policies (Dugas 2003). Evo Morales in Bolivia has also relied on his charisma, albeit to a lesser extent than his counterparts. He has the backing of major new social movements, including the cocaleros and the indigenous, but these groups are more fluid and less institutionalized than old bases built on traditional class interests. And MAS, Morales's party, was originally just a label abandoned by a failed traditional left party that allowed him to adopt its name in order to stage his campaigns (Van Cott 2005).

Associated with these actors' personalism was a deinstitutionalization process in which party organizations lost significance. Developing party organizations takes time, energy, and resources, whereas bases built on individuals are easily constructed (and destructed). When the old parties failed, individual leaders who lacked firm organizational underpinnings stepped in. As a result, party organizations were mostly irrelevant in the immediate post-collapse eras. In Venezuela, for example, since the old parties failed over a decade ago, neither the chavistas nor their opponents have developed anything that resembles an institutionalized party structure.

Weak party organizations and personalism pose challenges to democracy after collapse. Without party organizations to check leaders, the risk of excessive power concentrated in one person is amplified. Politics is easily subjected to a leader's whims, allowing erratic changes in policy or in the rules of the game. This uncertainty may provoke turmoil and undermine governability. The absence of strong parties in the legislature also means that the executive is unlikely to encounter constructive and substantive dialogue and may resort to unilateral action. When one individual amasses considerable power, opportunities for accountability narrow. Power concentration is particularly risky when the person who holds that power is an outsider with ambivalent or even hostile views of the political system or of the democratic regime—common characteristics of the successors to collapse (Mainwaring and Zoco 2007).

In none of the collapse cases did the system fail under pressure from well-organized or institutionalized competitors. Instead, it collapsed because of its decaying linkage capacity. Although successful heirs took advantage of the old systems' failures, it was not the presence of strong, established alternatives that caused these problems. Therefore, as old systems disintegrated, they

left a power vacuum in which various nascent players competed to gain a foothold, creating uncertainty and instability.

By definition, volatility during collapse was high in all four cases because the traditional parties lost considerable vote share to other actors as part of the collapse process. But even after collapse was complete, volatility remained high. Using seat allocation data and the Pedersen index (1983), I calculated volatility in the composition of the lower house of the legislature between the collapse election and the first election after collapse in Venezuela, Italy, Colombia, and Bolivia.⁴ In all four countries, volatility was quite high, well above regional averages of 8 in 1980s Western Europe and 20 in 1990s Latin America (Gallagher, Laver, and Mair 1995, 233; Roberts and Wibbels 1999, 577). In Venezuela, volatility between the 1998 collapse and the 2000 legislative elections was over 35, a marked increase above the average of about 20 during the two decades preceding collapse. In Italy, volatility between collapse in 1994 and the 1996 parliamentary elections was over 30, a significant departure from average volatility below 10 during the height of the old system (Pedersen 1983). In Colombia, volatility surpassed 50 between 2002 and 2006—almost five times its levels in the 1980s and 1990s (Roberts and Wibbels 1999). Even Bolivia, where volatility was comparatively high at about 27 during the 1980s and 1990s, saw an increase to a score of 35 between the 2005 collapse and the 2009 elections (CNE 2010; Roberts and Wibbels 1999).

The instability common after collapse poses challenges to democracy. These fluctuations create uncertainty for voters and parties, making political calculations difficult and ordinary strategies irrelevant (Moser 2001). As parties come and go, voters must learn anew what each stands for, and they face ambiguity about how new groups will perform (Hinich and Munger 1994; Mainwaring and Torcal 2006). Changing party identities, organizational structures, and ideologies require voters to adjust constantly (Roberts and Wibbels 1999). Additionally, when parties do not run for reelection, holding them accountable is nearly impossible. Without the structure provided by a stable party system, politics may devolve into chaos, weakening governability and accountability. It is also easier for new actors and outsiders to enter the system when volatility is high. But while volatility presents opportunities for access and may expand representational options, it may just as easily open the door to potential opponents of the regime.

4. The legislative volatility index is calculated by adding together the absolute values of the change in seat shares won by each party from one election to the next, and then dividing by two. The index ranges from 0 to 100 and corresponds to the net change in seat shares.

Escalation of conflict also accompanied collapse in each case. As linkage failed, the parties' ability to channel contestation deteriorated, and more contentious forms of politics proliferated. Successors to the old systems challenged as corrupt established norms of negotiation and compromise, which were typical of the interparty agreements in all four pre-collapse systems. As these new actors assumed power, old patterns of compromise gave way to conflict and contention. Of the four cases of collapse, Venezuela and Bolivia are the strongest examples of this. Both experienced dramatic escalations in conflict as their party systems deteriorated, and contention remained elevated after collapse. At the Venezuelan system's height from the 1970s through the mid-1980s, parties effectively channeled conflicting views of state and society. Likewise, Bolivia in the late 1980s and early 1990s was regarded as an exemplar of good governance and constructive participation (McNeish 2006). However, as the parties lost capacity to channel diverse interests, conflict intensified in early 1990s Venezuela and late 1990s Bolivia, with extra-institutional contestation reaching its most severe point in the years immediately *following* collapse.

With the failure of the Venezuelan party system, conflict reached unprecedented levels. In interviews, many elites noted that a major difference since the failure of the old parties was the considerable elevation in contentious politics. A major opposition politician characterized the post-collapse polity as a "permanent state of instability" (Interview 67), and an MVR leader agreed that the country had faced "high political conflict for the past five years [since Chávez took power]" (Interview 34). The constant political turmoil in Venezuela since 1998 supports this perception of instability and conflict (Smilde 2004). Repeated clashes between chavistas and anti-chavistas over the rules of the game, including election procedures, executive powers, and even the Constitution itself, speak strongly to the conflictual environment. Much of this turmoil came to a head during the April 2002 coup that briefly removed Chávez and provoked extended public demonstrations supporting and opposing the coup. Then, in late 2002 and early 2003, a general strike or work stoppage mounted by the opposition shut down ordinary public life for several months.

Fig. 12.1 depicts the elevated tumult of Venezuelan politics following the party system's collapse. The figure displays the number of protests counted by the human rights organization Provea in its annual reports, as well as the number of news items about protests in the major Caracas daily *El Nacional*, archived in the El Bravo Pueblo database at the Universidad Central de Venezuela (López Maya and Lander 2005). Both sources show significant

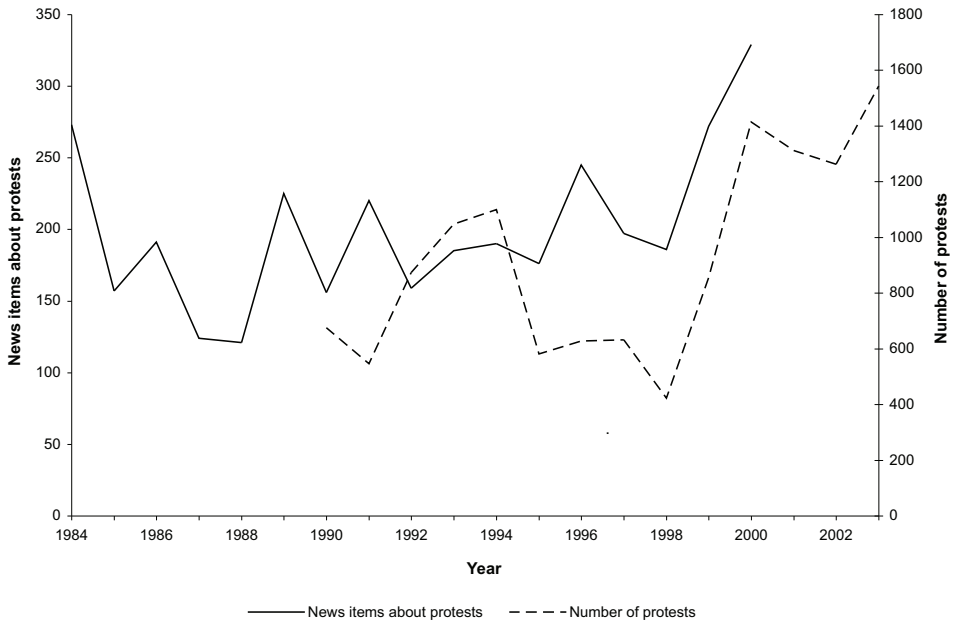


Fig. 12.1 Protests in Venezuela, 1984–2003

Note: Each year corresponds to October of the preceding year through September of the year indicated.

Source: Protests from Provea’s *Situación de los derechos*. News items from El Bravo Pueblo database. Both reported in López Maya and Lander (2005).

increases in protest levels in 1999 and 2000, and the news data suggest that protest activity remained high through 2003. The number of demonstrations and news reports reached levels 50 percent higher than the average during the pre-collapse period. Analysis of the kinds of protest during the post-collapse era also points to an escalation in the intensity of conflict, as nonconventional forms of protest increased. In 1999, 63 percent of protests were confrontational and 21 percent turned violent, whereas only 15 percent fit conventional patterns. This level of nonconventional activism contrasts with the decade spanning 1984 to 1993, when conventional demonstrations constituted nearly half of all protests (López Maya and Lander 2005, 96).

The Bolivian experience followed a similar pattern. The 1980s and early 1990s were a relatively peaceful period in Bolivia. But by the late 1990s, protests, demonstrations, and road blockades were common strategies. And with the presidential victory of Evo Morales, the cocalero who spearheaded many protests, the level of conflict remained high, overwhelming ordinary

political processes (McNeish 2006). National public opinion surveys conducted in Bolivia in 2004 and 2006, the years before and after the party system's failure, indicate that protest participation increased after collapse. The percentage of Bolivians who reported participating in a protest in the past year increased from 21 percent in the 2004 survey to 28 percent in the 2006 survey (LAPOP 2004a, 2006). Even though politics in Bolivia were already overheated before collapse, the level of turmoil did not subside but continued to escalate. As in Venezuela, Bolivian conflict involved contestation over basic rules of the game. Perhaps the most intense struggle focused on efforts to write a new constitution, with both government and opposition resorting to marches and protests to display their strength and pressure the other side (Madrid 2007). Regional polarization also escalated, and MAS supporters even set fire to the opposition governor's palace in Cochabamba, forcing the prefect to flee (Madrid 2007, 21). At this writing, confrontational politics show no sign of abating in Bolivia.

Although Venezuela and Bolivia are the most poignant instances of intense conflict accompanying party system collapse, Italy and Colombia exhibited similar, albeit less extreme, patterns of conflict escalation. Italy experienced a surge in protest in 1994 as the party system collapsed midway through that year. A database of protest events developed using the national news section of the major Italian daily *La Repubblica* demonstrates that the number of protests reached an all-time high in 1994 (Forno 2003). Furthermore, the scope and intensity of protests increased after collapse, as unconventional, anti-system demonstrations, like the LN's secessionist revolts, multiplied (Diani 1996; Forno 2003). The uprisings and their targets were also much more likely to extend beyond the local context to the regional or national level after collapse (Forno 2003, 6–11).

In Colombia, conflict was already quite common before the party system collapsed in 2002. But clashes between the government and leftist guerrillas opposing the system reached an all-time high under Álvaro Uribe (Avilés 2006; Farrell 2007). Of course, this sort of armed conflict between government and guerrillas was a natural outgrowth of Uribe following through on his promise to squash the guerrillas militarily. Perhaps protest activity is more comparable to the conflictual politics experienced in the other collapse cases. Traditionally, this type of contentious politics was limited in Colombia (Hochstetler and Palma 2009), with few strikes or protests being reported (Banks 2010). Though media coverage of protests remained limited, albeit with a slight uptick in the late 1990s and early 2000s, by 2004 demonstrations had increased (Almeida 2007, 124), and 19 percent of

survey respondents reported participating in protests—a rate almost as high as that of Bolivia after collapse (LAPOP 2004b).⁵ The Banks Conflict index (2010), which includes a variety of political conflict activities, such as protests, strikes, riots, and guerrilla warfare, also reached its highest level for Colombia in 2004, just two years after collapse. In fact, the index shows a general pattern of increased conflict over the 1990s and through the first half of the 2000s.

Thus, heightened conflict accompanies party system collapse. As established parties lose linkage capacity, the system cannot channel competing views constructively, and conflict spills outside institutionalized processes and into the streets. Furthermore, as the country transitions from the old to the new, traditional modes of politics become obsolete, and new actors challenge established conciliatory patterns. In this uncertain context, competing groups battle for the upper hand, and rules that had previously been a matter of consensus are subjected to discussion. When disputes extend to the rules themselves, conflict overwhelms typical boundaries as groups compete for survival. Party system collapse, therefore, exposes democracy to intense conflict over the fundamentals of politics. Extreme conflict levels, especially the sort observed in Venezuela and Bolivia, pose a real challenge to democracy. Although new voices are being heard in the post-collapse polity, the cacophony of competition that accompanies collapse threatens to overwhelm the democratic system if new patterns of contestation cannot be established in order to conduct competition in productive, rather than destructive, ways.

POST-COLLAPSE LESSONS

Party system collapse completely restructures not only the party system but also numerous other political patterns and processes. On the one hand, collapse opens opportunities for representation. Successful emerging actors address pressing issues that the old system neglected, giving people hope for future substantive improvements. Ideological options broaden in the post-collapse period, and voters are able to choose between alternative policy visions at the polls. Whereas the old parties excluded emergent interests aligned along newly salient cleavages, their successors appeal to these neglected interests. Therefore, while the old systems failed because of

5. Data on participation in protests for the pre-collapse period in Colombia were not available.

deteriorating linkage, the successful heirs to collapse capitalized on these weaknesses, building linkage where there had been none.

On the other hand, party system collapse raises the specter of tragedy by posing threats to the democratic regime. Personalistic leaders step into the power vacuum left by the old system, and without organizational constraints on individual power, horizontal accountability recedes and erratic decision making threatens stability and sound policy. If new leaders have ambiguous or antagonistic attitudes about democracy, the regime itself may be at risk. Increases in volatility that accompany collapse also pose a challenge for democracy, as uncertainty decreases voters' ability to sustain effective vertical accountability. Instability in electoral options and outcomes undermines policy consistency, limiting effective responsiveness in the long term.

Democracy is also challenged by the heightened conflict associated with decaying linkage and party system collapse. Ineffective linkage opens the door to more contentious politics as people clamor to be heard. As emerging actors struggle to redefine the rules of the game, they expand the scope of competition, increasing the level and intensity of conflict. Extreme conflict weakens governability, and protracted or violent clashes may even threaten regime survival. Therefore, although party system collapse may refresh linkage opportunities, it also exposes the democratic regime to multiple challenges, including concentration of power, limited accountability, and disintegrating governability.

Given the threats that accompany party system failure, democracy is likely better served if collapse can be avoided. Stability would be preserved and the quality of democracy enhanced if established systems could find a way to improve linkage. If a party system sustains linkage, the country avoids the threats associated with collapse while also maintaining representation. If party systems are to avoid collapse, my findings suggest several considerations that parties, government officials, and public opinion leaders should take into account. First, parties should not respond to major crises by closing ranks and working together. Commonly, when countries face challenges requiring significant policy innovation, public opinion leaders and even officeholders clamor for politicians to work together and avoid partisan conflict. However, my analysis of party system collapse shows that interparty collaboration during crisis threatens the programmatic credibility of all the participating parties. If the parties cooperate and fail to provide an adequate policy response, then voters are left with no viable alternative to the status quo, and people become frustrated with the entire system and look elsewhere for representation. Rather than entering interparty agreements

during times of crisis, nongoverning parties should offer responsible opposition, thereby giving dissatisfied voters the opportunity to express frustration at the polls without jeopardizing the entire system.

Second, parties should not block entry of regime-supportive competitors. This advice may seem counterintuitive to party leaders who want to optimize their chances for winning. But the Uruguay-Colombia comparison suggests that when systems allow expansion, they accommodate unrepresented interests and improve their long-term odds of survival. Although Uruguay's Blancos and Colorados lost complete dominance much sooner than Colombia's Liberals and Conservatives, the Uruguayan parties remain significant players today, while the Colombian parties have disintegrated. Because the Colorados and Blancos did not keep Frente Amplio out of the system and FA opted for electoral politics rather than guerrilla militancy, voters found options for programmatic and incorporating linkage that the two traditional parties could not provide. When clientelism failed, other forms of linkage remained. In Colombia, on the other hand, the left operated largely outside the electoral arena, and when clientelism deteriorated, the entire system lacked linkage and collapsed. The entry of competition into the Uruguayan system enabled its adaptation and allowed the traditional parties' survival. Therefore, competition can be a good thing, for both the system and its component parties.

Finally, crisis conditions and institutional reforms do not mix. In case after case of collapse, political reforms challenged linkage maintenance by requiring the parties to adapt to new institutions at the same time that they faced other stresses from economic crisis and social change. Frequently, the reforms were motivated by a desire to increase decaying legitimacy and enhance accountability, and politicians hoped that the changes might communicate a desire to respond to public opinion and compensate for their inability to address major economic and social problems. Unfortunately, while the reforms may have pleased a small set of the population attuned to institutional complexities, they did not compensate for lack of responsiveness to basic national issues like inflation, unemployment, and crime. More gravely, the reforms created roadblocks in the parties' efforts to provide linkage, particularly weakening clientelism. Thus, while institutional reforms can often be important tools in restructuring incentives and enhancing the quality of democracy, such changes should not be implemented in the midst of crisis because they infrequently resolve the country's most pressing problems and often create more challenges for parties to overcome. If reforms are implemented under stressful conditions, they should not demand

complete rationalization but should take care to preserve party access to resources in order to safeguard the system from complete linkage failure.

Party system collapse is traumatic, and although it may open opportunities for representation, it also has potentially devastating consequences for democratic stability. If a party system avoids threats to its core linkage profile or adapts in the face of major structural challenges, it is able to provide adequate ties between citizens and the state and survive. But where fundamental challenges and adverse constraints on appropriate adaptation cause the deterioration of the system's linkage strategies, the party system collapses.