FEMALE POLITICIANS IN CHILE: UNFOLDING THE MEANINGS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR CHILEAN POLITICS IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

BY

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Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to unfold the meanings and implications of female politicians in Chile in the twenty-first century. Based on interviews with Chilean politicians and employing a methodology based on Bourdieu's reflexive sociology and relational ontology, I unpack the complex relationships between gender and political power. My central claim is that the way in which female politicians are perceived by themselves and by male politicians, and how female politicians might affect views on political behaviour, is something widely influenced by the history and trajectory of Chilean politics.

I explore issues of representation in politics and democracy and reassess the relevancy of the concept of representation for elaborating the meanings and implications of increased numbers of female politicians in Chile. Highlighting the strategic character of political practices, I analyse symbolic representation by looking at it from political representatives' points of view. I problematize the complex relationships between democracy, representation, and economic development in the context of neoliberal globalization, in which the place of women in politics remains both promising and uncertain.

I analyse interview data collected by integrating 'conceptual blending theory', critical discourse analysis and Bourdieu's theory. From this integral perspective, I analyse political practices as both embodied experience and as a reflection of socio-political reality. Through a socio-historical journey, I explore the foundations of Chilean democracy, political participation, and representation. I argue that the main milestone which affects the meanings and implications can be found in Chile's late granting of women's suffrage (1949) and in the democratic breakdown during Pinochet's dictatorship (1973-1990).

I argue that Chilean political institutions of formal representation impede women's descriptive, substantive, and symbolic representation from fully taking place in the Chilean political system. Interview analysis demonstrated that political institutional design is an expression and reflection of the shortcomings of Chilean political culture. This was found to prevent the furthering of a democracy in which female politicians are central actors. This political context sheds light on Michelle Bachelet's presidential triumph in 2006, which represented a push for a more democratic and egalitarian society, as well as the political strategy by the weakened ruling coalition who sought to remain in power.

Finally, I explore the temporal dimension of the meanings and implications of female politicians in Chile. By looking at the temporality of political processes, practices and institutions, I return to the symbolic dimension of representation. I demonstrate that the states of uncertainty and crises of politics offer contested spaces for political power distribution and for further elaboration on the private and public division of social life. The temporality of politics as social practice reflects its deeply gendered nature, as well as the arbitrariness of political power.

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Acronyms

ANEF   National Association of Government Employees *(Asociación Nacional de Empleados Fiscales)*

ACI   Agency for International Cooperation of Chile *(Agencia de Cooperación Internacional de Chile)*

CEDEM   Center of Studies for Women's Development *(Centro de Estudios para el Desarrollo de la Mujer)*

CUT   Workers' United Centre of Chile (*Central Unitaria de Trabajadores* de Chile)

DC   Christian Democracy *(Democracia Cristiana)*

FONADI   National Fund for Disablility *(Fondo Nacional de la Discapacidad)*

FOSIS   Solidarity Fund for Social Investment (*Fondo Solidario de Inversión Social*)

IC   Christian Left *(Izquierda Cristiana)*

INDAP   National Institute for Agrarian-Livestock Development (*Instituto Nacional de Desarrollo Agro-Pecuario)*

JPM   Together We can More Pact *(Juntos Podemos Más)*

MAS   Broad Social Movement *(Movimiento Amplio Social)*

PC   Communist Party *(Partido Comunista)*

PH   Humanist Party *(Partido Humanista)*

PP   Progressive Pary (*Partido Progresita*)

PPD   Party for Democracy *(Partido por la Democracia)*

PRI   Regional Party of Independents *(Partido Regional Indepenentista)*

PRS   Radical Democratic Party *(Partido Radical Democrático)*

PS   Socialist Party *(Partido Socialista*)

RN   National Renovation *(Renovación Nacional)*

UDI   Independent Democratic Union (*Unión Democrata Independiente)*

Introduction

During 2005, two female politicians ran as potential candidates in Chile's presidential election. Later in 2006, one of them, Michelle Bachelet became the first female president of the country. Female politicians until then were very rare actors in Chilean politics and were mostly confined to the backstages of political activity. Michelle Bachelet's election not only put a woman at the centre of the political stage, but it broke with Chilean common sense assumptions of political power, gender relations and democracy.

During the period surrounding Bachelet's election and the first phase of her administration, there was considerable debate on the meanings and implications of her election and the position of women in politics for Chile and for women. Furthermore, on a more basic level, Chilean society started reflecting on women's advancement in the political realm.

The rise of women in politics in Chile is also noteworthy due to the particularities of the democratic transition and the features of the electoral system, from 1990 to the present. Despite the changes in political structures and the ongoing return of democracy, women's participation in the political field remained weak until 2000. The electoral system itself inhibited the advancement of 'women's issues', as it resulted in two main political blocs controlling the political arena - neither of which has taken on gender equality issues as a priority.

With the memory of the dictatorship still in the collective consciousness of the country, political parties have been willing to make concessions to avoid conflict that could jeopardize government and the existing social order. In order to keep the stability of the Concertación – the left centre coalition in office, since the return to democracy in 1990 until 2010 – and ensure the support of the all parties of the coalition in an electoral period,

sensitive topics have been left off the political agenda. The dynamics of the system of political parties has meant that gender demands – especially around gender quotas – have not been a priority for successive governments since the return to democracy. Research shows that during the controversial transition to the democracy from 1990 until 2000, successive governments not only failed to promote gender equality, but adopted policies that weakened women's ability to demand empowerment.

In 2000, the balance of the forces within the Concertación changed and the Socialist Party took a dominant position within this left-centre coalition. Under President Ricardo Lagos's administration, Chile saw the first significant signs of female presence in politics, which culminated with the election of Michelle Bachelet in 2006. However, women's representation in Chilean politics is still low. Only 16% of the Parliament and 5.2% of the Senate are women and there is strong resistance to introducing an effective gender quota[1].

Chilean intellectuals and political analysts have attempted to explain the current dynamics of the Chilean political field. Some argue that the emphasis in the Chilean feminine leadership rests more in the idea of complementarity than equality. The feminine leadership is also seen as a redress to market liberal economic ideals, which stress competitiveness and individualism.

In the Chilean case, the rise of women in politics was not perceived as a way to improve women's position in the society, but a way to improve the whole society, a society which is demanding political leadership committed to community, human well-being, solidarity, honesty, closeness, participation, family and team work. Women are considered more able to display this type of leadership than men. If so, does this help explain the current situation of women participating in Chilean politics. We have to

[1] Currently, gender quotas are voluntary and have been implemented just in the Concertación parties, without any effective control.

ask how does this explain the rise of women in politics in Chile? Why did participation become stronger after 2000? Why did Chile elect a women President? And what does this mean in terms of social change? Bourdieu's theory of symbolic domination, his analysis of the political field and his theory of masculine domination can help to explain the changes that have occurred in the Chilean political realm.

I will argue that the recent changes in women's position in Chile's political field have been more a result of a process of actualization of the political dynamics, rather than changes within political institutions themselves. Those political dynamics refer to the growing support that female candidates find from electors, the success of female candidates in electoral races, the perception of female politicians as more trustworthy, as well as the attempt to attract the female electorate and the acknowledgement of the traditional marginalization of women in politics.

The process of actualization of political dynamics necessarily conveys taking into account changes women have undergone in other spheres of society, such as education or paid work. While women's struggles to achieve more equality have been a permanent feature of Chilean society, the character of these struggles has been moderated. It is, thus not possible to explain women's position within the political field just in terms of recognition and rights achieved by feminist movements. The perspective of this research considers the process of actualization of political dynamics and political actors in a wider context by looking at the complex interrelationships between politics and culture alongside the growing market orientation and its pervading effect all over institutions of society. For instance, it is relevant to consider whether the growing presence of women in Chilean politics coincides with the decline of the traditional political class, or with the weakening of communitarian networks, resulting from the competitiveness and individualism imposed

by the deepening of capitalism and the liberal market economy in the country.

As the dominant ideology, neoliberalism worldwide is championing the flag of efficiency and outcomes in all realms of society, pressuring social structures to suitable and long-term profit generation. In this context, the political field is facing numerous challenges that cannot be faced by leaving behind women, who are being acknowledged as the key factor in the development and advancement of economies (Coleman, 2010; 2007). In line with this, there has been a strong trend in linking democracy to development. While there is not total clarity between the direction of the relation of dependency between them, researchers and scholars have found a positive correlation between democracy and economic development (see for instance Robinson, 2006). Thus, the quest for democracy is not only becoming a matter of political ideology, but economic necessity.

The neoliberal ideology has pervaded governments and economies to the point that nations across the world have been experiencing a phenomenon known as 'depolitization' (Fernández Jilberto, 2004). This process of depolitization has lead to a redefinition of the political strategies and the valuation of politics within society. Additionally, it has increased competitiveness between political parties who have experienced a shrinking in their spectrum of action due to constraints imposed by a growing neoliberal market. Furthermore, mass media globalization – that has earned significant dividends by mediatising political scandals of corruption, crime, and sex has had a negative impact on people's perception about politics and politicians. Collin Crounch (2004, p. 12) asserts that "politicians receive less deference and uncritical respect from the public and mass media than perhaps ever before''. Citizens around the world manifest growing disaffection with politics and critical questioning of its efficacy. Pippa Norris (1999) argues that more education and more

access to information are having two effects on citizens, first an overwhelming and widespread support for democratic principles and second, citizens are becoming increasingly more critical of institutions of representative governments. Norris argues that "at the end of the twentieth century citizens in many established democracies give poor marks to how their political system functions, and in particular how institutions such as parliaments, the legal system, and the civil service work in practice" (1999, p. 2). This topic has been discussed by several scholars (Dahl, 2000; Pharr & Putnam, 2000). The Chilean case is consistent with this international trend. Local scholars and mass media have investigated and denounced the decline of the efficacy and reputation of political institutions (Altman & Luna, 2007; Durston, 2005; Silva, 2004).

In this context, in which politics seems to be in free fall, female politicians are becoming an important asset for political parties and governments for a number of reasons. First, in general terms women are perceived as less political than men, because of their association with the private and domestic realm and their minority presence within formal politics (Siltanen & Stanworth, 1984). Second, women are seen as less corrupt, which is both a generalized perception and a fact, which is valid as much in industrialized as in developing countries (see Azfar, Knack, Lee, & Swamy, 2003; Dollar, Fisman, & Gatti, 2001; Goetz, 2003). Third, women are perceived as less authoritarian and more democratic (A. Eagly & Carli, 2007; A. H. Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001) which in an era in which the respect for authority appears to have declined in democracy (Norris, 1999) would explain why women's political representation finds worldwide support. Furthermore, women in politics improve the image of democracy in governments (Espirito-Santo, 2009; Lawless, 2004). These aspects make women very attractive to political parties in a context in which the reputation of political actors and institutions are undergoing decline. This is particularly relevant in contemporary, increasingly

market-oriented times, as female leadership has proven to bring a series of positives outcomes to corporate business and political institutions (Hunt, 2007; UN, 1997). All of these reasons account for the dramatic increase of studies on female leadership occurring towards the end of the millennium (Bass, Avolio, & Atwater, 1996; Carli & Eagly, 2001; A. H. Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001; Ridgeway, 2001).

Simultaneously, processes of globalization and trasnationalization have given rise to a series of supranational, intergovernmental and international organizations. Currently the performance of governments is closely monitored by diverse organizations such as the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Greenpeace, Human Rights Watch, and United Nations, to mention the most prominent. On the other hand, the growing globalization and access to information makes it virtually impossible to kept domestic issues within 'four walls'. International organizations rank countries on their achievements in security, education, quality of life, democracy, corruption to even happiness. The acknowledgment of the importance of countries' international reputation is a growing trend and essential for economic international investment, which puts pressure on local governments to adjust their performance and social policies to meet increasing demands of the international community. In this context, countries are being ranked and evaluated with regard to the number of female politicians within their political institutions.

An initial glance at Chile and the rise of women's political reputation may lead one to assume that the increasing relevance of female politicians, both numeric and symbolic, reflects progress in the nature of political systems and institutions, which through history have been male dominated worldwide. From a critical perspective, I would argue that the attention and relevance of female politicians today is a response more to electoral calculations and political strategies from fatigued and discredited political

institutions, which is confirmed by the fact that female politicians continue being minorities within political institutions in most parts of the world. While neither of these perspectives can fully represent such a complex phenomenon, politics as a territory marked by power struggles offers enough space for the existence of a continuum of interpretations between these two approaches, and for adapting different interpretations of the same phenomenon according to junctures of the moment. The analysis of the meaning and implications of female politicians for Chilean politics attempts to integrate and give an account of the plurality of interpretations that arise from this topic and sheds light on the power relations different views entail.

The following thesis examines the meanings and interpretations of the narratives and discourses on women in Chilean politics. Michelle Bachelet's presidential election in 2006 is the entry point of this task, which through in-depth interviews with politicians aims to unfold the meaning and implication of female politicians in Chile in the twentieth-first century. Why did it happen, but most important why did it happen when it happened? What does it mean for Chile and what are the implications were the questions that led me to undertake this research enterprise. To answer these questions the totality which female politicians are part of, and that enfolds them had to be examined. From the common sense explanations and analysis, the task of inquiry aimed to investigate politics as a strictly social phenomenon that reveal to us an implicit social order. I consider the process of unfolding the meaning of female politicians in Chile as a *nodal point*[2] around which the meanings and implication of politics adjusts to its changing reality.

The task of unfolding the meanings and implications of female politicians in Chile was inspired on Bourdieu's analysis of the social as twofold reality. Bourdieu observes that processes of naturalization and de-historization of

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[2] *Nodal points* are referential points, see Laclau (1977a).

social practices and institutions conceal the twofold truth or double meanings of social order (Bourdieu, 1990b, 1991b, 2000a; Robbins, 2004). To give an account of this double nature of the social Bourdieu resorts to the concept of doxa "which includes unexamined and un-spoken presuppositions about the world, all that which we take for granted" (Holton, 1997, p. 43). Doxa functions both as an 'act of cognition' by creating visions and categories of thought and as an 'act of misrecognition' by developing the mechanisms and instituting practices that secure the recognition of the established social order, which tacitly imposes and distributes limits and boundaries to individuals. In this double character of social reality lies the correspondence between the symbolic and the material dimensions of the social. Seeing this dual nature of social reality helps us to understand the subjacent structures of symbolic domination in contemporary society.

From Bourdieu's perspective, I undertook the process of historization of women in Chilean politics and democracy. Moreover, I analysed the conditions of possibility of female political advancement. First, I look at the institutional framework of Chilean politics, that is, the structure of the political field. Second, I explore the conditions that have allowed women to become active political agents in Chilean politics. I look at politics as practice to show that the temporality of the political is the key factor for the understanding of the meaning and implication of female politicians in Chile.

To achieve the above, I applied Bourdieu's relational ontology and reflexive epistemology. Bourdieu's approach was central to unfolding the complex dynamics that obscure and explain the efficacy of symbolic power. Bourdieu provides a framework for looking at symbolic representation via examining structures of power and strategies used in the political field from a perspective that includes a historical approach of social phenomena, structural or objective reading of social practices and

subjective or phenomenological reading of beliefs, thoughts and mental structures.

In this process of unfolding the meanings and implications of female politicians in Chile for Chilean politics and Chile as a nation, this thesis comprises six chapters. In Chapter One I explore issues of representation in politics. I assess the relevance of the concept of representation for elaborating the meanings and implications of women in Chilean politics. I analyse symbolic representation by looking at representation from the representatives' points of view. As opposed to investigating perceptions of political representations of those being represented (i.e. citizens, who are not actual players the political field), I sought answers from those who are in positions of power themselves.

In the Chapter Two I discuss Bourdieu's relational ontology and reflexive sociology and how these approaches can be applied to this research. Bourdieu's relational perspective provides relevant insights to reconcile both change and continuity, by inserting practices in a multidimensional space of relationships. Through a reflexive episteme, Bourdieu not only invites the rigorosity of scientific knowledge, but also the socio-self analysis that is necessary in the process of knowledge generation. To ground Bourdieu's perspective in the process of unfolding the meaning and implications of female politicians in Chile, I analyse politics as social practice, employing Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, field, strategies, and capital to illustrate the complex relationship between gender and symbolic power.

In Chapter Three I present the methodological perspectives that have informed this research, along with the research process, which largely comprised of interviews with Chilean politicians. In addition, I outline the approaches I took to analysing the data collected through interviews. Integrating 'conceptual blending theory', critical discourse analysis and

Bourdieu's theory, I analyse political practice as both embodied experience and as a reflection of socio-political reality. Thus, the process of unfolding the meanings and implications of female politicians in Chile acquires a practical dimension encompassing careful considerations of both subjective and objective realities.

In Chapter Four I historicize women's trajectory in Chilean politics and democracy. I explore the foundations of Chilean democracy, political participation, and representation. I argue that the main milestones for deconstructing the meanings and implications can be found in Chile's late women's suffrage rights (1949) and in the democratic breakdown during Pinochet's dictatorship (1973-1990). While completely different political events, in both there is a horizon of expectation that is in play, that is, the struggle for political power. In light of Chilean political history the democratic transition that started in 1990 resembles more an epiphenomenon in which the political elites with their traces from the past, present and future reassess the meaning of political representation. The twenty-first century finds Chilean politics in a state of bewilderment, in which politics resembles more a 'zombie category' than a symbolic space of the definition of the social. Michelle Bachelet's presidential triumph in 2006 thus represents a push for a more democratic and egalitarian society in which demands for gender equity collapsed. Furthermore, it can be seen as the political strategy of a weakening coalition seeking to remain in power.

In Chapter Five I discuss the institutional dimensions of representation as a referential framework to draw out the meanings and implications of female politicians in Chile. I argue that Chilean political institutions of formal representation impede descriptive, substantive, and symbolic representation fully taking place in the Chilean political system. Interview analysis demonstrates that political institutional design is an expression and reflection of the shortcomings of Chilean democratic political culture. I

argue that this prevents the furthering of democracy in which female politicians are central actors.

Finally, in Chapter Six I explore the temporal dimension of the meanings and implications of female politicians in Chile. By looking at the temporality of political processes, practices and institutions, I return to the symbolic dimension of representation. I demonstrate that the states of uncertainty and crises of politics offer contested spaces for the distribution of political power and for further elaboration on the private and public division of social life. The temporality of politics as social practice reflects its deeply gendered nature, as well as the arbitrariness of political power.

This research expands on the existing literature on women in politics by providing a sociological perspective on the topic informed by Bourdieu's constructivist structuralist theory, which explains both social change *and* continuity within the political realm. The central argument is that the correspondence between political institutions, political practices, and gendered culture accounts for the imbalance of women's political power. Taking the case of female politicians in Chile and the growing relevance of women in Chilean politics, this thesis focuses attention on the conditions of possibility for this growth. This will allow me to unfold the meanings and implications of women in Chilean politics, thus contributing to existing understandings of Chilean politics and women's increasing participation in contemporary politics, both in Chile and in a global context.

Chapter 1: Representation in politics: Towards an approximation of the meanings and implications female politicians

In this Chapter, I explore the concept of representation and reassess the relevancy of the concept in politics to show the complex nature of the term 'representation' and of its practical expression in objective reality of political practice. I argue that a closer examination of symbolic representation is necessary to unfold the meanings and implications of female politicians in Chile. Finally, I explore symbolic representation by looking at representation from the representatives' points of view.

The concept of political representation provides relevant insights for understanding the meanings and implications of female politicians in Chilean politics. As a cornerstone, analysis of political representation allows for deconstruction of politics and identifies its practical, institutional, and cultural dimensions.

Starting with Pitkin's (1967) work of political representation, I view political representation as a social practice. This approach allows for the incorporation of dimensions of identity and power, affording me the ability to move towards an interpretation of female politicians that acknowledges both the subject of the experience and the objective constraints that shape it. In the second section, I discuss the changing interrelations politics and democracy have undergone in late modernity, focusing on their impact on women in politics. My argument is that there is a complex constellation of highly contingent phenomena that requires careful consideration for the meanings and implications of women in politics to be examined. Increasingly negative perceptions of political actors and institutions, alongside the growing perception of democracy as ideal political system *per se* are occurring simultaneously with the increase of women in twenty first century politics. Furthermore, in an

increasing globalised and neoliberal era, where the possibilities for further development of democracy are contingent upon economic development and political leadership (Huntington, 1991) the meanings and implications of female politicians is both promising and uncertain.

Politics in this thesis is seen as a human activity and formal politics fundamentally as paid work. In this sense, my emphasis is on the practical dimension of political activity and politics as social praxis. I argue that the meanings and implications of social actors are given by the context in which their activities and practices take place. To study the meaning and implications of female politicians in Chilean politics is thus to study politics as an activity and a social practice that is inscribed in a historic-cultural and institutional context. This perspective puts at the centre the strategic character of social practices in general and of political practices in particular.

In this research, the focus of attention – as a subject of analysis – is female politicians or *politicas* a unified concept in Spanish, denoting a female politician. I regard the concept *politicas* as more representative of the phenomenon being studied, as it blends two separate categories – female and politician – into one, thus allowing for an integrated view. There is a selective integration of aspects of each of the source categories, which I will further explain in Chapter Three. With this approach, I attempt to take distance from research that focuses attention strictly on women's participation and representation in Chilean politics, which tends to neglect the dynamics between female and male politicians. Studies on political representation provide valuable insights for the analysis of political activity. Issues of representation are at the core of politics in contemporary democracies. Moreover, meaning and representation are concepts that are tightly connected. In this sense, research can be seen as a form of representation, which seeks to map the subject of its inquiry (see Lemesianou & Grinberg, 2006).

Political representation

Before discussing representation, it is relevant to separate conceptually political participation from political representation. While some authors tend to use those concepts interchangeably (M. M. Conway, 2001; Llanos & Sample, 2008; Shvedova, 2002), they in fact signify very different aspects of political activity. Political participation refers to citizens' activities aimed at influencing political decisions, such as voting, signing a petition, or blocking streets. Political participation is closely related to citizenship and democracy (van Deth, 2008). In the republican tradition of political thought, citizenship is associated with participation of the public in the political life of a community. Although citizenship encompasses other dimensions such as rights, duties and identities of citizens (Delanty, 2004), participation in the political community is its most classical characteristic, which can be traced to the *Politics* of Aristotle (Simpson, 1997). I will come back to the concept of citizenship later in this chapter. The relationship between political participation and democracy is direct, as democracy cannot function without at least some minimum level of political participation. In its more straightforward definition, democracy is simply government by the people and for the people (van Deth, 2008).

In political science (Pennock & Chapman, 1968; Pitkin, 1967; Schwartz, 1988) and in gender and feminist studies the concept of representation has received wide attention (Del Campo, 2005; Lawless, 2004; Lee, 2001; Lovenduski, 2005; Marques-Pereira, 2005; Nicholson, 1993; Norris, 2000; Paxton & Kunovich, 2003; Schwindt-Bayer & Mishler, 2005; Siavelis, 2006; Stoffel, 2008; Studlar & McAllister, 2002). However, representation due to its polysemic nature is a contentious and problematic concept, which is contingent upon the theory of representation chosen; this has been particularly evident in the literature of women in politics.

Pitkin's study on representation (1967) has been the cornerstone of numerous studies of women's representation in politics (Lawless, 2004; Schwindt-Bayer & Mishler, 2005). Pitkin's conceptualization offers a clear and systematic definition of political representation, as well as its major components. The author draws attention to the contradictory character of the concept in the sense that "*Representare* means to make present something that is *not* in fact present" (Pitkin, 1967, p. 92). By looking at *representation* from a referential point of view, Pitkin identifies four dimensions of the concept, namely: formal, descriptive, substantive, and symbolic representation.

For formal representation, Pitkin (1967, p. 91) refers to the institutional framework that makes representation possible, that is, the processes and mechanisms by which a political representative gains power. This dimension of political representation encompasses two aspects: authorization and accountability. The former refers to the mechanisms and processes by which a representative is elected or designated, and the latter to the degree of responsibility of the representative towards his or her constituents' preferences. Furthermore, accountability also conveys mechanisms available to constituents to sanction their representative if she or he fails to represent their interests. On the other hand, the authorization aspect of formal representation considers that in any social group in which decisions are carried out by particular individuals, representation is needed. Thus, a representative is someone who has been authorized to act in behalf of the group, which implies delegation of authority. The emphasis here is on the mechanisms and processes by which the delegation of authority occurs and not in the performance of the representative of delegate. For instance, from this point of view "there is no such thing as the activity of representing or the duties of representative; anything done after the right kind of authorization and within its limits is by definition representation" (Pitkin, 1967, p. 39). On the other hand, the

accountability dimension of formal representation considers that "a representative is someone who is to be held to account (...) so that he [sic] will be responsive to the needs and claims of his constitutes, to the obligations implicit in his positions" (Pitkin, 1967, pp. 55-57).

Studies on formal representation that discuss women's political representation have been often subsumed by the analysis of their descriptive representation, that is, the number of women in elected and non-elected offices in politics and the political practices of the institutions affecting those numbers. Thus, most of the literature on this formalist view of representation has centred its attention on electoral systems and affirmative action such as gender quotas (Gray, 2003; Jones, 2000; Larserud & Taphorn, 2007; Lovenduski & Norris, 2003; Nicholson, 1993; Norris, 2000; Seidman, 1999) with little attention to issues of accountability and their impact on women in politics. Nevertheless, it is important to observe that it is particularly problematic to analytically separate formal representation from descriptive representation. For instance, the most adequate type of government or electoral system for women's representation is equated to those that bring a higher number of women into elective and non-elective offices in politics. Studies on the impact of type of government on democracy have shown that presidential democracies compared with parliamentary or mixed ones are less favourable for the advancement of women in politics (Lijphart, 1999). The reasons for this are found in the higher levels of rigidity, authoritarianism, instability and breakdowns that presidential democracies display compared with parliamentary governments (Cheibub, 2007) (issues that I will further discuss on Chapter Five, when I examine Chilean presidential democracy).

On the other hand, studies on the impact of electoral systems on women's descriptive representation in politics have shown proportional electoral systems are the most suitable for increasing women's representation in

politics. Three factors facilitate or hinder women's representation in proportional electoral systems. First, a higher district magnitude, which means that the parties have the chance to compete for and win several seats, allowing them to go further down the party lists, where women are usually listed. Second, a high Electoral Threshold, which discourages the creation of 'mini-parties', which often lets in only one or two representatives, usually male. And third, closed party lists: the party determines rank ordering of candidates and thus women's names cannot be struck off or demoted (Helgesen, 2006, pp. 4-5). Furthermore, the electoral system appears to have a direct effect on women's representation in politics because changing the type of electoral system can immediately increase the number of women in parliaments (Larserud & Taphorn, 2007; Norris, 2000). In the case of Chile, the current electoral system for representatives in the Upper House and Chamber of Deputies is regarded as one of the main impediments for increasing women's representation in the congress. I will further expand on this in Chapter Five.

Analysing the meanings and implications of women in politics requires taking into account structural variables of formal political representation, because those reflect the processes and mechanisms by which political power is distributed within society. In the context of Chilean politics, a recent transition to democracy (Barton & Murray, 2002; Godoy, 1999; Posner, 2004) and an electoral system that prioritizes governability over representativeness (John M Carey, 2006; Helgesen, 2006; Nohlen, 2006; Siavelis, 2006) have deeply shaped the dynamics of political activity. Both aspects influence the strategies that political actors, as individuals or collectivities, undertake in order to access and to keep both elected and non-elected offices. It affects the meanings and implications that women politicians have for Chilean politics because of both the contingent and structural character of political practices. Therefore, how female

politicians are perceived by themselves and by male politicians, and how female politicians might affect views on political behaviour is something widely influenced by the trajectory and history of Chilean politics. This point will be further developed in Chapter Four, Chapter Five and Chapter Six.

Coming back to analysis on representation, Pitkin depicts descriptive representation as the degree of similarity between the representatives and those being represented. This dimension of representation is expressed in the level of accuracy of the resemblance between the representative and the represented. Here, Pitkin observes that descriptive representation in politics acts as a mirror of the represented, resembling the nation's composition itself (1967, p. 81). This perspective on representation asserts that female politicians would have common interests or share similar experiences with the women they represent, which would bring a sense of identification between the represented (women) and the representative (female politicians). This argument constitutes the base for the claims and actions for increasing the number of female political representatives. The first problem with this argument is that political representatives are called to represent the interest of those who elect them whether they are women or men. The second problem is that in thinking about female interests as a unified set of interests entails an essentialist perspective about female nature and neglects the immense diversity present in women's life. Furthermore, it puts at the centre gender differences overlooking other categories involved in political representation that overlap with gender, such as class, ethnicity, geographic location, religion and age, to mention a few.

Research on female descriptive representation has centred its attention on affirmative action (such as gender quotas) and on the political parties. Those studies are less conclusive than the studies on formal representation because gender quotas are the result of a political

negotiation, therefore for their establishment and implementation requires the support of political institutions. In addition, there are several types of gender quotas – e.g. Legislated Candidate Quotas, Reserved seats, Voluntary Political Party Quota – which measures of enforcement to make them effective varies both from country to country and from gender quota type (Larserud & Taphorn, 2007; Shvedova, 2002). This is complicated by the fact that studies on the role of political parties on women's political representation have demonstrated that parties act as gatekeepers of political power. Political parties control the access and permanence in both elective and non-elective offices (Lovenduski & Norris, 1993; Luciak, 2005; Macaulay, 2005). In this respect, Bourdieu (2000b) points out that currently, the political party is a kind of bank of specific political capital and the general secretary of a party is a kind of banker that controls the access to political capital. The author adds, "it is not by chance that all our past and future presidents are former general secretaries"(p. 16). It is important to bear in mind that the role of political parties as gatekeepers is affected by the political project of the party, the political juncture such as the election period, political crises, the political game and ideology. Furthermore, it is affected by the electoral system, which determines the formation of strategic alliances (Helgesen, 2006; Norris, 2004; Siavelis, 2005).

A central aspect that is highlighted by the growing attention to women in politics is the representational nature of democracy. That is, it is questioned *if* the representatives are in fact representing all citizens. The assumption that a democratic dynamic set by the mechanism of formal representation should allow descriptive representation faces a reality in which the inherent inertia of social practices historically institutionalized plays a major role. Here categories such as gender, class, ethnicity, age, civil status, sexual and religious orientation, and nationality are variables that can hinder or facilitate the access, opportunity, and disposition to take

part in representational politics. Therefore, acknowledging the impact of cultural and social dynamics, and political institutions on representational politics is central to denaturalizing and overcoming the under representation of large sectors of society, for instance women's political under-representation.

The meanings and implications of female politicians to democratic politics necessarily lead to the analysis and interpretation of strategies to increase the number of women in elected and non-elected offices. In the case of Chilean politics, the debate on gender quotas has been over-shadowed by the discussion on the modification of the electoral system (Gray, 2003) and further democratization (M. Garretón, 2003) and political parties' roles in supporting and promoting female candidates has shown significant differences between parties (Schuster & Poblete, 2008), which in turn affects the interest of the political party to supporting gender quotas. I will further develop this point in Chapter Five.

Descriptive representation leads to substantive and symbolic representation, all of them closely interrelated. Pitkin points out that substantive representation is one of the dimensions of representation that acknowledges and takes into account the preferences and interests of the represented. Normally, this is reflected in the design and implementation of public policies (Tremblay, 1998). In studies on female political representation, the common ground between descriptive and substantive representation is that by increasing the number of female representatives, the substantive representation of women's interest would naturally increase. Here there seems to be a causal relation between the former and the latter. The conviction of the positive correlation between descriptive and substantive representation has led the application of the critical mass theory to women in politics (Childs & Krook, 2008). However, the utility and accuracy of critical mass theory for predicting and reflecting a positive relation between descriptive and substantive women's representation has

been questioned and debated (Bratton, 2005; Childs & Krook, 2006; Grey, 2006; Macaulay, 2005; Studlar & McAllister, 2002). The problem with this argument is that it overlooks the existing differences in feminist policymaking and state feminism processes, as well as between representative democracies and the dynamics affecting those processes.

For instance, in presidential democracies the parliament has a minor role in setting and prioritizing the legislative agenda, compared with parliamentary democracies. In the former, it is the president who sets the legislative agenda and budget, which in the hyper-presidential government of Chile is particularly visible (Godoy, 2003; Siavelis, 2000). Another aspect that deeply affects policymaking in Chile is the current electoral system which has led to coalition governments. In terms of policymaking Baldez (2001) suggests that feminist policy tends to be more straightforward in single-party governments than in coalition governments. This is because coalition platforms represent an amalgam of the policies preferred by the various parties within a particular coalition. Furthermore, the author asserts that in Chile, the agenda of a particular ministry depends on the party affiliation of the person chosen to head that agency (p. 23). Regarding the first point made by Baldez, it is important to highlight that in the Chilean case as a result of the dynamics imposed by the dictatorship legacy the development of a common political platform has not been exempt from conflicts and forced agreements. Regarding the second point, in the Chilean presidential system it is the president who designates the members of the executive branch, which is independent from the legislative branch ("Constitución Política de la República de Chile," 1980). In this sense, Baldez (2001, p. 23) suggests that in the Chilean case, higher state feminism and feminist policymaking is more likely to be reached by increasing women in cabinet appointments. These examples illustrate that there are several variables influencing policymaking that determine a diverse scope of action in political

representatives. In line of this, asserting, a causal relation between descriptive representation and substantive representation is a simplistic way of understanding political activity. I will further develop this argument on Chapter Five.

The fourth dimension of representation is symbolic representation, or what Pitkin terms 'symbolization' (1967, p. 92). Symbolic representation refers to the extent to which the representative is considered to represent those being represented. According to Pitkin (1967, p. 102) "it will be the activity of making people believe in the symbol, accept the political leader as their symbolic representative." Here the author asserts that to accomplish symbolic representation "ritual, expressive, symbolic activity might be required, [in particular] symbol-making, which plays a major role in the symbolization view of political representation"(1967, pp. 102-104). It is important to stress the indefinite nature of symbolic representation. In this regard, the author points out that while "to say that a symbol represents is to suggest correspondence between the symbol and the represented, to say that a symbol symbolizes is to suggest vagueness or diffusions" (1967, p. 98). Here, Pitkin adds "a symbol is not a source of information about what it represents; it does not allege anything about what it represents" (1967, p. 99). For the author, "representation is a matter of existential fact; up to a certain point it just 'happens', and is generally so accepted" (1967, p. 92). To illustrate this, Pitkin points out that while we can talk about misrepresentation, as something that does not correctly represent what it means to, "…it makes no sense to ask whether a symbol represents well, for there is no such thing as mis-symbolizing" (1967, p. 100). The symbolic dimension of the representative does not reside in the fact that the political representative symbolizes what he or she means, or in the fact that those who are being represented think so, but in the fact that the representative is recognized as she or he does it. Pitkin's central claim is that symbolic representation rests not only

in the beliefs of those who are being represented, but also "on the beliefs of people outside of the representative relation itself, the observers or audience" (1967, p. 105). This is central to understanding the relevancy of symbol making in the process of transforming representation in symbolization.

Bourdieu has largely discussed the 'production of belief' when he analyses the symbolic dimension of social practices. When Bourdieu discusses the possibilities of symbolic effectiveness he asserts, "it has more chance of succeeding the more it is founded in reality, that is, (...) in the objective affinities between people who have to be brought together"(Bourdieu, 1990c, p. 138). Bourdieu asserts that symbolic systems are systems of representation, because to symbolize is to re-present and cognitions are structured structures because they contain structures that are external and independent of individuals (e.g. in language, grammar, lexis), which allows symbolic systems their continuity as well as their actualization in society. Here Bourdieu (1991b) recognizes the arbitrary character of the symbolic systems. Furthermore, symbolic systems are structuring structures because they are representations of the world that have their origin in the social, which is possible through social conventions. For instance, sharing meanings is a precondition of symbolization, because the symbolic function as such has to be recognized collectively. Here the cultural dimension is essential since it makes possible the emergence of social conventions and collective agreements throughout signifying practices.

Second, there is a structural homology between schemes of thought and social divisions because the former are the result of the incorporation of the latter. Bourdieu asserts symbolic systems are structuring because they establish a gnoseological order, that is, the reality they construct is established as taken for granted reality, in which the world appears as self-evident. Here Bourdieu further asserts that "symbolic power is a

power of constructing reality, and one which tends to establish a gnoseological order, the immediate meaning of the world – and in particular of the social world" (Bourdieu, 1991b, p. 166).

Finally, Bourdieu sees that correspondence between social structures and schemes of thought have a political function. This means that the symbolic systems are not only instruments of knowledge but also of domination. While symbolic systems allow cognitive integration, due to logical conformism (Bourdieu, 1991b, p. 166), they promote the integration of an arbitrary social order through a process of legitimation of domination[3]. Bourdieu integrates the concept of symbolic power into the Marxist tradition by claiming that "…symbolic systems have a political function as instruments which help to ensure that one class dominates another (symbolic violence) by bringing their own distinctive power to bear on the relations of power which underline them…" (Bourdieu, 1991b, p. 167).

The most paradigmatic case of this social alchemy is the political field, in which the act of delegation (Bourdieu, 1984b) of speaking for, in favour of, or in the name of someone implies the propensity to speak in place of that person. In order to be identified with the group, the political representative has to negate himself or herself in the group, thus presupposing some modesty. However, this implies bad faith on the part of the representative, which means he or she must, in order to appropriate the authority of a group, be identified with it, and reduced to the group which authorised him or her. This complex alchemy gives account of the ways that recognition and legitimacy operates in social relations.

For instance, electoral processes are taken for granted as if they were naturally part of the political field, when in fact the universal vote is a phenomenon from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, which was

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[3] This idea is very close to the notion of ideology in Marx' thought - Bourdieu takes distance from the concept of ideology by introducing the concept of doxa (1996)- and to the notion of theodicy in Weber (For more details see Lamaison & Bourdieu, 1986b).

instituted to legitimate the symbolic power of politicians. Bourdieu thus observes that due to the act of delegation, representatives receive "from the group the power to form the group" (Bourdieu, 1990c, p. 138). Classifications such as the workers, the unemployed, the retired, women, ecologists and immigrants reflect realities that politics has been bringing into existence through a long process of political efficacy and by naming politicians claim to the right of their representation. Furthermore, the political discourses of participation, inclusion, integration and social development are not inherent to the political field, but an expression of their social history. Here, I recall Bourdieu's concept of rites of institution (1991b, p. 119) as illustrated by rites of investiture. Bourdieu argues that the symbolic efficacy of rites of institution rests on the,

> … power they possess to act on reality by acting on its representation (….) because they transform the representations others have of the invested person and the behaviour they adopt towards him (…) and because they simultaneously transform the representation that the invested person has of himself and the behaviour he feels obligated to adopt in order to conform to that representations"(1991b, p. 119).

I suggest that rites of institution contribute to the production of belief by which political representation becomes symbolic representation. Insofar as it does, it confers a particular identity to political representatives. Illustrative in this sense is Althusser's (1971) concept of interpellation, which he defines as the process by which individuals are hailed into positions through symbolic processes and practices and thus become subjects (Althusser, 1971; Woodward, 1997). This analysis helps to illuminate the interpretation of the meanings and implications of women in politics in Chile by incorporating into the discussion on representation a reflection on identity and ideology. This allows us to view the meaning-making process of female politicians as a process of identity construction, which is both assigned and negotiated. I consider that within the available literature on the topic of women in politics, such a perspective has not been developed. This perspective offers important insights into the

cultural dimensions of political representation. Another limitation of existing literature on women in politics is that the majority of existing studies on female political representation have been carried out on western liberal democracies with little attention given to non-western countries that have recently transitioned to democracy.

My hypothesis in the Chilean case is that the meanings and implications of female politicians have to do more with the dynamics of political power than with gender or feminist issues. My argument is that in the *rites of institution* in Chile politics, feminist and gender perspectives have been relatively absent or weak because such political perspectives arise from intellectual and political elites of the Western world, which tends to have more liberal conceptions of citizenship. In Chile, feminism has been adopted more by female intellectuals and academics than by political elites because of Chile's socio-political history as a nation-state that emerged from exploitative colonialism. It has only been in recent years that the concept of gender has been integrated into the public discourse, though this is not without conflict (see for instance Baldez, 2001). Recent attention to gender issues has been in part due to the need to fulfil obligations under ratified international agreements on matters of gender equity, which has given space for social policies that incorporate gender perspectives. Because feminist and gender perspectives have been relatively weak in Chilean society, I suggest that they also have limited explanatory power in the meanings and implication of female politicians.

In a perspective that seeks to enlighten the discussion on political representation, Saward (2006) offers a novel concept that complements my approach on the subject. He asserts that what is central to representation is the *representative claim*, with this Saward[4] wants to

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[4] Saward develops his concept starting from a critique of Pitkin on representation, which I see relates more to the inaccuracy of his interpretation, than a fundamental difference with Pitkin's views. This is particularly visible in the passive character he attributes to symbolic representation (A. B. Gutiérrez, 2005, p. 377).

overcome the current limitations of mainstream views on representation. Saward proposes that "the world of political representation is a world of claim-making rather than fact adducing" (2006, p. 302). Here the author wishes to emphasise the *performative* character of political representation. He adds, "representing is performing, it is action by actors, and the performance contains or adds up to a claim that someone is or can be 'representative'" (Saward, 2006, p. 302). This view can be seen in a similar way to Althusser's interpellation, in the sense that the representative claim hails individuals into a subject-position. And as Bourdieu has asserted (1984b), "it is because the representative exists, because he represents (symbolic action), that the represented or symbolised group exists and then in return brings into existence its representative as representative of a group" (p. 56). For Bourdieu, political representation produces and reproduces groups. For example, any predicative statement that includes the working class as subject disguises an existential statement that there is a working class. According to Bourdieu "politics is the site par excellence of symbolic efficacy, the action that is performed through signs capable of producing social things, and in particular, groups" (1985a, p. 741). Here the existence of the group is subject to the existence of the representative, as well the existence of the representative is subject to the existence of the group, for which both the group and the representative have to negotiate the process of identity construction which connects them. This argument can be applied to women in the political field. Having women in politics and talking about them as a group means that they are given real existence and legitimacy. In the political field, there is recognition of the women's demands. They are recognized because they are represented and in being represented, they become a significant social actor. With this, both the representative and the represented secure the continuation of the political representation in a beneficial but also strategic relationship. Being subjected to an identity

offers a possibility of subversion, in this sense, understanding that representative claims are "made, offered, disputed and accepted" (Saward, 2006, p. 306) and brings insights to the strategic nature of political representation.

When Bourdieu (1984b) analyses political representation, he identifies a relation of delegation that when forgotten leads to political alienation. He asserts, "the relation of delegation can easily conceal the truth of the relation of representation and the paradox of situations where a group only exists by delegating its power to a singular person" (p. 56). Furthermore, for Bourdieu, the relation of delegation entails a second moment, often unnoticed that is "the act by which social reality thus constituted – the Party, the Church, etc. – deliberately gives an individual a mandate, whether it be the secretary (Bureau goes very well with secretary), the minister, the secretary-general, etc." (p. 58). From a subversive perspective, the author asserts that "it is necessary to risk political alienation to escape political alienation" (p. 56) by mobilizing and acquiring instruments of representation. In the case of Chile, while the women's interests were subject to instruments of representation, such as political parties, political alliances and political coalitions, and not the instruments of representation subject to women's interests it would be very difficult to overcome female political alienation. Perhaps one way for women to escape this closed circle is by developing new instruments of representation outside of the traditional structures that have perpetuated the objective divisions that originate women's political alienation.

The concepts of representation, rites of institution, interpellation, and representative claims offer important insights when looking at the meanings and implications of female politicians to Chilean politics. While the concept of representation provides several perspectives to look at female participation in politics, its overlooks the diachronic dimension of politics as a practical activity that is shaped by multiple variables that

cannot be generalized to all representative governments. Representation has personal and historical dimensions, which make it inherently unstable and subject to change. Due to the historically evolving interplay between individuals, civil society, political society, and the market, representation should be seen as an embodied emergent structure.

I have paid particular attention to the concept of symbolic representation because it is one of the most overlooked dimensions of women's political representation and it is often presented as a function of descriptive representation (Koning, 2009; Lawless, 2004; Schwindt-Bayer & Mishler, 2005; Stoffel, 2008). Feminist and women's studies scholars working on political representation have largely devoted attention to the object of representation neglecting the subject and emphasising the represented-representative relationship (e.g. Lawless, 2004) at the expense of the representative-represented side of the relationship. In the case of women's political representation, this has led to a series of assumptions that have constituted the core of academic research on the topic; for instance, that female politicians would plead for women's rights (substantive dimension), with the consequent improvement of women's quality of life and conditions. Further assumptions are that female politicians would bring a complementary perspective, a different point of view that will enrich the political work; and that female politicians would attract more women to get involved and participate in politics (Celis, Childs, Kantola, & Krook, 2008; Childs & Krook, 2008; Koning, 2009; Schwindt-Bayer & Mishler, 2005; Squires, 2007). In this sense, representation has been seen as external to the subject and attributed as an external property, and as a duty to fulfil.

The focus of this research is the subject of representation, that is, political representatives from whom I aim to interpret the meanings and implications of female politicians in Chilean politics. By taking distance from the mainstream lines of study on the topic, I want to use the concept

of symbolic representation in a looser way, adopting an interpretative perspective on politicians' experiences and perceptions on the topic at hand. To carry out this exercise, I conducted in-depth interviews with politicians. I propose to understand the meanings and implications of female politicians in Chilean politics first and foremost by looking at the conditions of possibility of the political activity. This demands acknowledging the practical character of political activity, that is, to seeing politics as an activity bounded by sets of rules that define the conditions of access to and of permanence in the political activity, conditions eminently practical. How politicians become politicians and how they remain so, are questions that require seeing representation in a broader context, and often beyond the representational character of political activity.

My second proposal in this research is that the meaning and implications of female politicians in Chilean politics is bounded by the strategic component of political practices. Here I propose that by looking at political strategies, the meanings and relevance of political practices become apparent. The advantage of this approach for the study of women in politics is that it allows connection between structural, cultural and individual dimensions of political activity in a temporal context, in which often the meanings and trajectory are interwoven and contingent upon one another.

Coming back to Pitkin's views on symbolic representation, what female politicians symbolize needs to be seen in the light of the strategic political decisions of the representatives, both female and male and of the processes of negotiation and exchange politicians establish with their constituencies. Therefore, my approach to the subject is to understand the meanings of women in politics not as a fixed property or reality in itself, but the result of a series of dynamics within politics, which reflects the juncture, contingencies, and trajectories of social movements, political actors, political groups, and political communities.

A direct inquiry in to what Chilean female politicians think they represent for politics and how they interpret their representation in Chilean politics is a crucial instance that invites both the researcher and the interviewer to deconstruct and reconstruct the answers to those questions. Furthermore, it allows participants and researchers to challenge and contest assumptions that are deeply engrained, for instance, substantialist views that posit female politicians as symbols of women or essentialist views that consider that female politicians are the cornerstone of women's substantive representation. The interview process is also an invitation to discuss female politicians' relationship with power; as how they experience and relate to political power is an often-overlooked dimension of studies on women's representation in politics.

An analysis of the meanings and implication of women in politics cannot be accomplished without taking into account male political actors who have been largely neglected in studies on women in politics. Male politicians, as the dominant political representatives for centuries, are a fundamental source of knowledge for providing insights on the dynamics of politics and changes in the political field. Because male politicians dominate the political elite, the evolution of the political parties and their practices are contingent on their views of politics which contribute to locating the discussion of women in politics in a broader context. Thus, for interpreting the meanings and implications of women's representation in Chilean politics, male politicians' perspectives on the topic are as important as those of female politicians. For instance, it is relevant to explore the impact of female politicians on both male politicians' perspectives and behaviour in their political work as representatives, and on political institutions.

Concluding Remarks

In this section, I have discussed the concepts of representation and its connection to political participation. Political representation has been considered in more detail following Pitkin's seminal work identifying the four dimensions of political representation: formal, descriptive, substantive, and symbolic. These four dimensions of representation organize most of the discussion and literature available on women in politics. However, symbolic representation, compared to the other three, has been largely overlooked. I proposed that an integration of symbolic representation with Bourdieu's views on *rites of institution* and representation, Althusser's concept of *interpellation* and Saward's account of *representative claim* offers a more comprehensive perspective for capturing the complexity of political activity. Representation, with an emphasis on its symbolic dimension can thus be considered a cornerstone concept for understanding female representation in politics. Moreover, it marks a starting point for interpreting and organizing my discussion of the meanings and implication of women in Chilean politics.

Chapter 2: Bourdieu's constructivist structuralism approach in the analysis of female politicians

In this chapter, I will address the ontology, epistemology and methodology that guided this research. Drawing on Bourdieu's relational ontology and reflexive epistemology my view in this research is that analysing the meanings and implications of female politicians in Chile necessarily takes us to the analysis of the complex and dialectical dynamics between the political field and social reality. This considers the actualization of politics by including and/or repositioning women within it, which works as a correlate of the changes in Chilean and contemporary society. The analysis of women's advancement in Chilean politics presupposes a questioning of such advancement by looking at the conditions of possibility for women's political advancement in Chile which requires a process of historical deconstruction. Moreover, it presumes to put reality in suspense, breaking with the explanations given by common sense or by spontaneous sociology.

The epistemological and ontological considerations in this study gravitated to the identification and analysis of the social conditions that have led to recent changes in Chilean politics. In addition, they provide a perspective that integrates the analysis of the interplay and overlap between the political and gender dimension. In the understanding that our personal and social sense of identity is simultaneously gendered and political; gendered because from birth we internalize physical and social configurations of what is considered appropriated for women and men; political because our social nature leads us to live in society from which multiple needs and conflicts arise.

Applying Bourdieu's relational perspective has two main advantages for this research. It allows acknowledgement that the process of production of the collective representation of politics is being challenged by female politicians' incorporation and/or repositioning within Chilean politics, while acknowledging at the same time that systems of classification of social reality, and of politics, in particular, are anchored in traditional political practices, which have prevented a real advancement for women in Chilean politics. The second advantage that the relational mode of thinking has for the study of female politicians in Chilean politics is the positioning of *políticas,* – as the subject of study, within a system of co-ordinates in which a plurality of discourses converge. The process of making sense of a changing and unstable actors' organization within the political field lead participants to articulate multiple narratives which organized and signified their political practices.

Drawing on Bourdieu' work, in the following sections I will discuss the categories of analysis, the construction of the subject of study and the role as a researcher I applied in this investigation. Moreover, I will explain how Bourdieu's theory can be utilized in the analysis of female politicians in Chilean politics.

Relational Ontology

Bourdieu's trajectory as a social theorist has been marked by the analysis of the processes of knowledge generation (Bourdieu, 1969c, 1987, 1990c, 1993a, 2004; Bourdieu, Chambordom, & Passeron, 1991c; Bourdieu & Eagleton, 1992b; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992a; Wacquant, 1989), which leads him to the development of a reflexive sociology and of a relational mode of thinking; both perspectives constitute the epistemological and ontological foundations of his structural constructivist theoretical perspective.

On an ontological level, the relational approach is reflected in the primacy of social relations. This means that social agents cannot be analysed as isolated entities that carry particular properties, but only in relation to other social agents which indicates their positions within the social field. Bourdieu asserts that "the real is the relational: what exists in the social world are relations – not interactions between agents or inter-subjective ties between individuals, but objective relations which exist 'independently of individual consciousness and will', as Marx said" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992a, p. 97). Thus, the 'relational character of reality' is what defines Bourdieu's ontology. This represents an attempt to overcome the classical antinomies that have dominated sociological analysis such as the ontological priority of the structure or the agent, the system or the actor, the group or the individual. To maintain the primacy of relations is to identify the real with relationships and not with substances or immanent properties of social life.

The relational thinking breaks with ontological substancialism, which "characterizes common sense – and racism – and which is inclined to treat the activities and preferences specific to certain individuals or groups in a society at a certain moment as if they were substantial properties" (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 4). Moreover, relational thinking breaks with essentialist epistemologies which assert fixed properties to entities and study them by knowing their properties independently of their context.

In Bourdieu's relational thinking the social world is formed by social relations between social agents inscribed in specific places and in specific moments. This allows it to break with the philosophy of the subject that reifies properties of social agents detached from social and historical contexts. Bourdieu revindicates the practical character of the human action but as an action immersed in a system of social relations. Here Bourdieu agrees with Marx's pronouncement in the *Theses on Feuerbach*:

"all social life is essentially practical…" (K. Marx & Engels, 1845, p. 571). He

further adds that

> …with the Marx of the Theses of Feuerbach, the theory of practice as
> practice insists against positivist materialism, that the objects of knowledge
> are constructed, and against idealist intellectualism, that the principle of
> this construction is practical activity orientated towards practical
> functions(Bourdieu, 1977a, p. 96).

From Marx, Bourdieu also recovers the proposal of the distribution of the

agents in social classes (Brubaker, 1985) without reifying them and

treating them like objects but considering them as a historical reality. Here,

Bourdieu raises a critique of Marx's substancialism, which privileges

substances instead of relations and leads to the fetichization of the

concepts that confuse the theoretically constructed class with the real

class.

Epistemological Reflexivity

Bourdieu's reflexive epistemology implies also a break with the

intellectualism which typically observes reality spectatorily without taking

account of the position of the observer in the process of knowledge

production, as well as rupture with extreme materialism and idealism. For

materialist thinkers reality is not assumed as practical but passive. On the

other hand, idealistic reality is active but has been treated only in an

abstract way. Both ruptures have been particularly important for me as a

researcher, who has undergone a rigorous process of 'objectification of the

objectifying' observer, by undertaking an ongoing, rigorous self-socio-

analysis of my own internalized gender and power structures. This has

meant a recursive process of construction and reconstruction of the object

of study and the categories of analysis applied to it. On the other hand, it

has meant an acknowledgement of the collective process of knowledge

construction of observed reality, from which as a researcher, I am

inextricably a part of.

Radical doubt is the departure point of scientific work of constructing an object of study in which the researcher escapes from the trap of studying the social world from which he or she is the product. In this fashion, Bourdieu's reflexive epistemology proposes to "recognize and to work to neutralize the specific determinism to which their inner most thoughts are subjected and it informs a conception of the craft of research designed to strengthen its epistemological moorings"(Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992a, p. 46). This means a break with collective representation by being self aware of the process of institutionalization of worldviews. However, Bourdieu asserts this is not sufficient when he states "...one of the most powerful instruments of rupture lies in the social history of problems, objects and instruments of thought, that is, in the history of the world of social construction of reality..." (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992a, p. 238). From there the construction of the scientific object is possible which

> is not something that is effected once and for all, with one stroke, through a sort of inaugural theoretical act (...) It is, rather, a protracted and exacting task that is accomplished little by little, throughout a whole series of small rectifications and amendments, inspired by (...) the set of practical principles that orients choices at once minute and decisive" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992a, pp. 227-228).

This is a crucial aspect in this research, where the starting point is the observation of social reality that presents together rupture and continuity.

Bourdieu asserts that epistemological vigilance is crucial in all social sciences but particularly in sociology "where the separation between everyday opinion and scientific discourse is more blurred than elsewhere" (Bourdieu, et al., 1991c, p. 222). This epistemological vigilance encompasses the necessity of a reflection on scientific practice, of a sociology of sociological knowledge, and of a sociology that reflects on the social conditions of the possibility of the sociological knowledge and practices (Bourdieu, et al., 1991c). Furthermore, it encompasses an epistemological break or rupture. That is, "the bracketing of ordinary preconstructions and of the principles ordinarily at work in the

elaboration of these constructions, often presupposes a rupture with modes of thinking, concepts, and methods that have every appearance of common sense, of ordinary sense, and of good scientific sense … going for them."(Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992a, p. 251). Bourdieu gives account of this major epistemological moment in his thesis on the necessity of the 'objectification of the objectifying subject' (1990a, p. xii), which consists of a reflection on the scientific work that conveys the social conditions in which this scientific work is produced at a particular moment.

Bourdieu attempts to include in his theoretical work a recursive moment in which 'theories' of social phenomenon must ask themselves what type of social phenomenon theories even are. In here, the author asserts that the theories about the social world are the product of a theoretical view. Therefore, science should not only aim to produce theories but also to establish reflection on the difference between social theory and scientific practice as part of theory construction.

Bourdieu's concern about the rigorosity and scientific character of sociology can be seen in his critical approach to the classical tradition of the discipline. This leads him to re-interpret the classical establishing moments of rupture and integration, from Marx, Durkheim and Weber's theoretical contributions (Brubaker, 1985), and from structuralism and phenomenology (Robbins, 2002), which are central in his analysis of symbolic power as I will discuss later in this chapter.

An explanation of Bourdieu's especial attention to scientific rigorosity can be found in his strong commitment to differentiate sociology as a science from spontaneous sociology. In this respect, Bourdieu inquires "how could anyone fail to see himself as a bit of sociologist when the 'sociologist's analysis so completely concurs with the themes of everyday chatter and when the analyst's discourse and the discourses analysed are separated

only by the fragile barrier of quotations marks?" (1991c, p. 24). From this
Bourdieu states

> sociological language, which, even in its most controlled uses, always draws
> on words from the common lexicon, but uses them in rigorous and
> systematic senses, and which therefore always becomes equivocal as soon
> as it is spoken outside the circle of specialist, lends itself, more than other
> language, to fraudulent usages (1991c, p. 25).

This is particularly important in the context of this research since politics
and gender relations are topics discussed by Chilean society on a daily
basis. For instance, in this research I paid special attention to the use of the
words 'participation' and 'representation' with regard to female politicians,
because both concepts remain ambiguous when addressing the topic of
this research on the meanings and implications of female politicians in a
society. The first, 'participation', has a temporal dimension in which the
activity one takes part in is circumscribed to a particular event, such as
participate in an electoral process or in a referendum. The second concept
– 'representation' – has proved to be contentious since it places a political
and philosophical discussion on issues of representation (Lee, 2001;
Phillips, 1991; Pitkin, 1967; Sartori, 1987a, 1987b), for instance, whether
female descriptive representation lead to women's substantive or
symbolic representation (Grey, 2006; Koning, 2009; Tremblay, 1998).
Moreover, both concepts need to be considered in the light of the
processes of resignification of politics and democracy as I discussed in
Chapter One.

Methodological Relationalism

The proposal of Bourdieu is oriented to go beyond the limits of objectivism,
and subjectivism, the former present in structuralism and the latter in
constructivism. Structuralists assert that structures can be caught from the
outside and their articulations can be observed and measured in their
materiality. This objectivist reading of the social life has limits like the

impossibility of determining some principles that can explain the generation of social regularities and the reduction of individuals' behaviour to the passive realization of the structures. On the other hand, Bourdieu has a critical view of the constructivist perspective present on phenomenology[5], ethno-methodology, and rational choice theory, which understand social reality as the product of social actors' decisions and actions. The limits of this perspective have to do with the conception of the social structures as products of the simple aggregation of strategies and individual acts, without explaining according to what principles the construction of social reality occurs. In the specific case of the 'rational choice theory' Bourdieu indicates that it "…ignores the individual and collective history of agents' through which the structures of preference that inhabit them are constituted…" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992a, p. 123). At the same time, Bourdieu rejects the symbolic interactionist perspective, by considering that social interactions by themselves cannot be the basis of social processes, because social agents are, finally, the carriers of social determinations. It is not about eliminating the study of social interactions, but of not separating them from their social genesis.

In order to surpass the extreme theses of structuralism and phenomenology, Bourdieu proposes a 'structural constructivism'. This constitutes Bourdieu's theoretical strategy, which further aims to go beyond the diverse antinomies that have divided and limited the possibilities of sociology becoming a true scientific discipline (Bourdieu, et al., 1991c; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992a; Maton, 2003). The central aspect of this proposal is the relationship between agents and structures which is manifested in social practices. Bourdieu sees practices as a link that mediates between the individual and collective action. Furthermore, practices are the link that mediates between the social organizations of the

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[5] Bourdieu's critique of phenomenology has been discussed by several scholars, for more details see (Saward, 2006, pp. 300-301).

production, that is, the social structure and reproduction of the society. He

begins his analysis from the notion of practice, strongly linked to the

Marxist notion of *praxis*, which produces and reproduces society**.** At the

centre of his theory are the generative principles of social practices. For

him those principles are in the "dialectic of the internalization of

externality and the externalization of internality" (Bourdieu, 1977a, p.

72).Thus, Bourdieu

> …defines practice itself in terms of a dialectical relationship between a
> structured environment (by which he invokes 'objectivist structures',
> which are not necessarily the real world but an agent's practical
> interpretation of the world) and the structured dispositions engendered in
> people which lead them to reproduce the environment even in a
> transformed form" (Bell, 1992, p. 78).

Bourdieu describes his theoretical proposal as methodological

relationalism (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992a, p. 15). In this perspective, the

primacy of relations allows reconciling agents, structures, and history in a

perspective that privileges the relations among them, without sacrificing

their place in the social phenomena. Moreover, by introducing time

through a historical analysis, methodological relationalism provides an

agentic perspective (using Bandura's concept, see Bandura, 1999) of the

social practice that does not disregard the role of structures. In practical

terms, this approach compels not only the analysis of relations within the

research topic, but within the research process. For instance, the analysis

of the interview texts lead to the analysis of structures and the junctures

affecting and informing the analysis, which are not separate dimensions of

the research but an interrelated ones.

Bourdieu's methodological relationalism offers a set of analytical tools that

constitute the axis of this research for uncovering the meaning an

implication of female politicians in Chile. Habitus and field are the

concepts that allow for understanding the processes of continuity and

change, stability and variation in the universe of social practices. In this

thesis, this means attempting to explain and make sense of the sudden and

unexpected eruption of female politicians in the Chilean political field at a given moment in history. The way I undertake this task is by looking at the temporal relationship between the Chilean social space, the structure of their political field and the political practices. By unmasking the Chilean political habitus, I am to seek for clues for the meaning and implication of female politicians.

Field, Capital and Habitus

Bourdieu sees society as a multidimensional social space "constructed on the basis of principles of differentiation or distribution constituted by the set of properties active within the social universe in question…The active properties that are selected as principles of construction of the social space are the different kinds of power or capital that are current in the different fields" (Bourdieu, 1985a, p. 724). Capital represents the power over a field, that is, the source of it. Social agents are distributed within the social space according three dimensions: volume of capital, structure of capital and trajectory of capital.

Bourdieu develops the concept of field to give an account of specific spheres or dimensions of the social space; a field could be understood as a sub-space. A field can thus be seen as a

> …network, or a configuration, of objective relations between positions. These positions are objectively defined, in their existence and in the determinations they impose upon their occupants, agents or institutions, by their present and potential situation (situs) in the structure of the distribution of species of power (or capital) whose possession commands access to the specific profits that are at stake in the field, as well as by their objective relation to other positions (dominations, subordination, homology, etc.) (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992a, p. 97).

Each field has a logic that is unique to it and that agents have to submit to it in order to be in that 'social space'. This means values and regulative principles that form the field and their boundaries. However, Bourdieu asserts that the structure of the field is always potentially unstable. Social

spaces are first and foremost "spaces of conflict and competition…in which participants vie to establish monopoly over the species of capital effective in it …and the power to decree the hierarchy and 'conversion rates' between all forms of authority in the field of power" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992a, p. 17).

For Bourdieu (1986a) capital is not reduced only to its economic meaning, but it conveys the set of properties that social agents use in the power struggles. Capital must be understood as all types of social energy susceptible to produce effects, all energy susceptible to be used must be considered (consciously or unconsciously) like an instrument in the social competition. For Bourdieu capital is first and foremost "accumulated labour" in a materialized or embodied form (p. 46). However, unlike Marx Bourdieu sees "a much broader range of types of labor (social, cultural, political, religious familial, to name a few) that constitute power resources and that under certain conditions and at certain rates can be converted into another one" (Swartz, 1998, p. 75).

All different types of capital (economic, social, cultural) can work as symbolic capital. Therefore, it is possible to speak of the "symbolic effects of capital" (Bourdieu, 2000a, p. 242). For Bourdieu symbolic capital is not, in the strictest sense, a type of capital. In fact, all forms of capital 'exist and act like symbolic capital', as long as they are recognized as legitimate. Symbolic capital is the more unequally distributed form of capital, because the hierarchies that generates are accepted as natural and thus are more bearable than the hierarchies produced by the other forms of capital.

Bourdieu observes that within each field power struggles take place and it is through these struggles that a social agent seeks to increase their symbolic capital to secure dominance over the field. Those in a position of dominance control legitimacy, this is, they control "the power to be heard, believed and obeyed, along with the ability to silence others or allow them

to speak" (Bourdieu, 1991b). Through acquisition of cultural capital dominant agents maintain the ability to reproduce their dominance. The dominant group Bourdieu asserts defends the integrity of the *status quo*, that is, of the doxic experience. Bourdieu designates doxa as a "deep seated stated structure of embodied dispositions", thus "unquestioned beliefs, embodied in actions and feeling but seldom formulated in words" are part of the doxic experience (Crossley, 2001b, p. 99).

Bourdieu's central claim is that "the conversion of the different forms of capital is the basis of the strategies aimed at ensuring the reproduction of capital and the position occupied in the social space" (Bourdieu, 1986a, p. 54). To address this issue the author resorts to the relationship between time and power to explain the process of conservation of social energy throughout the conversions of the different types. In here he observes that process is mediated by the "labor-time accumulated in the form of capital and the labor-time needed for the transformation of it" (Bourdieu, 1986a, p. 54). In a recursive synthesis, the author asserts that "capital in its various forms is a set of pre-emptive rights over the future" and that "power over the objective chances governs aspirations, and therefore the relation to future. Thus, "the investment in the forth-coming of the world" as "labor-time accumulated" presupposes a sense of anticipation of profit, given by social actors' projections of present power relations into the future, which orients their present dispositions in return (Bourdieu, 2000a, pp. 124-127). However, Bourdieu observes that capital "takes time to accumulate and which, as a potential capacity to produce profits and to reproduce itself in identical or expanded form contains a tendency to persist in its being" (p. 46).

As previously discussed, for Bourdieu social reality is not only a set of relations of forces between social agents (social space and fields), it is also fundamentally a set of relations of sense which constitute the symbolic dimension of the social order. The symbolic capital is the social energy on

which those relations of sense are based. This capital rests on the
necessity that human beings have to justify and find a reason for their
social existence. This is the central sociological problem for Bourdieu: "the
question of the *legitimacy* of an existence, an individual's right to *feel
justified in existing as he or she exists*" (Bourdieu, 2000a, pp. 237, emphasis
original). From there "the seduction that *the rites of institution* (acts of
performative magic) exerts on human beings, which assure their existence
like ordinary or extraordinary members of a certain group, that is to say,
in their *social fiction*, to take on the social image or essence that is
conferred to [them] in the form of names, titles, degrees, posts or honours"
(2000a, p. 243); and also "the *acts of consecration* able to take the feeling
of the insignificancy and the contingency of an existence with no need,
conferring on them a known and recognized social function" (2000a, p.
239).

On the other hand, the lack of social recognition represents the loss of
social identity, that is, the properly metaphysical misery human beings
without social reason for being, left to the insignificance of an existence
with no need, left to the absurdity (Bourdieu, 2000a, p. 239). Bourdieu
finds the best example of this absence of sense of the social existence, in
the social experience of people without future, the sub-proletarians, those
excluded from the economic world (Bourdieu, 2000a, pp. 221-223).
Consequently, symbolic capital is made of all the forms of social
recognition:

> all the forms to be perceived that make up a social being known, visible,
> famous, admired, invited, loved, etc. are so many manifestations of the
> grace (*charisma*) that save those it touches from the distress of the
> existence without justification and which gives them not only a 'theodicy of
> their own privilege' (…) but also a theodicy of their existence (Bourdieu,
> 2000a, p. 241).

For Bourdieu, the symbolic power would reside in the "structure of the
field in which belief is produced and reproduced" (Bourdieu, 1991b, p.
170), which defines the power relations between the dominants and the

dominated. This leads back to the idea that power relations are relations of force and relations of sense, an idea Bourdieu borrowed from Weber. Weber[6] asserts that social reality is a set of relations of sense and that any type of domination (with exception of the physical coercion) rests on the principle of legitimacy, which both dominants and dominated have to acknowledge, however the mechanisms of efficacy of this legitimacy remain unknown (A. B. Gutiérrez, 2005).

Therefore, Bourdieu accounts on field and capital posit a tension between the production and the reproduction of the social spaces. On one hand field has a propensity to remain stable, mostly because the agents that participate in it submit to its logic. On the other hand, the same agents attempt to improve their relative position within the field by engaging in power struggles which potentially can risk the stability of the field and eventually transform it. In spite of this inherent feature of the field and the practices that take places within it, fields and practices themselves remain relatively predictable over time, keeping however a degree of indeterminacy. Within the relational logic that characterizes Bourdieu's theoretical project the concept of habitus permits us to understand this particularity of the social world as neither fixed nor chaotic.

Bourdieu recognizes the existence of regularities which signify conformity between practices and rules, that is, between agency and structure.[7] He asserts that social agents act within rules[8] by means of strategies, which

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[6] It is possible to identify traces of the notions of charisma and legitimacy in Bourdieu's theory of symbolic power and its relations to economic and political power (Crossley, 2001a; Endress, 2005; Throop & Murphy, 2002)

[7] In his ethnographic research about Kabile society, he observes the existence of practices of marriage between parallel cousins, a practice that goes against the system of kinship (Bourdieu, 1991b; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977h; Brubaker, 1985). Here, he concludes that social practices do not always follow rules; the case of this type of marriage being a clear example. Therefore, there are not marriage rules, but marriage strategies.

[8] Here, the concept of rule has major implication for Bourdieu. The concept of rule that Bourdieu uses has a more loose meaning than the one used conventionally. When Bourdieu talks about rule he is encompassing 'norms' as much legal as moral, 'theoretical models' and 'schemes' implicit in social practices (Bourdieu, 1977a). Bourdieu observes that rules are not the only constitutive

they are free to determine. Social practices respond to social agents' strategies, rather than to the adequacy of social agents to rules. Individuals adopt strategies to face the rules.

Strategies demonstrate the capacity that social agents have to manoeuvre and to improvise. The strategies have nothing to do with conscious decisions nor with a mechanical process but with a habitus. The habitus functions as the 'strategy generating principle', it is the source of the practices which are 'objectively organized as strategies' but without necessarily a strategic calculation. Here Bourdieu asserts that "most successful strategies are normally those produced on the hither side of all calculation and in the illusion of the most 'authentic sincerity', with the additional benefit of social approval accruing from apparent disinterestedness" (Bourdieu, 1977a, pp. 72-73).

An illustrative case of Bourdieu's use of the concept of strategy is his analysis of gift exchange in relation to the time that exists between the gift and the counter gift, which makes an interested act appear disinterested. Bourdieu observes that the giver and the receiver, without realising, deny the truth of the exchange which appears as a completely disinterested act precisely due to lapse of time between giving and receiving. To illustrate this, the author denounces the taboo of making things explicit (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 96), which in the case of the gift exchange prevents giver and receiver talking about the gift price and the counter-gift. Bourdieu claims what happens in the generalized system of exchange (the concealment of the interest that is inscribed in the relation between gift – time – counter-gift) could be seen in social practices.

For Bourdieu, time – or the interval between the gift and the counter gift – is what constitutes the strategy, as he claims "to abolish the interval is to

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principles of social action in a legalist sense as structuralism or rational action theory have asserted (1977a, p. 27). Bourdieu's concerns about the efficacy of rules come from his observation of regularities of social practices.

abolish the strategy" (Bourdieu, 1977a, p. 6). This is not a conscious process. Bourdieu asserts, "practices always have double truths" (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 95). This is the central postulate of his economy of symbolic exchanges. According to Bourdieu, the dual character of practices lies in the 'collective misrecognition' inscribed in both objective and subjective structures, preventing to think or act otherwise. The fact that practices have concealed meaning is possible due the doxic character of social reality, that is, what is taken for granted in any particular culture (Bourdieu, 1977a, pp. 164-167). Bourdieu elaborates this idea to give account of a theory that at the core does not have intentions, but acquires dispositions, which are reflected in the concept of habitus, "a durable system of schemes of perception, thought and action" (Bourdieu, 2001, p. 8).

Bourdieu points out the necessity of breaking with the idea of disinterest. However, Bourdieu asserts that this is a very difficult task, particularly in the cultural field in which we are all both judge and jury. He observes we tend to be unaware that culture as our own specific capital is the source of our specific power and of the particular form of domination we exert (Bourdieu, 1998). Social practices thus are always orientated by interest. For Bourdieu the concept of interest or *illusio* gives account not only of an opposition to the ideas of disinterestedness, gratuitousness and indifference but also signals "that interests are both presupposed and produced by the functioning of historically delimited fields … interest is a historical arbitrary construction that can be known only through historical analysis" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992a, pp. 115-116).

Habitus appears like a "system socially constituted of structured and structuring dispositions that is acquired in the practice and constantly oriented towards practical functions" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992a, p. 97). From this perspective, habitus appears like a historically determined notion, as much in the sense of the process of socialization (internalization

of the social structures) as in the sense that those structures have been recreated by the previous generations. But, on the other hand, habitus is something 'powerfully creative':

> To put it briefly, habitus is a product of the conditionings which tend to reproduce the objective logic of those conditionings while transforming them. It's a kind of transforming machine that leads us to reproduce the social conditions of our own production, but in a relatively unpredictable way. In such a way one cannot move simply and mechanically from knowledge of the conditions of production to the knowledge of products (Bourdieu, 1993a, p. 87).

Habitus works like an a priori concept, but with a temporal dimension, produced by the practical activity, which at the same time produces itself, which makes it an historical transcendental concept. In conclusion, the concept of habitus has a double aspect: on one hand, it reproduces the social conditioning, and on the other hand functions as producer of social practices.

Habitus and field are two faces of the same process from where the correspondence between the positions and the taking of position can empirically be observed. This pre-established harmony between habitus and field is only explained by the 'principle of action', which:

> ... lies in the complicity between two states of the social, between history in bodies and history in things, or, more precisely, between the history objectified in the form of structures and mechanisms (those of the social space or the fields) and the history incarnated in bodies in the form of habitus, a complicity which is the basis of the relationship of the quasi-magical participation between these two realizations of history (Bourdieu, 2000a, pp. 150-151)

Bourdieu conceives habitus in an Aristotelian sense (Gerrans, 2005), as lasting dispositions[9], but goes further when he inserts the concept into a constructivist structuralism and states that habitus is what makes knowledge and doxic experience possible. For Bourdieu, doxa understood as a natural attitude, an ordinary experience or belief (Husserl, 1983;

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[9] Aristotle's word for this type of socially embodied representations acquired through practical immersion in a culture is Hexis: Bourdieu captures the same concept by a term first used by Aristotle's medieval translator: habitus (Gerrans, 2005)

Myles, 2004) makes the natural and social world appear as self-evident (Bourdieu, 1977a, p. 164).

This conformity that Bourdieu talks about is never complete. There is always a degree of uncertainty in it, the reason of this lies in the process of the internalization of social structures given by social cognition. Central concerns for Bourdieu are the processes that lead to symbolic struggles and cultural revolutions. Bourdieu asserts that the 'struggle of classifications is a fundamental division of class struggle. The power of imposing a vision of divisions, that is, the power of making visible and explicit social divisions that are implicit, is the political power *par excellence*: it is the power to make groups, to manipulate the objective structure of society' (Bourdieu, 1990c, p. 138). For instance, Bourdieu says, if I say that the main division of society is between rich and poor, I will have a completely different social structure than if I say that the main difference is between French (people) and immigrants (Bourdieu, 2000b).

Awareness of the twofold character of doxa is essential to realize how the established order with its relations of domination, its rights and prerogatives, privileges and injustices can so often be perceived as acceptable and even natural. The moments of crisis are propitious for challenging the established order. First, there is a process of recognition of doxa which transforms it into orthodoxy. This process, it "looks backward to the re-establishment of previous doxa and its tacit beliefs and naturalized conventions" (Holton, 1997, p. 43). In short, it attempts to naturalizes the belief, transforming a universe of practices in knowledge. Secondly, there is a process of "awareness and recognition of the possibility of different or antagonistic beliefs"(Bourdieu, 1977a, p. 164), namely heterodoxy in which alternative ways to doxa emerge.

At the basis of social transformation are the contradictions and conflicts that arise in the reproduction of the social and symbolic space (Bourdieu,

1998). In here, Bourdieu asserts that "there is always room for cognitive struggle over the meaning of things of the social world" (Bourdieu, 2001, p. 13). For him "to reintroduce uncertainty is to reintroduce time, with its rhythm, its orientation and its irreversibility"(Bourdieu, 1990b, p. 99). The temporality of social practices and social order is mediated by the relationship between habitus and field, which allows the accounting of pluralities of time, that is, "different ways of temporalizing oneself, relating them to their economic and social conditions of possibility" (Bourdieu, 2000a, p. 224).

For Bourdieu, symbolic capital constitutes the base of symbolic power. All forms of domination (the unequal distribution of capital between individuals and groups) have a symbolic dimension, even those based on explicit force. If the "acts of submission, obedience, are recognition and knowledge acts" (Bourdieu, 2000a, p. 172), then domination always puts into play cognitive structures that, applied to the social structures, establish relations of sense. Thus, the relations of domination must be recognized as legitimate, so that the dominated adhere naturally, without knowing it, to the dominant order (Bourdieu, 1991b, 2000a). Therefore, the symbolic violence is defined as a violence that is exerted on individuals with their own complicity.

Symbolic violence is exerted in a diversity of forms: each field is a space of exercise of the social violence. The mental and cultural schemes that work as a symbolic matrix of the social practice becomes the true foundation of a theory of the domination and the politics: "of all the forms of hidden persuasion", the most implacable is the one exerted, quite simply by the *order of things*"(Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992a, p. 168). Bourdieu asserts that relations of domination are inscribed in the body as habitus, and from this the great stability of the social order has reached the immediate submission, almost natural, of the dominated ones. The symbolic violence, more than the physical violence or any other form of mechanical co-action,

constitutes the main mechanism of the social reproduction, and the most powerful means for the maintenance of the social order.

To unpack the mechanisms of the symbolic violence Bourdieu turns to the systematic study of the gender relations (2001). Bourdieu's analysis starts with the analysis of masculine domination by raising the following question: "what are the historical mechanisms responsible for the sexual division and the corresponding principles of division that this implies"(p. 1). For that purpose, Bourdieu asserts the necessity of becoming aware of the "processes leading to the naturalisation of masculine domination"(p. 2). The family, the church, the state, the educational system, and, in another order of things, sport and journalism are part of the interconnected institutions that play a central role in the de-historization and eternalization of masculine domination. The problem that he sets out to analyse is not the domination of one sex over another one, but that this is accepted or tolerated by the dominated ones, although in it they find suffering and humiliation. To address this issue he embarks on the development of a "genetic sociology of the sexual unconscious" that explains the fact of the trans-historic constant of masculine domination (Bourdieu, 2001, p. 106). The elucidation of the problem has to do with the symbolic violence, invisible relations of domination that are inscribed in the bodies in the form of dispositions, schemes of perception, appreciation and action.

Bourdieu observes that the nucleus of the symbolic violence is in the "*twofold naturalization* which results from the inscription of the social in the things and in bodies" (Bourdieu, 2000a, p. 181). For the author it is through the process of learning of masculinity and femininity that the differences between the sexes are inscribed in the bodies, which can be seen in clothing, walking, talking, standing, sitting, for example. Bourdieu asserts that *rites of institution* are the limiting case that lead sex differences to be naturalized and become gender divisions (Bourdieu,

2000a). For Bourdieu it is essential to take "account of the durable effects that the social order exerts on women (and men), that is to say the dispositions spontaneously attuned to that order which it imposes on them" (2001, p. 38).

Bourdieu's analysis of the mechanisms of distribution and the functioning of symbolic power allows him to conclude that the social order maintains itself and becomes efficient only with the complicity of the dominated, that is, by means of the symbolic violence. However, for Bourdieu (1979) symbolic violence is not clearly the direct result of domination structures, nor the result of conscious actions (reflective, rational, and oriented to aims), but is the result of the dialectic between habitus and the structures. The concept of habitus explains how this might occur. The habitus mediates between the binaries of structure and agency, the structures of society that bind us and our own experience and actions within the confines of these structures, acting both as a structured structure and a structuring structure. The author asserts that:

> ...the effect of the symbolic domination (whether ethnic, gender, cultural, linguistic, etc.) is exerted not in the pure logic of knowing consciousness but through the schemes of perception, appreciation and action that are constitutive of habitus and which, below the level of the decisions of consciousness and the controls of the will, set up a cognitive relationship that is profoundly obscure to itself (Bourdieu, 2001, p. 38).

 Bourdieu's analysis of women's subordination proposes focusing on agencies such as the school or the state where principles of domination that continue being exercised, both in public and private spheres, are developed and imposed. For the author this perspective further opens up the space of feminist struggle, which has had a distinctive and decisive place within the political struggle against all forms of domination. Taking a political and subverting stance, Bourdieu suggests that to break with the paradoxical logic of masculine domination women should engage in political action to invent and impose forms of collective organization and action and effective weapons, especially symbolic ones, capable of shaking

the political and legal institutions which play a part in perpetuating their subordination (Bourdieu, 2001).

Using Bourdieu's perspective to advance the analysis of meanings and implication of female politicians in Chile

Bourdieu's theory offers analytical tools for the study of meanings and implications of female politicians in Chilean politics as will be discussed throughout this section. His contribution to feminist and gender studies has been widely acknowledged by sociologists and scholars from different disciplines (Adkins & Skeggs, 2005; Bullen & Kenway, 2005; Hook, 2005; Krais, 1993; Lovell, 2000; McCall, 1992; Mcleod, 2005; Moi, 1991; Palomar Vera, 2002; Reay, 2002). Furthermore, feminist researchers have found in Bourdieu's investigation of masculine domination powerful insights into feminist and gender studies (Ashall, 2004; Chambers, 2005; Mottier, 2002).

Feminist critiques of positivism and structuralism have been at the core of sociological theorizing and these have been extensively developed in Bourdieu's works and constitute the core of his constructivist structuralistic approach and of his reflexive epistemology (Bourdieu, 1990c, 1993a, 2001, 2004, 2008; Bourdieu, et al., 1991c; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992a; Wacquant, 1989). Several feminist scholars have recognized Bourdieu's potential for feminist research (Adkins & Skeggs, 2005; Lovell, 2000; McCall, 1992; Mcleod, 2005; Moi, 1991; Skeggs, 1997). The major points of convergence between Bourdieu's sociology and feminist methodologies are an anti-essentialist perspective, rejection of dualism (subject-object, agency-structure) and an emphasis on epistemic reflexivity. Added to this for both feminists and Bourdieu the dynamics of power and knowledge production has been a central concern and mater of analysis (Bourdieu, 1991b; Lazar, 2007; Offen, 1988).

Bourdieu's sociology offers not only important insights for feminist research but also for gender studies. Ontologically, Bourdieu's relational

thinking possesses several characteristics that are in tune with the concept of gender. The rupture with essentialism leads to the analysis of the relationships between the dynamic set of properties that constitute masculinity and femininity, instead of the traditional analysis of their ascribed characteristics. Thus, to speak about gender is to speak about the set of properties (constituted by beliefs, attitudes, values, conduct and activities) that differentiate women and men; as Bourdieu points out, "a relational property exists only in and through its relation with other properties" (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 6). Gender is understood as a socio-historical construction which allows thinking about differences between women and men as a non-static system but as determined by the passing of time and by the diverse means through which it is transmitted. This remits to the variability of the definitions that are given to men and women depending on the period and culture from which they are described. The relational aspect of the concept of gender allows for superseding the essentialist and realistic approach of analysing the relations between women and men.

Gender studies claim that to understand the very nature of the logic of social reality based on opposites, a process of deconstruction of the differences is necessary. This process would demonstrate that opposites and the degrees of superiority and inferiority are not natural but rather constructed through a complex historical and social process. As Conway, Bourque and Scott (1996, p. 32) point out,

> gender systems, regardless of their historical period, are binaries systems that oppose the man to the woman, the masculine to the feminine and that, in general, not in a level of equality but in a hierarchical order. While the symbolic associations about gender have significantly changed, still the categories of thought and the ways of organizing our symbolic universe are based on binaries opposition. This impedes understanding the complexity of the social and cultural processes, in which the differences between women and men are neither not apparent nor clearly defined, in which reside their meaning and power. By studying systems of gender we learn that they do not represent the functional assignation of biologically

prescribes roles, but a mean of cultural conceptualization and social organization.

At the core of the meanings and implications of female politicians in the twenty-first century is the evolving nature of power relationships, which determine changes in gender and political dynamics. In *Gender: A useful category of historical analysis*, Joan W. Scott (1999) points out that gender is a constitutive element of social relations based on differences that distinguish the sexes. Moreover, gender is a primary form of power relations.

The concept of gender differentiates the sexual differences inscribed in the body from their social and cultural meanings and from the cultural learning that men and women acquire through their socialization. Gender relations determine not only differences, but also divisions between women and men, and because of that, a differential distribution of power for females and males. Hence, "gender is a constitutive element of social relationships based on perceived differences between sexes, and gender is a primary way of signifying relationships of power"(J. W. Scott, 1986, p. 1067).

Bourdieu extends the concept of habitus to the field of gender studies when he asserts that gender is a sexually characterized habitus. For Bourdieu the gendered habitus lead to "opposed and complementary bodily hexis" (Bourdieu, 2001, p. 30) that is, a sexualized "way of experiencing and expressing one's own sense of social value" (Bourdieu, 1984a, p. 474). Throughout a historical process the body has been defined as a "sexually reality" where the "sexually defining principles of vision and division" rests (Bourdieu, 2001, p. 104). Bourdieu argues that sexuality is a historical invention that has developed progressively as the various fields and their specific logics became differentiated. The emergence of sexuality is also indissociable from the appearance of a set of fields and agents competing for the monopoly of the legitimate definition of sexual

practices and discourses - the religious field, the legal field, the bureaucratic field – and capable of imposing that definition in practices, in particular through families and the familistic vision (Bourdieu, 2001, p. 104).

For Bourdieu the visible changes that have affected the condition of women mask the permanence of the invisible structures which can only be brought to light by a relational thinking capable of making the connection between the domestic economy, and therefore the division of labour and power which characterizes it, and the various sectors of the labour market (the fields) in which men and women are involved (Bourdieu, 2001).

The concept of field allows Bourdieu to analyse the political realm, a space he defines as having some properties that are unique and specific to it. The political field is considered by Bourdieu as a part of cultural field. One of the first aspects Bourdieu recognizes is the differentiation between the professionals and the clients, as he calls the members of the political field and the outsiders.

> The political field is the site in which, through competition between the agents involved in it, political products, issues, programmes, analyses, commentaries, concepts and events are created – products between which ordinary citizens, reduced to the status of 'consumers' have to choose thereby running a risk of misunderstanding that is all the greater the further they are for from the place of production (Bourdieu, 1991b, p. 172).

Here Bourdieu asserts that the conditions of possibility of access to the political field are distributed very unequally. In fact the *market of politics* according to Bourdieu is "doubtless one of least free market that exist"(Bourdieu, 1991b, p. 173). For Bourdieu in the political field expectations and aspirations are very unequally distributed. They tend to be roughly adapted to the objective chances of individual and groups. In fact, Bourdieu argues that the desire for power is roughly adjusted to the agent's actual empowerment (Bourdieu, 2000a). This projection of the present on the future can help to explain women's interrupted or

fragmented political trajectories and their relatively lower political capital, which is particularly visible in Chile (for more details over this issues see PNUD, 2010). Political capital is an expression of the political habitus, which in the case of women determines their investment on the political field. That investment being adjusted to the conditions of possibility of gains of political capital or 'political reputation' has been considerably lower in women. This is what Bourdieu call the "inertia of the habitus", which has a spontaneous tendency to perpetuate structures corresponding to their conditions of production (Bourdieu, 2000a).

 Bourdieu notes the most important aspects that define the access to the political field are interest and competence. Here the education level is a central variable as well-educated people tend to be more interested in politics than people with low levels of instruction. Gender is without doubt the most crucial variable in political interest. Bourdieu asserts that the historical lower social recognition of women has lead them to be perceived as less interested in politics and therefore less competent in it (Bourdieu, 1993a, 2000b). This is an issue that has been explored by several scholars researching women in politics who discovered that women's self-perceptions of their qualifications inhibit their political ambition (see for instance Lawless, 2010; Lawless & Fox, 2010). The sense of time, of the past in the present and the present in the future can further help to explain the differential of political ambition between women and men and in general, "women's tendency to establish a higher bar for themselves" which inhibits their "political ambition and further opportunities for leadership" (Lawless, 2010, pp. 54-55).

Bourdieu observes that political capital is a reputational capital and as such, it has a very different logic from other types of capitals. It is accumulated in relation to the clients (voters) and within the political field. Political capital understood as reputational capital means that "in politics, 'to say is to do', that is, it is to get people to believe that you can do what

you say…the politician derive his power from the trust that a group places in him" (Bourdieu, 1991b, pp. 190-192). This has a dialogical sense, the group as the outsiders or non-professionals and the group as the party.

The reputational character of politics explains why politicians are very vulnerable to scandal, both within politics and regarding their personal lives. Reputation explains why in modern politics liberal professionals such as doctors, lawyers and engineers, for instance, constitute the majority of political representatives, who easily transfer their professional capital to the political field (Bourdieu, 2000b). It can also explain how high profile artists can easily transfer their media success to the political field. The conversion of reputational capital to political capital is a phenomenon that has been more marked with the mediatisation of politics, particularly during election campaign and when bills get passed. As discussed in Chapter One it is perhaps the reputational character of the political that has made women more attractive to politics, as they are educated, professionalized and far away from the scandals that have surrounded men in the public and political sphere. In fact, higher-level education for women has also meant that they are increasingly belonging to professional bodies and this increases their potential as members of the political field. It is interesting in this respect is to acknowledge that as much as women's educational level increases their propensity to be interested in politics increases too. High levels of education for some women have meant lower levels of fertility and higher incomes, freeing them from household tasks. Although the changes have been very slow and they have been triggered by the economic field, they are having some effect over the political field. Free time along with enough economic resources are central for taking part in politics as they allow distraction from productive activities and the availability to be in a position of spokesperson (Bourdieu, 2000b).

The temporal dimension of politics and in particular of gendered perceptions of time is inextricably bounded to political power and gender

divisions of that power. Thus for instance, the political time and the political sense of time, reflects an interwoven relationship of the sense of the game while in the game. Moreover, the gendered time and the gendered sense of time hide the effects of private and public time. According to Bourdieu, public time is:

> ...naturalized, dehistoricized, desocialized, becoming something external which flows 'of itself and by its nature' (...) which thus help to conceal the links between power and the possible under the appearances of the consensus that it helps to produce (Bourdieu, 2000a, p. 223).

This perspective offers an unexplored venue for analysis of female politicians in Chile: meanings and implications in twentieth first century. It allows identifying and conceptualizing the sense of time as both a subjective and an objective experience, which is inscribed in the body, in social practices and institutions.

Concluding Remarks

In this chapter, I addressed Bourdieu's framework of analysis of the social which examines symbolic domination by looking at power structures and their practices and strategies in political field. This perspective has been central in the process of unfolding the meanings and implications of female politicians in Chile. Bourdieu's analysis historicizes social phenomena and provides a double reading of social practices and institutions that unfolds the twofold dimension of the social. His standpoint pays special attention to objective structures of the social universe and their embodied in beliefs, thoughts and mental structures. Habitus and field are central concepts to understand the correspondence between objective structures and cognitive disposition, which explain the regularities of social practices and the stability of the social order. In the same way habitus and field allows us to understand the possibilities for social transformation and change. The doxic state of reality always offers possibilities for own subversion.

Bourdieu's reflexive epistemology and relational ontology provide a comprehensive framework of analysis for the symbolic power, which is at the root of all struggles for change or maintenance of the social order. These perspectives permit the connecting of different levels of analysis of the social in the temporal dimension, for instance political power and gender dynamics. In the process of unfolding the meaning and implications of female politicians, Chilean politics intertwinement with complex phenomena that go beyond the universe of the possible and probable in politics was central. Bourdieu's attention to the temporal dimension of social struggles reflects the relevance of de-construction and re-construction of history to give an account of the processes that lead to symbolic domination. Therefore, a Bourdieuian perspective helps to illuminate the underlying conflicts and contradictions of Chilean politics unfolded in this research through the process of historization of women in Chilean politics and democracy. Moreover, it provides relevant insights for the examination of the conditions of possibility of female political advancement, that is, the conditions that allow women to become active political agents in Chilean politics.

Chapter 3: Researching the meanings and implications of female politicians in Chile: Qualitative research design

In this chapter I will explain the research methods and the data collection and data analysis techniques used. My approach in this research sought to look at how individuals, both female and male politicians experience and perceive, at the personal and professional level, female politicians' presence in Chilean politics. The focus is on the meanings attributed to events, places, behaviours, interactions, people, and artefacts; understanding that these meanings have historical depth and are widely shared, negotiated, and co-constructed (Schensul, 2008, p. 1).

On one level, this thesis is based on a micro approach looking at the culture, identity and life experience of participants. The emphasis here was exploratory and descriptive. It was exploratory because it incorporated both female and male voices on the subject, which was an approach that had not been applied previously to the study of female politicians in Chile. Moreover, the subject of inquiry was on female politicians as political actor, rather than female participation or representation in politics.

The use of in-depth interviews as a data collection technique provides a point of access to the process of meaning construction by interrogating individuals on their views and provoking them to take a position within the space of significations. Through in-depth interviews with politicians, I sought to gather the human dimension of the political activity, understanding politics primarily as a social phenomenon. Within this descriptive level of study, I also sought to specify the relevant properties and characteristics of the topic in question, for example, leadership styles, communication codes and performance.

Following Bourdieu's relational ontology and methodological relationalism the interview process and data gathered from it revealed themselves as a correlate of meso and macro levels of the social. The meanings and implications of female politicians were revealed as a part of an interactional process between individuals and collective political actors and institutions, norms and structures constituting the political field. At a meso level, the particularities unfolded by interviewees in the micro level were considered in a wider context. Here I looked to find relationships between for instance, electoral processes and outcomes of female candidacies, financial resources and female candidates, political parties' support and female candidates, types of candidacies and level of support. At a macro level participants unfolded the institutional dimensions of politics; that is, the structure of the political field as a structuring axis of the meanings and implications of political practice. Lastly, in a reflexive synthesis of the micro, meso and macro levels of analysis this thesis examined what were the sources of the actual meanings and implications that currently female politicians has for Chilean politics. I considered the in-depth interviews not only as process of data collection but as an access point to unfold the political habitus of the interviewees, the structure of the political field and the universe of possible meanings and implication of female politicians.

Research methods: Researching female politicians

The research methods I chose for this thesis were qualitative. The qualitative perspective is a way to research the language, to give a verbal description of the phenomenon studied, their essence, their nature, and behaviour. Qualitative research is characterized by the comprehension of the phenomena itself. In it, we find interpretative research techniques that try to describe and de-codify naturally occurring phenomena. In these techniques, texts, discourses, and narratives are the basis for the

reconstruction and interpretation of reality. Qualitative techniques are more orientated towards determining the meaning of the phenomenon rather than to quantify it, thus allowing the understanding of the perception of reality that individuals have (Creswell, 2002; Kvale, 1996; Temple & Young, 2004).

In line with the description above, I used in-depth interviews as the technique for data collection and discourse analysis as the technique for data analysis. Starting from the findings of the data collection process and discourse analysis, I developed a relational analysis that integrated the interview process and data analysis, the analysis of the historical and political processes as well as institutional frameworks that have marked the current dynamic of politics. The qualitative design aimed to find relationships between different variables that affect, determine or condition views on female politicians in Chilean politics, as well as explore interviewees' experiences in this regard.

Research Validation

As a part of the reflexive episteme as discussed in Chapter Two – a research process that reflects on its conditions of knowledge production – I undertook a rigorous process of data validation throughout data collection and data analysis. Different sources of data, from different periods were utilized to compare, check, and validate results and findings. In-depth interviews, as a primary source of data were related to relevant mass media sources, political sciences, sociological and historical literature and statistical data.

The data collection was carried out in different periods. In-depth interviews were conducted between November 2007 and January 2008; the mass media data sources were collected through the whole research process thus allowing a longer view of political dynamics in Chile to occur. Furthermore, I incorporated statistical data and a socio-historical

literature review relevant to the aims of this research. In addition, I have carried out a methodological triangulation by utilizing different techniques of data analysis, such as discourse analysis, statistical analysis, and systematization of the socio-political process and interviewees' experiences.

In order to set a context that allows full analysis and interpretation of the findings of this research a review of historical processes of the Chilean political development and women's trajectory within it was carried out. This stage had the objective of looking for the main socio-political events that have influenced or determined women's trajectory in Chilean politics. Thus identifying relationships between different processes and events that have shaped the political field was essential.

The explanatory approach was the last step in this research process. This included a process of consolidation that allowed a general overview of the main findings and the development of lines of explanation and theorization about women's trajectory in Chilean politics in recent years. At this level of analysis, I looked for connections among the qualitative findings, quantitative analysis, and significant socio-political events to open up a wider scope of understanding of the meanings and implications of female politicians in Chile. While the research process presented here seems to be linear, in fact it worked more dialectically since the different approaches mentioned were in permanent dialogue and informed by each other. The emphasis in the analysis and the research process was informed by the findings from the analysis of the in-depth interviews.

Especial attention should be paid to the systematization process I carried out. In it, the historical context was regarded as a condition of possibility for the research experience as well as one of its dimensions. I took into account particular situations that formed part of the time-space juncture, incorporating social practices that formed part of the processes and

experiences. This included the perceptions, emotions, sensations, and interpretation as well as the results and effects that modified the processes and experiences. The systematization approach considers the above as interrelated dimensions and asserts that those interrelations generate reactions in the actors that participate in processes and experiences, which in turn determine relations among them. These relations have been mediated by the dimensions affecting processes and experiences, but also are triggered by what happened during them (Jara Holliday, 1994). An example of the intertwining of these dimensions is seen in the following extract from one of the interviews.

> In the political world, the election is a time for people's petition; it is like a telethon. I had no idea. The first time [as a candidate for deputy], the priests asked me for money, the Evangelicals gave me blessings, they made me pray and after they cornered me and gave me an envelope to give them money. I suffered there; I suffered an emotional impact, because the world needs to hear this political reality, where the political world is accustomed to gifts, to bribery. Then, not because there is democracy the historic bribery is eliminated, there is clientelism ... it was used by the parliamentarians to say I got that from the FOSIS, I got this from INDAP, I got this from the Ministry of Housing... Then, I said let's not be liars, this money is from the taxes of all Chileans. But there, there is also a very important fact, how do you change this structure? The political world is giving money for receiving votes (Ricardo Halabí, personal communication, November 14, 2007).

The emotional dimension is interwoven and triggered by a socio-political trajectory in which constellations of meaning are articulated in tension. Categories such a democracy, elections, telethon, bribery, clientelism, and taxes are integrated within a narrative that reflect both despair and realization in the experience of being a candidate for deputy. To unfold the richness of meanings of this extract within the discourse analysis process I had to historicize this individual experience and abstract the complexity from the present interrelations to connect them with the meaning and implication of female politicians.

Systematization was not only an organizing method to validate data collection and data analysis, but also the research process. In this sense, it

encompassed a reflexive sociology in which I systematized the research process and my experience as researcher as a dimension and a condition for knowledge production.

Research Relevance

The relevance of this thesis rests in the research topic, theoretical framework and the methodological design. The meaning and implications of female politicians in Chile is a relevant topic because of the complexity of the Chilean democracy trajectory, political institutions and legacy of the dictatorship period which I assert is an anchoring dimension of the Chilean political field, of the political activity and therefore of the political actors. Because of Chilean democratic breakdown and because of the conditions of the democratic transition this study is distinctive in the international literature of women in politics. Chilean politics is not only a challenging and complex enterprise, but also a fertile territory for the analysis of relationships and interaction between macro, meso and micro social phenomenon and their ramifications over time. The meaning and implications of female politicians is inextricably interwoven in this temporal dimension of Chilean politics, which in turns is also part of the global context of international politics. My claim in this thesis is that political phenomena have precedence over gender or feminist approaches in the meaning of female politicians. I thus see my contribution here being the opening of new doors for constructive dialogue on the subject.

Throughout history, Chilean women have never been absent from the political sphere, but it is their recent visibility in high-ranking positions in elected and non-elected offices in the Government, Congress and political parties that requires interpretation and analysis. Recent events then bring us to think about the conditions of possibility that allow the rise of women in politics and the impact of female politicians for Chilean in recent times.

I found the perspectives in place for the study of women in politics overlooked the human and practical dimension of politics and prioritized political science and feminist perspectives on the topic. There is a wide range of studies on women in politics, but the majority of this research has been carried out in the western world. These investigations have focused on structural aspects of politics such as the electoral system, political parties, gender quotes, the political system, democracy and citizenship (Azza, 2005; Bacchi, 1996; Carroll, 2003; M. M. Conway, 2001; Heigh & Henig, 2001; Karl, 1995; Larserud & Taphorn, 2007; López-Claros & Zahidi, 2005; Lovenduski, 2005; Lovenduski & Norris, 2003, 1993; Moghadam & Senftovan, 2005; Norris, 2000; Seidman, 1999; Shvedova, 2002; Studlar & McAllister, 2002). Cultural aspects such as critical mass theory, glass-ceiling theory, gendered politics, and leadership have also drawn great attention (Bratton, 2005; Dolan, 2001; Franceschet, 2003; Haas, 2005; Lovenduski, 2005; Macaulay, 2005; Norris, 1996; Paxton & Kunovich, 2003; Studlar & McAllister, 2002).

Although research available in the Latin American context constitutes a valuable source, it tends to recapitulate the perspectives in the above mentioned literature and in some cases reflects the problematic of the particular countries in which they have been carried out or constitutes an overview of the situation in the region (M. Garretón, 2003; Jane Jaquette, 1989; Jane Jaquette, 1994; Llanos & Sample, 2008). In the case of Chile, numerous studies have been conducted in the recent years; however, these have taken the mainstream perspectives in terms of women's in politics (Altam, 2004; Fernández Ramil, 2008; Franceschet, 2001, 2003, 2005; Gray, 2003; Hardy, 2005; Hinojosa, 2009; Mlynarz & Muñoz, 2003; Ríos Tobar, 2003; Schild, 2003; Stoffel, 2008; Waylen, 2000). Building upon the existing literature, the theoretical framework of this thesis applies Bourdieu's theoretical perspectives on the political field and

masculine domination to illuminate the unfolding process of the meanings and implications of female politicians in Chile.

In terms of the methodological relevance of this research, the design proposed is consistent with Bourdieu's methodological relationalism (Bourdieu, 1990c; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992a), since it incorporates different techniques of analysis as part of the reflexive and relational perspective of the social. Understanding the significance that Bourdieu gives to history in the process of production of social practices, I established two research tasks; first, to construct and deconstruct, through the interviewees' discourses, the historical processes that have influenced the political field in Chile and female politicians; second, revealing the political habitus – the subjective, pre-reflexive elements of interviewees' discourse for understanding the dynamics of power relation within the political field and the implications of the gender factors within it. The most significant statistical trends on education, work, political participation and representation, religion and demographics were connected to the previous dimension in order to find connecting factors between this objective dimensions. Finally, from the subjective analysis of the political field and the symbolic power within it, I considered an objective analysis (historical and statistical) to look at homologies and correspondences between the objective structures and the cognitive schemes of perception and appreciation that define the meanings and implications of female politicians.

Researching female politicians in Chile

One of the first tasks that I undertook when I started this research was reflecting on what I wanted to know. Although the title of this study introduces the subject of inquiry, for me the central aspects were uncovering and understanding the experiences of those who take part of politics, of those who actively construct and work in what we normally

understand as politics. Moreover, to show that political practices uncover a universe of meaning and implications that allow to locate different social actors (in this case female politicians) within the political field.

Although the concept of politics could have a wider scope than the one considered here, for the purpose of this research, knowing what the 'main actors' of politics feel, think and perceive in relation to women's participation in politics was my central concern. From an operational point of view, I considered *meaning* as the making sense of female politicians in Chilean politics; *implications* as the contingent repercussion of female politicians for Chilean politics; *female politicians* as women in elective and non-elective offices and female political leaders; *Chilean Politics* as the actors, institutions and culture that form part of the political field in Chile.

The participants – the 'voices of politics' – included both females and males from the formal political realm. Elected offices, appointed offices in the executive and legislative branch and political parties were considered relevant in this study. Specialized voices, such as intellectuals and mass media representatives were also considered relevant. Such voices offer valuable insights and commentaries on Chilean politics which are engaged within broader sectors of Chilean society.

The voices of politics: The sample design

I originally planned to conduct 20 interviews, which would include Cabinet Ministries, Regional Ministries, Regional Governors, Governors of Provinces, Ministries of Supreme Court Deputies and Senate, Political Parties Representatives, academics, and journalists.

The final sample included 34 in-depth interviews due to the increased availability of potential interviewees[10], the relevance of the topic, and to the principle of saturation in discourse. The pool of relevant participants was determined finally by those who agreed to be interviewed, as well by their geographic location. The interviews were carried out in Santiago and Valparaiso; the first being the centre of the executive branch and the latter the centre of the legislative branch. The interviewees, who represented both women and men, included senators, deputies, senior executives of various political parties, public servants, an intellectual, and the editor of Chile's main social and political magazine (for more details of the final sample design, see Appendix I and II).

The topic "female politicians: meanings and implications for Chilean politics" turned out to be a very appealing subject for the interviewees and attracted attention among the people contacted. An additional plus was the fact that the interviews were conducted by a Chilean Scholar from an overseas university. Due to the commercial links between New Zealand and Chile, as well as the working holiday program, New Zealand is a highly regarded country and is well known in Chile. Moreover, the worldwide known tradition of women's participation in politics in New Zealand, alongside with the fact that for four consecutive parliamentary periods were lead by a female Prime Minister, was an aspect that several

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[10] The opportunity to contact high-ranking public servants, such as Ministers and Sub-secretaries of Cabinet was negative due to their busy agendas and their innumerable assistants that made it virtually impossible to schedule an interview. Probably, also a succession of government political issues over that period and the time of the year (Between November 2007 and January 2008, there were important issues affecting the internal image of Chilean politics. Some of the problems were the failures in the public transport system in Santiago, known as Transantiago (La Nación, Sábado 10 de febrero de 2007, the Parliamentary interpellation to a Minister (La Nación, Jueves 10 de enero de 2008, El Clarín, 08 de marzo de 2008).contributed to make this task even more difficult. It is important to bear in mind that public servants are highly constrained in their public interventions, because as appointed officials they do not want to upset the people who appoint them. On the other hand, the availability of members of Parliament was generally positive, which made it more manageable to schedule and conduct interviews. Since parliamentarians spend a considerable amount of time at the Congress, the probability of meeting them there was higher. Moreover, as MPs depend on voters, they tend to be friendlier and more open than public servants, who are appointed and not elected; therefore, they are more willing to agree to interviews. Finally, political leaders, members of political parties and key informants showed a favourable disposition towards being interviewed.

interviewees took into consideration and commented during the interview. Therefore, most of the interviewees very curious about my experience in New Zealand, from cultural, political, and academic points of view. This situation represented in many of the cases, an advantage at the time of arranging and conducting the interviews.

Finally, the principle of saturation of information was the last consideration that determined the actual size of the final sample. This principle asserts that when applying instruments of data collection if the information becomes redundant and adds little new data there is a signal of lack of discursive diversity and therefore the phase of data collection should end. In this sense, the principle of discourse saturation can be considered as a criterion for determining the sample size as well as validity. Saturation is reached when discourses and frames of reference are repeated, when interviews do not add new elements of analysis (Gómez, 2001). When discourse analysis is applied, "the endpoint is not that one stops finding anything with new further cases, but that the analysis of the cases considered to date has been thorough"(Wood & Kroger, 2000, p. 81).

Interviewing the 'voices of politics': The questionnaire guide and the interview

Starting from a semi-structured questionnaire guide, the interviews progressed towards exploring the maximum number of topics and themes related to female politicians, as well deepening some of patterns that were consistently repeated throughout the majority of interviews. Thus, the questionnaire was developed more as a guide to open up a wide range of possible topics and issues than as a fixed set of questions to be followed in every interview.

The length of the interviews varied between 40 minutes to an hour and a half. All interviews were recorded. The main topic of the interviews were:

interviewees' work experiences with female politicians, their personal and professional experiences of female politicians, their perceptions and evaluations of women in politics, their analysis of the political field in relation to female politicians and, historical and political processes or events affecting or influencing women's trajectory in politics. Along with the set of 15 structured open questions, the interviews included and an indefinite number of additional questions which arose as the interview progressed. These tangents assisted in further exploring different underlining trends within the main topics (For more details about the interview guide, see Appendix III).

Throughout the interview process, the interviewees were confronted with specific questions that made them take a position and provide their opinions and views, reflect on their personal experiences and deal with their emotions in relation to gender issues, politics, and power. The interviews were conducted emphasizing the experiences of the interviewees in the political world, but were also keeping track of macro factors (history, politics structure, national identity) that affected or determined their personal views. The dynamic of the interviews was oriented to develop a deep conversation that allowed both interviewer and interviewee to develop trust, openness, and reflection. The interviews followed a slow rhythm of conversation, frequently enlivened with references to our personal lives, and phrases 'off the record' in order to generate a space that allowed interviewees to freely express their ideas.

As studying any dimension of politics in some way or another entails the study of power, adopting a reflexive and relational perspective on the structures and power relations is essential for scientific knowledge production. In terms of the interviewees and the interview process this meant that I regarded interview "participants as partners in uncovering and addressing power imbalances, inequities, and injustices" (Schensul, 2008) and that a reflective and relational approach was not only a

perspective adopted by me as a researcher but also by the research participants. Interviewing thus was considered an instance of epistemological reflexive analysis. The text resulting from the interviews was subject to a relational analysis, as well as the knowledge production arising from it.

An important consideration in this study is that I conducted the research while living overseas in an English speaking country, which allowed me a greater sense of detachment and objectivity from the subject of analysis. This provided me with a critical view of the applicability of applying referential frames of though available in Anglo-Saxon scholarly tradition of women in politics to the Chilean case. In fact, it afforded me an insider-outsider perspective, that is, a perspective that seeks to find the uniqueness of the phenomenon within the context it takes place, while becoming aware of one's own cognitive bias by being and working in a different cultural setting. This was a significant plus in the process of conducting the interviews, in the sense that from both participants and the interviewer, the 'reality out there' was not taken for granted. This meant that in the majority of the cases a previous common sense of the topic was not taken for granted, but constructed in an inter-subjective process of building up meaning and signification about female politicians and their implications for politics and society. Participants manifested this by providing more precise explanations and descriptions of the issues in discussion and responded more freely and spontaneously. On the other hand, as the interviewer, I felt comfortable formulating questions that were sometimes potentially incisive, extending the interview to a more personal level and compelling the interviewees to take positions and provide clear answers when topics were avoided or left out. My impression on these issues is that because this research was being carried out from New Zealand, a country perceived as remote and distance from the Chilean context, interviewees felt more relax about what they said.

Another important aspect to consider during the whole process of research was my daily monitoring of the Chilean mass media, which allowed me to have a very deep sense of the political events occurring in Chile, as well as trends and cultural changes. A daily reading of the main newspapers and magazines of the country was central to having a sense of the flux of political events, as well as to triangulate my assumptions and findings throughout the process of the research.

Getting started: the Interviews transcriptions

Having finalized the interviews and back in New Zealand, the task of transcription was the following step in this study. For this task I considered an *emic* perspective (Pike, 1954, p. 48), that is, to focus on the intrinsic cultural distinctions that are meaningful to the interviewees. Capturing the richness of the dialogue occurring during the interview was one of my main concerns. With this aim in mind, I envisaged a full transcription of the interviews, word by word, including speech emphasis. However, the length and number of interviews made this task problematic. Moreover, research suggests that "excessive detail makes a transcript very large and extremely difficult to read and work with (…) it is neither practical nor desirable to produce highly detailed transcripts as substitute for identifying the focus of the study" (Wetherell, Taylor, & Yates, 2001, p. 37). Furthermore, the level of detail of the transcripts is a matter of selection, which is ultimately based on the theoretical approach selected. The above point made me reconsider my initial plan and opt for a combination of transcriptions styles, fully detailed transcription of half of the interviews and partial transcriptions of the other half. The process of selection of recorded interviews for full and partial transcription was randomized.

Qualitative research: Issues on language and translation

In this section, I identify and discuss distinctive features of this research that arises from language and translation. From a language perspective, a central observation is that this study needs to be considered within an intercultural context. First, it was produced and carried out in an English speaking country by a non-native English speaker, for whom Spanish is her first language. Second, because of the collection of primary sources was carried out in Chile, the country of origin of the researcher, which is Spanish-speaking country. Finally, the issue of language and translation needs consideration because the both primary data (from fieldwork), and the secondary data (from literature review and supporting materials in Spanish), were translated into English.

In an increasingly globalized society in which the internationalization of education and academia is a growing trend, speaking more than one language constitutes an advantage that opens up new ways of doing research, as in this case. However, it poses several challenges, particularly in the field of qualitative research, which is largely Anglo-American dominated (Pertti, 2004). In qualitative research language is central as it "organizes reality in a specific way" (Monroy-Casas, 2008, p. 175). Researching in two languages poses major challenges in terms of how reality is perceived, organized, and presented.

Temple and Young (2004) identified two main issues in qualitative research studies where data are collected in more than one language and the research process, at whatever stage(s) involves acts of translation between languages. The first is if the act of translation is identified or not, an issue directly related to the researchers epistemological stance. Consistent with Bourdieu's reflexive epistemology[11], I consider that it is

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[11] In this regard is important to notice Bourdieu's contribution to the field of translation studies, his ontological and epistemological perspective as wells as his theorization on habitus, field language and symbolic power have increasingly drawn attention among scholars on this field of study (Gerrans, 2005, p. 56).

necessary to make explicit the translation act as a dynamic part of the research process. The second issue is whether the translator and the researcher are the same person, which is the case in this study. From a perspective that sees "the act of translation as a re-presentation of reality" which is not "the mere representation of an original but as an activity involving manipulation and rewriting, as political engagement" (Vidal Claramonte, 2005, pp. 259-261), the issues raised by Temple and Young (2004) are relevant. Because the translation work involved in this research required translating into a second language, the challenges of working with data collected in a language other than English were different. Campbell (1998, pp. 57-59) observes that "it is difficult to think of a writing task that constrains the writer as much as translation does". In addition to this constraint, "in translating into a second language, comprehension of the source text is the easiest aspect; the real difficulty is in producing a target text in a language in which composition does not come naturally." Campbell's observations present a further challenge when the source text was in a spoken form and style as in the case of in-depth interviews. In this research, I translated both written text from secondary sources and spoken text from primary sources. Furthermore, I translated the spoken text into a second language written form.

Diagram 3:1

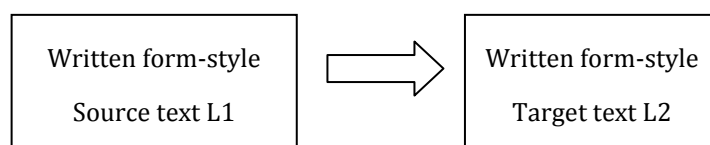| Written form-style Source text L1 | ⟹ | Written form-style Target text L2 |

Diagram 3:1 shows the process of translating secondary sources, in which written form-style source text in L1 (Spanish) was translated into target text L2 (English). The source text in L1 was mostly from the literature review, mass media, and local statistics. Although I was not trained as translator this type of translation was not a difficult task to achieve

because the formalities of the written text pose less challenges in terms of lexical diversity and textual competence (for more details on those issues see Campbell, 1998). Moreover, the basis of Spanish language derives from Latin and Greek, where most of English formal vocabulary comes from (Brodsky, 2007; Green, 2003).

Diagram 3:2

| S1 | Spoken form-style Source text L1 | → | Written form-spoken style Source text L1 | → | Written form-spoken style Target text L2 |
| S2 | Spoken form-style Source text L1 | → | Written form-style Source text L1 | → | Written form – style Target text L2 |
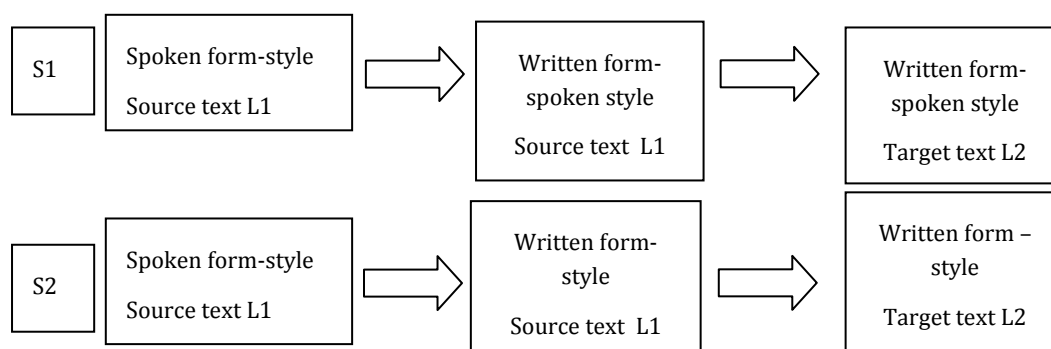
Diagram 3:2 shows the process of translating primary sources. This process can be separated in two stages as shown S1 and S2. In S1 I attempted to translate the interviews, that is, spoken form-style source text L1 (Spanish) into a written form-spoken style target text L2 (English). This means that I attempted to reproduce an oral interview in Spanish into a written text that can be read as spoken text in English. This posed complex challenges for the translation act. First, because while written language is "decontextualized and detached", spoken language is "contextualized and involved" (Campbell, 1998, p. 60). Furthermore, "spoken language is open to several different kinds of variation, whereas written language is relatively much more uniform" (Stubbs, 1980, p. 161). For the translating act this meant that while interviews were produced in a particular context and juncture, they were translated in a completely different context, both linguistically and temporally. Most of the supplementary meanings attached to the words in the form of symbolic meaning were neutralized to make the content readable out of the context

produced. In addition, colloquial and informal ways of verbal expression were often replaced by formal and written styles of expression to allow readers undertaking.

Acknowledging the difficulties encountered in S1 I adopted S2, in which I translated the spoken form-style source text L1 into a written form-style in target text L2. In both S1 and S2 the mediating step in the translation process was the transcription, which in S1 was in written form-spoken style and in S2 in written form-style. Although there was not a strict separation between S1, S2 and in some cases both type of translation techniques were applied simultaneously, the prevalent criterion was intelligibility. Thus, the expected output was a written text "comprehensible independently of the context" (Stubbs, 1980, p. 161). In this regard, processes of reflexivity on language structure and language acquisition were central to increase my awareness over two important issues for translation into a second language: first, that "every speaker perceives his/her language as linear and all others as non-linear"; second, "there is a tendency to transfer unconsciously to the second language the resources and rhetorical devices of the first language" (Monroy-Casas, 2008, pp. 175-176).

Issues of linearity, circularity, and use of rhetorical devises arose from working alternately in English and Spanish, gathering primary and secondary data, and transferring all the data to an English symbolic system. This lead to a simplification and selection of some of the content sources in order to make them accessible from a literal and symbolic point of view to English native speakers. For instance, the richness of metaphorical expressions was often sacrificed due to the lack of equivalence for representing that richness in a cultural context in which the symbolic meaning did not correlate to any objective meaning available. Moreover, nested ideas or linguistic recursive devices were translated into

linear fashion to secure intelligibility and full comprehension within the constraints that "Anglo-Saxon academic writing style" imposes.

As I have argued, the complexities of the translating act in qualitative research acquire a new dimension when translating into a second language. In this respect Campbell (1998) asserts that because "the second language translator [not only] has to work within the limitations of their second language repertoire (…), but also within the limitations of the source text" translation into the second language is a very special variety of second language writing (p. 58).

Reading the discourses on female politicians

One of my main concerns was to capture and interpret as much as possible the totality of the meaning and significance from my interviews. However, it is not possible to undertake discourse analysis without taking a position, a particular stance, without formulating questions about what you are expecting to answer. The taking a position process starts even before the discourse is produced. After all, carrying out research is an act of taking a position in the world and questioning specific issues or problems (Parker, 1992; Wetherell, et al., 2001; Wood & Kroger, 2000). Due to the very nature of discourse production and discourse analysis the task of gathering the totality of the meanings present in a discourse is unachievable. Having said that, it was essential to extract and interpret, as much as possible, the richness and complexity present in the discourses that as a researcher I was part of.

The perspective I applied in this thesis sees discourse as:

> … the practical use of language (broadly conceived) for the purposes of examining or otherwise criticizing the normal course of actions. Here, actions would include, of course, the action of writing or speaking, as well as political, economic, and social actions (Lemert, 2004, p. 1).

I considered a perspective that sees discourse analysis as much a research strategy as a form to treat data and their collection. In a broad sense, discourse analysis is a technique for interpretation of language that seeks to uncover patterns and structures. Discourse analysis considers that language, when it is read and adequately interpreted, allows us to access knowledge relating to the diverse aspects and phenomenon of social reality (Abela, 2002).

Considering that all speech involves manifold meanings, I analysed the discursive language in terms of the communicative functions of the language by responding to the following questions: what is said (referential aspects of the language), what is discovered (interpretative aspects of the language), and what is concealed (symbolic aspects of the language)(Abela, 2002). As a systematic interpretative technique of the concealed meaning of language, discourse analysis must not only be confined to the manifest content of the analysed material, but has to extend to the latent content as well as the social context from which it arises.

The aim of discourse analysis is "...to identify patterns of language and related practices and to show how these constitute aspects of society and the people within it" (Wetherell, et al., 2001, p. 9). Ultimately, such analysis draws attention to the social nature and historical origins of the world 'out there' which is largely taken for granted. Controversy is basic for this form of discourse analysis because it involves the study of power and resistance, contests and struggles. The basic assumption is that the language available to people enables and constrains not only their expression of certain ideas, but also what they do (Wetherell, et al., 2001). In this sense, the production of the discourse is part of discourse itself. This position is rather close to Bourdieu's *provoked and accompanied self-analysis* in which the author asserts that the sociological interview is provoked:

> ...because in all cases it takes place when requested or "provoked" by sociologists in order to pursue the object of their study. It is an "accompanied" interview because, according to Bourdieu, the interviewer must accompany the interviewee, according to the sense conveyed by his remarks (sic) (Hamel, 1997, p. 101).

If discourse is understood as the production of meanings, discourse analysis constitutes the study of how meanings are produced, and of which meanings prevail in society (Iedema, 2007). The base of a discourse analysis is the existence of the cultural meanings of the symbolic communication, which are structured by a system of inter-subjective signs or language and, as well, is crossed by the subjective sense of the speaker (Orti, 1992). The cultural meanings of the discourse necessarily lead to the understanding of the articulation of the language, for instance, what elements are included as pertinent and the relations that these establish within the social context in which the discourse occurs.

The use of discourse analysis in Bourdieu has not been explicit. He has coined concepts such as linguistic market, linguistic field, linguistic capital, legitimate language and linguistic authority (Bourdieu, 1991b) among others as he argues:

> we can say that a sociological critique subjects the concepts of linguistics to a threefold displacement (...) in place of language (langue), [it puts] the notion of the legitimate language. In place of relations of communication (or symbolic interaction), it puts relations of symbolic power and so replaces the question of the meaning of speech with the question of the value and power of speech. Lastly, in place of specifically linguistic competence, it puts symbolic capital, which is inseparable from the speaker's position in the social structure (Bourdieu, 1977b, p. 646).

The above perspective is close to critical discourse analysis in an ample sense, as I will discuss in the following section. For Bourdieu all languages and language varieties are equal in the linguistic sense, however, they are not all worth the same in the social sense. Standard varieties are privileged and nonstandard varieties are stigmatized, both by degree. The concept of linguistic capital illustrates this argument as the positive

aspects of privilege and status that languages carry with them wherever they go (Sayer, 2008).

> Language is praxis: it is made for saying, i.e. for use in strategies which are invested with all possible functions and not only communication functions. It is made to be spoken appropriately (Bourdieu, 1977b, p. 646).

Within Bourdieu's study of culture and power, the study of language is conceptualized as social practice and therefore analysed as such. For instance, the author:

> discussed language use in terms of the variation learned during an individual's early years as a form of cultural capital that acts as a condition for the reproduction of social order. For Bourdieu, language is part of a person's habitus, which is the totality of cultural aspects acquired during early stages of socialization (Moore, 2005).

Bourdieu's perspective on language is inserted in his view of the social as the space for production and reproduction of the social order, throughout practices in specialized social spaces or fields. Practices are triggered by habitus, a generating principle of strategies, which are neither entirely determined, nor determining. In the concept of habitus, there are both objective and subjective dimensions, which determine 'regular', but also unpredictable social practices. As embodied social order through life experience, the subjective dimension is determined by processes of cognition and recognition, which in turn are constitutive elements of the objective reality.

Taking into account Bourdieu's approach to language, my use of discourse analysis integrates both subjective and objective dimensions of meaning production. From an operational point of view, I incorporated analytical tools from Cognitive Semantics and Critical Discourse Analysis. In the following sections, I will develop the uses of these approaches in the data analysis.

Socio-political dimensions of discourses about female politicians

Critical Discourse Analysis offers a perspective that sees language:

> … as one element of social events and social practices that is dialectically related to other elements (including social institutions and aspects of the material world). Its objective is to show relationships between language and other elements of social events and practices (Fairclough, 2003).

I considered critical discourse analysis to place the analysis of the meaning and implication of female politicians in a socio-political context, or as Van Dijk (1993) states, to analyse the relationships between power and domination and the strategies used to naturalize and reproduce them and unveil how social differences are propagated. Critical discourse analysis and Bourdieu's sociology have several points of convergence. In both approaches there is great attention to power relations and structures of domination, both of which are considered contextually and historically situated, and produced and reproduced through social practices.

Doing critical discourse analysis is doing a critical analysis of culture, the practices, representations, languages and customs of any specific society, as well as the contradictory forms of common sense which have taken root in and helped to shape popular life (Hall, 1996, p. 439). Culture is concerned with the various ways we make sense of the world, our shared social meanings.

To understand culture is to explore how meaning is produced symbolically in language as a 'signifying system' (Barker, 2003, p. 8). Geertz (1989) – following Weber – claims that individuals are bound up in series of symbolic or mythic representations and that humans are animals 'suspended in webs of significance' which they themselves spin. As Bohm asserts "the most fundamental things cannot be defined; we can unfold them, but we can't define them" (Bohm & Factor, 1987, p. 104).

Countless definitions of the term "meaning" have arisen from many disciplines ranging from psychology, linguistics, cognitive science,

anthropology, philosophy and sociology among others (see for instance Abend, 2008; Eickelman, 1979; Fauconnier, 1994; Mohanty, 1986; Strauss & Quinn, 1997) to give an account of this unfolding process. Therefore, it is important to ground the concept of meaning.

Schutz's view is that "only experiences, which can be recollected beyond their actuality and which can be questioned about their constitution are therefore, subjectively meaningful"(1945, p. 535). This perspective sees meanings fundamentally as interpretations of past experiences that result from reflection. Complementing this view James observes that "all experience is a process"(2009, p. 408) and Bohm asserts that "the meaning pervades being"(Bohm & Factor, 1987, p. 103).

James (2009) maintains that reality is always seen and interpreted from particular vantage points by particular individuals, an idea which led him to coin the phrase, 'point of view'. In fact, he adds, "the point of view of many is the more natural one to take" (2009, p. 143). James' perspective finds a close correlate in Bourdieu's notion of symbolic violence, which naturalizes common sense and taken for granted assumptions, making seeing reality as self-evident. James's message is that one's view is always only a partial view among other possible ones. As the author observes, "the world is full of partial stories that run parallel to one another, beginning and ending at odd times" (2009, p. 143). Schutz similarly formulated this idea in his discussions of how actors navigate 'multiple realities' in their own uniquely experienced *lifeworlds*. The author asserts the simultaneity of 'various orders of realities' (Schutz, 1945) an idea similarly conveyed by Sartre as the 'plurality of existence' (Sartre, 1969). Within a similar perspective, Bourdieu (1985b) speaks about fields to give an account of the pluralities of dimensions that are encompassed in the social space. The concept of field allows Bourdieu to unveil a plurality of contexts, which have both a social and historical origin. Bourdieu's view is that meanings are translated into a practical knowledge that arises from

the immersion in those contexts or fields. For Bourdieu "a word takes its meaning from that field through its position within the network or relations immanent in the semantic field" (Grenfell & James, 1998, p. 79). Therefore, "meanings are determined by particular fields" (Grenfell & James, 1998, p. 78).

Bourdieu's historical generative approach links meaning and practices in a space-temporal context. For the author, "practice unfolds in the time ... Its temporal structure, that is, its rhythm, its tempo, and above all its directionality, it is constitutive of its meaning" (Bourdieu, 1990b, p. 81). Bourdieu's perspective sees meaning and practice as mutually bounded. This perspective allows us to connect language to the practical dimensions of the human activity, or to the everyday realm which demands what Bourdieu terms 'practical sense'.

> The universe of meanings corresponding to different universes of practices are both self-enclosed ... and objectively adjusted to all the others in so far as they are loosely systematic products of a system of practically integrated generative principles that function in the most diverse fields of practices (Bourdieu, 1990b, p. 87).

Summarizing the previous discussion on critical discourse analysis and meaning it can be said I conclude that meanings are bound to experience. Meanings attached to experience are referential, that is, context dependent of a practical nature. In short, they are a component of human interaction with a material reality. It is from experience that practical sense arises and from it, practices emerge. This know-how, 'practical sense' or 'sense of the game' in Bourdieu's words (1990b), has a temporal dimension. Experiences are circumscribed to a horizon of time in which actions, practices or events take place. Hence, the meanings of experiences have a contingent existence.

The notion of 'implicate order' permits linking the contingent dimension of meanings to their implications. Bohm (2002) proposes the concept of implicate order to question the manifest order of things, or what he calls

the 'explicate order', which is offered to our senses as tangible and concrete. It is the realm in which things 'disclose' themselves, or are made present, to use the phenomenological nomenclature. On the level of 'implicate order reality', however, "everything is enfolded into everything" (Bohm, 2002, p. 225). Meanings, like everything else, then, unfold from that which enfolds them. For Bohm, a theoretical physicist by training, the implicate order is nothing less than totality. Following this holistic perspective, the meanings and implications of female politicians has to do with experiences, with realties and with practices that unfold themselves during our attempts to locate and gather their meanings as they unfold. At the end, the world as it is, in this manifest dimension is there to be subverted, to be questioned. It is this subversion which drives science and knowledge onward in the search of further meanings and implications.

From Bohm's notion of wholeness (2002; Bohm & Factor, 1987) language can be seen as an implicate order, in the sense as Saussure observes, that language is a system in which meaning is constructed in relationships of difference. Saussure noted that this is due to the arbitrary nature of signs and the fact that the meanings conferred upon them are historically contingent upon a changing socio-cultural context. He asserts that meanings are subject to change and the idea of any singular, static, universal meaning is false (Hall, 1997). Durkheim similarly emphasized that collective representations have finite lives and will transform in tandem with processes of social change (Tekiner, 2002). Meanings are thus ephemeral and subject to continual interpretation and reinterpretation. The result of this circular exercise, as Derrida tells us, is that any notion of final meaning is always put off, and always deferred to an unreachable future point.

Derrida, argue that individual speakers can never finally fix meanings, including the meaning of their identity. To enunciate a word always triggers off other meanings associated with that word. Propositions and

premises of which we are not aware underpin our statements. Meaning is inherently unstable: its aim is for closure (in this case, identity), but is constantly disrupted by difference. "There are always supplementary meanings over which we have no control, which will arise and subvert our attempts to create fixed and stable words" (Hall, 1996, p. 609). The relationship of similarity and difference inherent in meaning production are not neutral but convey relations of hierarchy and power. An important part of discourse analysis is to uncover this.

Derrida's whole project of deconstruction is centred on this idea and illustrated by his notion of *différance*. Derrida's argument is that meanings change and are always deferred, postponed, and subject to revision in a manner resembling Marx's pronouncement, 'all that is solid melts into air' (2003, p. 4). Words thus have the potential to become *empty signifiers* and once relevant ideas can become what Ulrich Beck calls *zombie concepts* referring to the inadequacy of concepts to grasp reality (Beck & Willms, 2004). In the same line of analysis, Bourdieu notices that *all-purpose dictionary words* are result of the neutralization of the practical relations within they function, which in turns makes pass unnoticed their social existence in the diversity of different fields (Bourdieu, 1977b, 1991b).

In the end, there is no single set of meanings and implications of female politicians in Chile (as there is no singularly experienced/communicable reality). Politicians, like everyone else, are suspended in webs of significance they themselves spin. Politics is also an open book, subject to constant re-significations based on particular agendas and viewpoints from individually and collectively perceived/experienced realities. Here the temporality comes in, everything is in a state of constant change, which people have a hard time perceiving and understanding.

To conclude, the process of meaning production occurs in the signifying of the world and social practices, which is done principally through language.

We are able to construct meanings by establishing relations of difference and similarity within a language. For instance, a female politician is generally not conceived in the same way as a 'politician', who is normally understood to be male. Here we can see an analogy between language and identity, which is unconscious. I know who 'I' am in relation to 'the other' (e.g. my mother) whom I cannot be. As Lacan points out, identity, like the unconscious, 'is structured like language' (Barker, 2003, p. 109).

In terms of analytical tools for critical discourse analysis the concepts of *nodal points* and *empty signifiers* developed by Laclau (1996) offer practical ways to ground the web of meanings and implication that the social order unfolds. *Nodal points* are reference points from which a particular system of meaning acquires a new meaning by being articulated around it. For example, the concept 'politicians' has a specific meaning when articulated with the concept 'female' than when is considered by itself. Laclau asserts that a nodal point is a 'master-signifier' which conveys the "notion of a particular element assuming a universal structural function, within a certain discursive field"(Laclau & Mouffe, 2001, p. xi). At the centre of this concept is the category of *empty signifier*, which gathers up a variety of different concepts, and binds them together into a discourse. However, this can be achieved only by emptying a signifier of its meaning. Laclau (1994, p. 167) states that "an empty signifier is, strictly speaking, a signifier without a signified". The emptiness of the signifier makes it possible to signify the discourse as a totality, articulating different concepts around it and produce a discourse. According to the author, this would be possible due to a "structural impossibility in a signification as such." In fact, he argues that a signifier is empty "in order to assume the representing function that will be always constitutively inadequate" (1994, pp. 168-171). Laclau's concepts lead me to think of the Chilean dictatorship period and in the transition to democracy as a nodal point and as an empty signifier respectively. In

Chapter Four and Chapter Five, I will illustrate how the meanings and implications of female politicians in Chile are structured around the traces and the legacy of the Chilean democratic breakdown period. Furthermore, I will explore the links between the transition to democracy (a state that by definition constitutes an oxymoron) and the evolving dynamics of women in politics in the twenty first century Chile.

In terms of discourse structure the concepts *intertextuality, interdiscourse* and *interdiscursivity* are also relevant analytical tools for the advancement in the meanings and implications of female politicians in Chile*.* Intertextuality is a central conceptual tool for constructing and de-constructing the meanings and implications of female politicians in Chile, because it introduces both a linguistic and historical perspective in the analysis of texts. It allows us to see the "play of multiple temporalities" of texts (Frow, 1995, p. 45) by looking at the dependence of texts upon society and history in the form of resources made available within the order of discourse (Fairclough, 1992).

Furthermore, interdiscourse and interdiscursivity permit identifying the interpretations in relation to other discourses that are socially more acceptable, that is, the discourses that are acceptable and enunciable and have primacy over other interpretations of the social world (Bjerke, 2008, p. 2). Interdiscursivity "by recognizing multiples social contexts of enunciations (…) firmly embraces meanings (…) [and] referentiality" which helps to analyse "how discourse is actualized and can change, not least as retrospective or prospective possibility, whether as imagination, hypothesis, virtual or historical re-presentation of experience" (Orr, 2003, p. 43). From an ontological perspective, both intertextuality and interdiscourse emphasise a relational logic in which temporalities and cultural context are central. Diagram 3:3 exemplifies the structure I used to identify intertextuality, interdiscourse and interdiscursivity in the data analysis.

Diagram 3:3
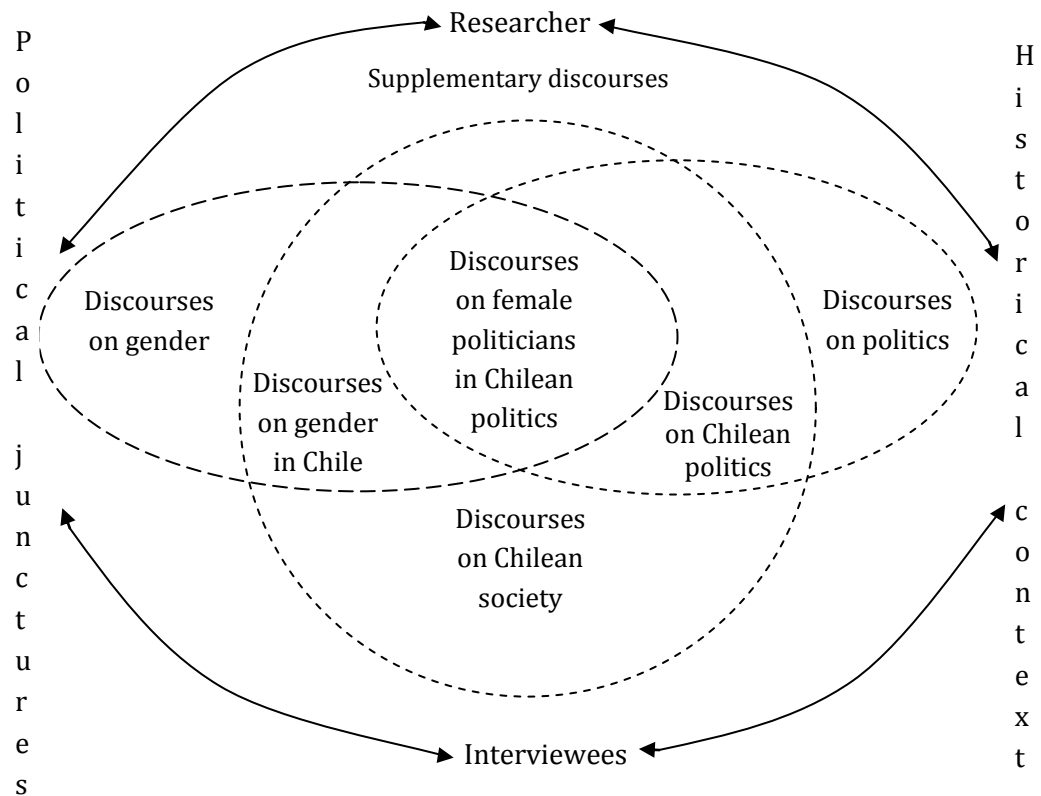
It was throughout the inter-subjective discourse between politicians (interviewees) and researcher (interviewer) that the idealization of female politicians in Chilean politics occurred. However, for both female and male interviewees the meanings and implications of women in Chilean politics seemed somehow elusive and ineffable. Discourse analysis demonstrated the confluence of multiple narratives, throughout which both interviewer and interviewee attempted to capture/encapsulate the meaning of female politicians in Chilean politics. These discourses articulated three main symbolic systems: gender, politics, and Chilean society. During the interview and discourse analysis, these symbolic systems were discussed, de-constructed, and overlapped through categories that fluctuated between the discrete and fluid mode of thinking that combined synchronic and diachronic analysis. While a discrete analysis of social phenomena separates and identifies individual components and their properties at a

given fixed point in time (synchronic), the fluid analysis underlines the social processes related to a specific phenomenon, which encompasses a diachronic analysis, providing a critical view on their evolution over time. The particularity of the first approach is that it gives predominance to the subject over the structure (allowing identifying points of inflections irreducible to the analysis of social structures), while the continuum analysis gives attention to the constraints individuals face in a determined social setting through history. The inertia, for instance, of social practices is a powerful explanatory force to understand the slow pace of major social changes.

Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and field were relevant analytical tools to capture the complexity of the double logic that social reality presents and that individuals internalize through practices and life experiences; the habitus understood as the generative principle of social practices, and the field understood as the social space in which these practices are generated and have sense. Bourdieu's theory:

> ...demonstrated that social structures, and identities must be understood not as static, typological and hard edge categories but rather as dynamic formations of organized diachronic complexity, poised between stability and change, whose edges are best construed (in terms of non linear dynamics) as fuzzy, shifting fractal basin boundaries between complex attractors with relative hard cores (Shusterman, 1999, p. 8).

Applying Cognitive Semantic to unfolding the meanings and implications of female politicians in Chile

Following Bourdieu's assertion (1998) that social agents embody social structures, I considered to discuss cognitive perspectives in the analysis of the meanings and implications of female politicians in Chile. Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and doxa reflect his attention on cognition and re-cognition as constitutive dimensions of the social practices and the symbolic struggles in the social space. In line with Bourdieu's perspective cognitive semantics offers relevant insights to further advance the analysis

of meanings and implications because it is a perspective that sees linguistic meaning as a manifestation of knowledge representation, which is ultimately mediated by our experience of the world (Evans & Green, 2006). The ways we experience the world through our senses is interwoven with the ways we make sense of the world (meaning).

Cognitive Semantics is an approach that emerged from cognitive linguistics. Its central claim is that language encodes and externalizes our thoughts. Cognitive linguistics rejects the principle of body/mind dualism that has dominated the rationalist and positivist paradigms. Cognitive linguistics emphasises the importance of human experience, the centrality of the human body, and the human specific construction and organization. For Cognitive linguistics, the human mind, and therefore language, cannot be studied in isolation from human embodiment (Evans & Green, 2006). This ontological perspective shares with Bourdieu's relationalism the attention to relationships, instead of entities or essences.

Language reflects patterns of thought, therefore, to study language is to study patterns of conceptualization (Evans & Green, 2006). Language provides a means of encoding and transmitting our thoughts and ideas; it has a symbolic function and interactive function. Language encodes and externalizes our thoughts by using symbols. The meaning encoded by linguistic symbols refers to our projected reality; a mental representation of reality as constructed by the human mind. While our conceptualizations are unlimited in scope, language merely provides prompts for the construction of conceptualizations (meaning construction). Language also serves an interactive function in the sense that we use it to communicate. Language allows us to perform speech acts or to exhibit expressivity and affect. Language can also be used to create scenes and contexts; hence, language has the ability to invoke frames. Language does not directly reflect the world. Rather, it reflects our unique human construal of the world, our 'world view' as it appears to us through the lenses of our

embodiment (Evans & Green, 2006). In this sense, language is not only reflective, but also constitutive, "it is the site in which meanings are created and changed" (Wetherell, 2001 p. 6).

The ways in which the embodied experience manifests itself at the cognitive level are through conceptual projection and perceptual meaning. In the first, there are basic concepts such as contact, container, and balance that derive from pre-conceptual experience, that is, experiences of our world directly mediated and structured by the human body. These basic concepts are image schemas[12] that can be extended to provide more abstract concepts and conceptual domains with structure. In the case of the language used to talk about women's participation in politics, the conceptual projection could be seen in metonymic and metaphoric rhetoric devices. Let us consider as an example the metaphor of 'glass ceiling'. In it the concept of glass, as transparent and solid material is projected onto ceiling to signify that a ceiling exists but is not visible as it becomes manifest only by contact. On the other hand, perceptual meaning is the process of forming image schemas in terms of re-description of spatial experience. Considering the same example, the word glass conveys a semantic field of meaning that is selectively projected onto a ceiling to redescribe its meaning. The ceiling rather than serving the purposes of shelter is resignified as an invisible barrier, which represents the 'invisible' obstacles (which are part of the semantic field of gender differences and divisions) that women face when pursuing ascending positions of power. Thus, from a cognitive semantics point of view, it is the experience, meaningful to us by virtue of our embodiment, what forms the basis of many of our fundamental concepts. In the case of the metaphor of the

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[12] An image schema is a recurring structure of, or within, our cognitive processes, which establishes patterns of understanding and reasoning. Image schemas emerge from our bodily interactions, linguistic experience and historical context. The term is explained in Mark Johnson's book The Body in the Mind University of Chicago Press (April 15, 1990).

'glass ceiling' cognitive semantics helps to understand how embodied experience is used to represent and make sense of social experiences.

When further exploring the glass ceiling metaphor we observe an implicit assumption that for women there are invisible barriers that they are unable to foresee. This tends to disempower women, by making them appear unaware of the obstacles that they will encounter in their trajectory toward positions of power and leadership. Furthermore, the glass ceiling metaphor does not address the successful trajectory of women within male dominated fields.

The metaphor of the labyrinth proposed by Eagly and Carly (2007) allows for a more comprehensive approach for the analysis of women in positions of power. They maintain that the symbol of labyrinth represents a complex journey that requires persistence, awareness of one's progress, and a careful analysis of the puzzle that lies ahead. Moreover, the labyrinth metaphor also implies viable routes to get to the centre. It is understood that goals are attainable. For women due to the particular complexities of their life and the inadequacy of power structures to face those complexities, their trajectory to leadership is better represented by the intricate the journey into a labyrinth than by a linear path (A. Eagly & Carli, 2007).

The metaphor of the labyrinth offers great potential not only for the analysis of women's trajectory to positions of power, but also for the analysis of intricate paths in the political space. Here, the notion of 'practical sense' used by Bourdieu to refer to the 'feel for the game' - where the game acts as a metaphor of the internal logic of the social fields - (Bourdieu, 1990b; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992a) can be used to express the political sense necessary to navigate within the labyrinthine paths of the political game. However, for Bourdieu "one does not embark on the game by a conscious act, one is born into the game, with the game; and the

relation of investment, *illusio*, investment is made more total and unconditional by the fact that one is unaware of what it is"(Bourdieu, 1990b, p. 67). Here, the idea of habitus as acquired and not learned disposition is clearer. Bourdieu (1990b) further explains this by arguing that the 'learning of a game is very much as the acquisition of the mother tongue is to the learning of a foreign language'. While in the first case the "child learns at the same time to speak the language and to think *in* the language", in the second case learners face a language as an arbitrary game, with grammar, syntaxes and rules "expressly taught by institutions expressly designed for that purpose" (Bourdieu, 1990b, p. 67). Here the concept of belief is central to understand the adequacy between habitus and field as the adequacy between learning a mother tongue and to think in that language.

From the previous discussion derives one of the major principles of cognitive semantics, that the knowledge representation, that is, the conceptual structure, is embodied. The embodied cognition thesis states that the concepts we have access to and the nature of the reality we think and talk about are functions of our embodiment. That is, we can talk about and what we can perceive and conceive derive from embodied experience. The meaning commonly associated with words, that is to say, linguistic concepts, reflect mental representations of the external world, rather the external world itself. This does not mean that concepts are dissociated from objective reality, but that they are related to a lived experience. This principle leads to the idea that semantic structure is encyclopaedic in nature. Within cognitive semantics, a concept itself does not refer only to a neat set of meanings related to a specific word, but also introduce a wide range of diversity of meanings associated with any linguistic concept, which allows the concept to make sense. Words constitute 'points of access' for the process of meaning construction, which involves the selection of an appropriate interpretation within the context of the

utterance. The principle that meaning construction is drawing upon encyclopaedic knowledge involves inferencing strategies, which consider the local connections (mapping) between distinct temporary conceptual packing of information (mental spaces) within a local discourse context. Meaning construction is always context bound (Evans & Green, 2006). This is why it is problematic to transfer concepts developed to give account of a particular reality to a different one. When concepts are used in different contexts from the ones in which they arise, they are in one way or another re-signified.

The principles above set up the foundations of what is called Conceptual Blending theory, developed by Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner (2002). "The crucial insight of Blending Theory is that meaning construction typically involves integration of structure that gives rise to more than the sum of its parts" (Evans, c2006, p.400). For example, the category female politicians is not just an intersection of the category female and the category politicians, but a new category that selectively integrates aspects of each of the source categories, which is achieved by conceptual integration or blending. Meaning construction involves emergent structure, that is, a structure of meaning that seems inaccessible in the conceptual structures that function as sources or inputs to the meaning construction process (Evans and Green, 2006). This approach derives from Mental Spaces Theory and Conceptual Metaphor Theory. Mental Space theory, developed by Fauconnier (1994, 1997), considers that the process of meaning construction is a process that is fundamentally conceptual in nature.

From this perspective, meaning is not an individual property of individual sentences, but arises from a dynamic process of meaning construction, which is called conceptualization. One of the central aspects of this approach is the development of the concept of 'mental space', which accounts for a temporary knowledge structure created during the on-line

process of meaning construction. During the process of meaning construction, final meaning arises from the mapping or connection between these temporary conceptual units or mental spaces. Sentences thus cannot be analysed in isolation from ongoing discourse. On the other hand, Conceptual Metaphor theory states that metaphors map structure from a source domain (body of knowledge) to a target domain but not vice versa. This points the unidirectionallity of metaphor. For instance, in the example of the glass ceiling metaphor, the projection occurs from the concept of glass to the concept of ceiling and not the other way around.

Concluding remarks

In this chapter, I have addressed the method and the analytical perspectives that informed the task of unfolding the meanings and implications of female politicians in Chile. I discussed the approach I used to conduct interviews. This sought to set the research topic in a context of broader social and historical processes from which interviewed politicians analyse the political game and what it means, not seeing the researcher as the only analyst of the situation. This meant that the approach to analysing the data collected through interviews was also an approach to generate the data, that is, the production of data and the analysis of data were intertwined processes. Consistent with the Bourdieuian theoretical proposal of the twofold character of social reality, I combined 'conceptual blending theory' and critical discourse analysis to give account of the subjective or cognitive dimensions of the social world, and the objective or structural dimensions of practices and institutions. This perspective sets out the basis from which to analyse political practice as both embodied experience and as a reflection of socio-political reality. I argue that through the process of unfolding the meanings of female politicians in Chile, their implications acquired a practical dimension, one that

encompassed both the explicate and implicate order, or putting it in different terms, the subjective and objective reality.

Chapter 4: The historical context to understand the meaning of Women in Chilean politics in the twenty first century

In this chapter I discuss the historical context within interviewed politicians position themselves to unfold the meanings and implications of female politicians in the twenty first century. As a result of interview analysis, the central argument of this chapter is the necessity of reflecting on the development and trajectory of Chilean politics to understand and address the meanings of female politicians in Chilean politics. The chapter elucidates a range of ideas and institutions that have shaped women's involvement in politics, including the macro discourses and institutional arrangements that incorporate the legacy of those arrangements. From a perspective that seek to historicize the development of the political field in Chile, the roots of the political habitus and the conditions of possibility of political power I will discuss the foundations of the Chilean political system with attention to the Chilean conceptions of a democratic republic, political participation, and representation and citizenship. My argument here is that the meaning of women in Chilean politics in the twenty first century is marked by the intrinsic contradictions of Chilean political development, which has prevented the deepening and consolidation of democracy. The nature of these contradictions is the tension between the adherence to the established order (rooted in the Chilean colonial legacy) and the push for further democracy for a society that longs to become modern and developed.

In addition, I argue that the meaning and implication of female politicians in Chile responds to both external and internal forces, which are often contradictory and contentious. One of the external forces is the legitimatization and adherence of democracy as an ideal *per se* worldwide, which directly and indirectly puts pressure on political institutions to

support principles of inclusion and political equality within Chilean politics. On the other hand, within the internal forces, the quest for further democracy is a growing demand from Chilean society, which is becoming increasingly critical of political performance and institutions, due to their poor democratic culture and increasing scandals of corruption. While all this may not be new to politics, phenomena such as globalization, the mediatisation of politics and neoliberalism have profoundly affected the ways citizens perceive politics and their engagement in decision-making processes. In the context of Chilean society, this has lead to growing demands for further development of democratic culture and practices within political institutions, with the hope of not only becoming more democratic, but also more developed and wealthier.

In the case of Chile, the adherence and support for democracy has been central to legitimate the governments in office until 2010, who had claimed to be the artifices of the return to democracy and its consolidation since 1990. However, several scholars have asserted that the return to democracy was more an agreement between political elites achieved in part due to the international pressure from the United States at the end of the cold war (Godoy, 1999; Morley & Chris Mcgillion, 2006). The support of democracy, however, has proven to be more in terms of principle than practice. This is expressed in conflictive and contradictory aspects of the political field i.e. political institutions and political culture. By the first, I am referring to the structure of the political field, that is, congress, state, government, political parties and the electoral system which I will discuss in Chapter Five; and by the second to the political habitus, that is, political ideology, political communication, and interaction between political actors which I will discuss in this chapter and in Chapter Six. Furthermore, I refer to the values, customs, and beliefs political actors hold in terms of the exercise of their offices as politicians.

The dominant elites, both the right and left wing, in different moments of history and resorting to different strategies, have prevented the growth of the base of political society, which has had two important consequences. First, it has limited the impact of political participation in the political process and instances of decision-making in a democracy with weak and inefficient accountability mechanisms and almost nonexistent instances of popular deliberation. Second, it has restricted access to political representation, which more than representing the interests and sentiments of citizens, seeks to maintain economic and political elites' positions of power, balancing the fragile political equilibriums. Nevertheless, while the twenty first century progresses, internal and external factors are pushing the boundaries of the *Chilean idea of democracy* and redefining participatory and representative practices.

On the one hand, the strong and recognized positive correlation between democracy and economic development (Robinson, 2006) has put Chilean elites in the uncomfortable position of having to acknowledge that democracy is a broader concept than democratic elections, and involves not only institutions but culture and practices. On the other hand, the negative correlation between social inequality and democracy (Chong, 2001) shows that in a highly unequal society Chilean democracy is unlikely to progress. In this context, and risking the contiguity of their traditional political elites, due to social demands of elite renovation, right and left wing parties have had to face the fact that political success is highly marked by economic prosperity, and that their lack of democratic culture is holding back the 'economic development' that will keep them in power. The meanings and implications of women in politics in the twenty first century are thus marked by the complexities of demands for further democracy and economic development.

Through a historical overview informed by interview analysis, the findings demonstrate that female participation has been higher in civil society than

in institutional politics, which reveals a weak trajectory in the female accumulation of political capital and development of political habitus. While this might not be new to the literature on women in politics in the case of Chile the late women's suffrage (1949), the democratic breakdown (1973-1990) and the subsequent transition to democracy are the milestones that account for this phenomenon. Interview analysis showed that the election in 2006 of socialist Michelle Bachelet was not regarded as the result of a long process of women's advancement in the political society, but as the push of the civil society seeking a more democratic and egalitarian society, which it was thought a female political leadership would, would be more willing to fight for.

Sadly, in spite of Michelle Bachelet's strong popularity and citizenry support, income distribution and poverty in Chile are still major social issues. Furthermore, several corruption scandals pre and post the Pinochet period reflect an institutionalized focus of corruption, with public servants and MPs involved, from both right and left wing parties. This has lead to citizenry demands and pressures from politicians to implement more efficient mechanisms of accountability. With this state of affairs Chilean internal politics' prestige and reputation has deteriorated, a perception that is shared by politicians themselves. Thus, women's representation in Chilean politics face an uncertain future, in which the quest for more democracy seems to be shadowed by the persistent gender inequalities in the access to political power, which in turn are part of a broader system of social inequalities on which the Chilean nation state is based.

Tracking the origins of the political field and the political habitus: Democratic Republic and citizenship in Chile

In a political community individuals and groups are not immediately linked by a mutual dependence, but because they share the same juridical

attributes and, in principle, access to the same cultural resources for the exercise of these attributes (Mouffe, 1992, p. 20). The State is the set of institutions on which a political community is organized under a government. Stuven (2003) in her article *El Feminismo en Retirada* – Feminism in withdrawn – argues that since the independence of Chile and during the whole nineteenth century, the construction of the nation-state by the Chilean upper class was inspired in the republican ideology. This meant the emphasis in Chilean politics was on designating a sovereign State with a head of government that was not a Monarch. However, this republicanism was implemented almost by force in a traditional society, in which the predominating interpretation of republican democracy considered political representation and participation were subjected to the struggle against tyranny, absolute government, and the popular push at gaining full exercise of sovereignty.

The first republicans understood the notion of liberty as the absence of arbitrary domination, which does not necessarily imply the total applicability of the individual rights. The principle of equality among citizens, the core of democracy (Dahl, 1998), was rather weak in this tradition. On the contrary, the predominant view of western democracies is liberalism. The liberal ideology was founded upon a defence of individual freedom, traditionally expressed in the language of rights (Heywood, 1992, p. 169). The principle that citizens have the right to take part in the governing process was central in this current of political thought. "Liberalism strives to establish the conditions in which people and groups can pursue the good life as each defines it, but it does not prescribe or try to promote any particular notion of what is good (Heywood, 1992, p. 27).

In this fashion, Stuven in her study on *Chile y Argentina: Representación y Prácticas Representativas para un Nuevo Mundo* (2001)– Chile and Argentina: Representation and Representative Practices for a New World

– speaks about the *democratic fiction* when referring to the foundational contradiction of Chilean democracy. Stuven argues that this paradox has its origin in a political culture based on strict notions of social order, in which any political mechanism of social inclusion and strengthening of equality, including suffrage, triggered defence mechanisms against which was easily perceived as the phantom of anarchy, or social disintegration. Although not explicit, Stuven's study suggests that the colonial past would explain this feature of the founding Chilean political culture, a past that left weak political institutions inherited from a monarchic legitimacy. Furthermore, Larraín (2001) in his study on *Identidad Chilena* – Chilean Identity – asserts that geographical location lead Chilean elites to a sense of insecurity of having to demonstrate that in spite of their isolation and distance Chile was a civilized country. According to the author, this also would explain the characteristic Chilean centralism, which was developed as a strategy to face a potential disintegration in a long and narrow territory surround by mountains and the ocean, which did not facilitate communication or transport. Chilean geography (see Figure 4:1) could also account for the centrality of the armed forces in the historical process to establish and protect the national sovereignty, this in clear relation to border disputes with Argentina, Peru and Bolivia and the Chilean Antarctic territory.

Figure 4:1

The foundation of the Chilean nation-state was marked not only by this *democratic fiction,* using Stuven (2001) words, but also by a series of contradictions that still pervade Chilean society. In the same way that the *Philosophes* of the Enlightenment asserted that "their democratic and

egalitarian goals were inaccessible to the ordinary people, who they imagined were more cattle like than human" (Horowitz, 1997, p. 36). The predominant view of the Chilean elite in the nineteenth century, from both liberal and conservative sectors was the acceptance of a community that was politically ignorant and pre-modern (Stuven, 2001). This was supported by the value assigned the civilized, rational, ordered and scientific which was used to degrade the barbaric and the indigenous (Larraín, 2001). These notions would justify temporary restricted citizenship and would shape the particularities of Chilean gender inequalities in a territory in which the *mestizaje* – miscegenation – occurred between male Spaniards and indigenous women (Mitnick, 2004; Montecino, 1991).

For instance, as Larraín (2001) argues, the war against indigenous people to take control over the territory (indigenous conflict in Chile took place over a period of three hundred years, from the sixteenth to nineteenth century) meant that conquerors established relationships with women as a right of conquest, seen them as inferior and often resorting to violence and rape. While in the war, far away from the moderation that their families exerted on them, men frequently continued their relationships with the indigenous women, who had no rights. The image of the warrior father, violent and powerful was reproduced by the boy child, who overwhelmed by the fear of their aggressor father will end up imitating their personality to overcome the anguish (Larraín, 2001, pp. 228-229). Concrete consequences of that can be seen in Chile's levels of violence against women, femicide, and rape (Andrade N., 2007; Corporación Domos, 2003; ONU, 2004, 2009).

Gender inequalities are by no means only a result of the colonization process; in fact, the pattern of gender relationships of nations colonized by different countries varies greatly. For instance, in Latin American countries, particularly in Chile, there is an accentuated machismo

compared with North America. For example, the existence of men with double families – the legitimate and the illegitimate – was a commonplace practice that led to a complex set of regulations for property rights and inheritance in Chile, which disadvantaged women and children. In fact, only in 1999 the distinction between legal, illegal, and natural children was eliminated leaving all children with the same legal rights. Therefore, it is not surprising that throughout history women, children and the indigenous population have been highly overrepresented in the Chilean underclass (Mideplan, 2003, 2006, 2009; Montecino, 1991; Salazar V., 2006) which has given place to a system of exclusion where gender, ethnic and class divisions intersect.

Coming back to the origins of the political field and habitus, the republican liberal democracy instituted in Chile in the nineteenth century was a *Chilean* version of the predominant political system current at the time. Even though it had a strong liberal component, particularly in its adherence to constitutionalism, it was weak on the defence of individual rights as was its view of liberty which depended upon the common good. This argument would justify persistent political exclusions and it would explain why individual rights have been alien principles in the Latin-American political thought. It has meant that the suffrage rather than an expression of the political equality reflected the existing divisions in society, because it just delimits a political class that exerted the power in the name of the nation. The mechanisms of exclusion, through property and education as synonymous of rationality, have remained visible not only in the class structure, but across all sectors of the nation in the process of the integration of civil society. Thus, gender exclusion has been inserted in a system of exclusion that has not been specifically designed to disadvantage women. In the republicans liberties and equalities the subject was masculine, thus it has not been necessary to make the female exclusion explicit (Stuven, 2003).

Women in the civil society and political community

In this section, I will use a socio-historical analysis to discuss the development of women's citizenship in Chile, their political participation and representation prior to Michelle's Bachelet presidential election. My argument in this section is that due to the late granting of women's citizenship, the impact of their political participation was very limited. In fact, women's political participation throughout almost the whole twentieth century can be defined more as participation in the public realm, expressed in feminist and women's organizations and movements, rather than political participation expressed in the vote and in the affiliation to political parties. Franceschet (2005) explains this phenomenon arguing that "Chile's process of democratization has created profoundly gendered ways of being citizens" (p. 19). The author argues that restricted social and political rights shaped women's citizenship, making it *gender differentiated*.

Stuven (2003) agrees with Margaret Power (2002) that women entered politics, they did so in their traditional female roles and not as citizens with the same rights as men to determine the politics of the nation. For Stuven, in part women resignedly were satisfied with their passive citizenship, but also possibly due to their consciousness of their position of power in the home, in civil institutions and in public opinion. The political arena did not constitute a field where their interests were discussed and if they were, women knew how to effectively apply pressure in the masculine world to not be totally disregarded by it.

In spite of this, women's organizations constituted instances of female political participation and representation. It was a form of participating in the political community[13] aimed at influencing political decisions, in

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[13] Weber defines political community as a community that "'constitutes more than an economic group': or in other words (...) it possesses value systems ordering matters other than the directly economic disposition of goods and services. [A political community] is constituted where we find (1) a "territory"; (2) the availability of physical force for its domination; and (3) social action which is not restricted exclusively to the satisfaction of common economic needs in the frame of a

particular those ones regarding women's issues, though with very limited success. Secondly, through their political representation women articulated representative claims – paraphrasing Saward (2006)– they claimed to represent or to know what represented women's interests. This type of political representation can be considered as non-electoral political representation.

Nevertheless, despite their limited scope, both female political participation and representation still required the autonomous mobilization of women's interests and women's communal participation in political activities, which reflected the exercise of their citizenship and their engagement in the political community. But due to their late participation in electoral politics, women's formal representation has had an even later development. In this sense and following Pitkin's notion of formal political representation (Pitkin, 1967) as the processes and mechanisms by which a representative gains power were only available for women since the second half of the twentieth century, which is when women achieved full political rights.

Women's full political citizenship was granted in 1949, which meant that they were able to vote in presidential elections and stand as political representatives. In 1973, only after 24 years of this major women's political advancement, the country entered in a non-democratic phase under Pinochet's military dictatorship, which suppressed any form of democratic political participation and representation. This meant that the period that women had to achieve some degree of political participation in electoral politics was only two decades. During the dictatorship period as a result of suppression of political activity, several women's organization in civil society rose and assumed a central role in the public sphere (Chunchryk, 1994). After formal democracy was restored in 1990,

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communal economy, but regulates more generally the interrelations of the habitants of the territory" (see Inghillieri, 2005; Vidal Claramonte, 2005).

women's organizations lost momentum and were subsumed by the political parties (Franceschet, 2005; M. A. Garretón, 1990).

Women's participation in the public sphere can be traced prior to the process of pro-independence in Chile, a period which called them in to support and contribute to the consolidation of Chile's independence. During the nineteenth century and in part of the twentieth century, due to the blurring of boundaries between the ecclesiastical and political power in Chile - the separation of the State and the Catholic Church in Chile was officially formalized in the constitution of 1925- women's participation in the public arena was marked by their participation in Church and religious organizations. In this respect, Errázuriz Tagle (2006) in her research on *Discourses on women's suffrage in Chile 1865-1949* argues that "the defence of the church's interests and later, the so called 'Social Question' played a main role in incorporating women into the public sphere" (p. 2).

Maza Valenzuela's article on *Liberals, radicals and Women's citizenship in Chile* (1872-1930) (1998) argues that contrary to conservative women, women from lay sectors developed organizations later. While they participated in political meetings, they were excluded from Freemasonry, the counterpart of the Catholic Church in the anticlerical sector. In fact, women from the clerical sector participated along side with men, not only in political meetings taking place in private houses, but in religious activities and in beneficence. During that period, the female elite of both sectors had several points in common in regard to women's issues. However, conservative women found greater support in their demands for electoral rights. Lay sectors feared the female vote would largely favour the conservative party.

This view is shared by Stuven (2003), who points out that Catholic associations for charity work, in particular the Chilean Lady's League, founded in 1912, was an instance of female participation, of professional

learning and an awakening of gender demands. Religion, morality, and beneficence constituted the ambit of women's action, which evolved from generosity towards gender stances. For instance, in 1918, in Santiago the Marian Congress was organized, which was considered a transcendental step in Chilean feminism. The aim of this Christian feminism was the effective emancipation of women, the recognition for women of the same civil and political rights that men had.

Since the mid-nineteenth century Catholic conservatives had greater success than anti-clerical sectors in incorporating women in education, social and political life. In addition, during those years a considerable number of women supported the Church in political and religious disputes, compared with the lower level of support that liberal and radical anti-clerical positions found among women. This could be explained by the fact there were more opportunities for men and women to participate together in social life in sectors of Chilean society linked to the Church than in anticlerical and liberal sectors, where a more strict gender separation prevailed. Therefore they were likely to obtain a higher percentage of female voters, which explains why liberal and more progressive political sectors were very reluctant to support the female electoral vote (Maza Valenzuela, 1998). In addition, it could explain the origin of women's historical identification with more conservative and right wing parties, namely the traditional gender gap (Inglehart & Norris, 2000); an identification that has continued into the twenty-first century in Chilean politics (Altam, 2004).

Errázuriz Tagle (2006) argues that women's situation in the middle and in lower classes were different to each other. They started to participate in public life by becoming part of the work force to support their homes and from there they began to fight for their rights (p. 2). Thus for example, in 1913, in the northern region of Chile, working-class women organized the

Centros de Belen de Zarraga to address the exploitation of the women workers (Maza Valenzuela, 1998).

Stuven (2003) asserts that from the beginning of the twentieth century women's participation in politics was aimed to develop organizations from civil society. This can be seen as a response to the lack of formal channels of expression such as political parties that support women's issues. Throughout the twentieth century, there were several attempts to give them some political substratum. However, a society strongly patriarchal and religious prevented any attempts by both conservative and liberal parties to tackle issues of gender equality and women's advancement in society.

Stuven (2003) argues that historically Chilean socialism did not include women's demands. The position of left wing parties was to co-opt women into the class struggle, in positions of support for the masculine world, subordinate to it, and with no recognition of gender demands. Despite the lack of support, since approximately 1880 women from working sectors made their own demands, outside of the political parties' structures. Paradoxically the first organizations of women workers at the beginning of the twentieth century were strongly linked with the Socialist Working Party, where feminist struggles were subsumed in the discourse of class struggle, weakening the gender one. Nonetheless, during the twentieth century, women from the working class continued struggling within a strategy of materialistic feminism orientated towards the overcoming of economic exploitation.

Over time, women's organizations changed their position from one in which women from the left wing thought that the improvement of society would automatically improve their situation to a more radical discourse questioning not only their situation, but also the representations that men constructed about them. Despite this discourse, the influence of the

masculine parties and their ideological-political definition in the context of the anticlerical and class struggles, did not allow women' emancipation (Stuven, 2003). This was the position of the left wing parties that prevailed until the end of the twentieth century.

Women's demands for equality measures were not advanced by right wing parties either. Since the middle of nineteenth century, Catholic women entered in the public sphere in defence of what they considered their social values jeopardized by the secular trends of modernity. In these groups, there was total coincidence between the representations of the feminine social role made by men, the Church and the educational programs, and the role women considered they had. Nonetheless, the initial absence of gender themes in these sectors did not imply the absence of a feminism that demanded some degree of participation (Stuven, 2003). Therefore, women's political participation in this sector continued with the female traditional roles historically associated with the Catholic Church that centre and right wing parties supported and promoted.

Stuven (2003) points out that the acceptation of traditional roles did not necessarily mean women felt reduced in their capacities. They assertively assumed their cultural position. This was supported by what they saw as independent decisions and not as a product of their limitations as women. Women also struggled for access to education and finally for the right to enter to University, which was granted in 1877 (Maza Valenzuela, 1998). The polemic regarding women's education emphasized the female social role and their right to equality (Stuven, 2003).

Despite the evolution of women's demands, which included acknowledgment of their intellectual capacity and power within society, denouncing the injustice in their legal rights, women did not prioritize the struggle towards parity of citizen's rights with men. The initial content of this feminism was marked by the struggle for civil rights, for improving

their gendered condition and for the legal modifications to protect their condition and recognize the social role that women perform (Errázuriz Tagle, 2006; Stuven, 2003).

Women's organizations and movements evolved from civic rights demands for the realization of the vote as an important tool to participate in the political system and put on pressure to meet their demands, which had been neglected by the masculine political class. At a symbolic level, the fight for the vote signified women's recognition of themselves as individuals, with rights and duties, but in a state of passive citizenship, that is, with no real participation in the political system. For an active citizenship, the exercise of political rights was required. This conveyed the right to choose representatives as well as the right to be chosen as representative. This reflective process would explain the importance that Chilean women assigned to the right to vote as a means to pass from a passive to an active citizenship. Errázuriz Tagle (2006) points out that while masculine suffrage was extended to all those over 21 years who could read and write in 1874 the female suffrage took much longer to achieve. She explains this by arguing that women had to pass from the private to the public sphere and only once they gained their space there they began to move in to the political sphere (p. 5). This trajectory reflects the metaphor of the labyrinth as discussed in Chapter Three.

With Errázuriz Tagle's thesis in mind, it is not surprising that women's participation in Chilean politics during the nineteenth and twentieth century was low. The first attempt by women to engage in an electoral process was in 1875. However, women were not allowed to vote in that election, even though there was no law against it. The Conservative party introduced a women's suffrage bill in 1917 and despite the earlier discussion on the issues started in 1865, liberal leaders warned that women's suffrage could only be granted once the degree of independence of women had increased by reforming the Civil Code, and female education

had progressed under the sponsorship of the State. Even after the Civil Code was amended and female secondary education had reached a level quite similar to that of men in the mid-twenties, the liberal leaders did not support women's full voting rights. Instead, they proposed to grant women's right to vote in municipal elections. The law was passed in January 1934 during the second presidency of the liberal, Arturo Alessandri. Liberal leaders preferred that women's participation in the political life of the nation started in local elections, because they would not compromise the balance of parties in the most important elections, that is, legislative and presidential elections. Chilean women first voted in 1935, but only in municipal elections (Maza Valenzuela, 1998). In 1949, women in Chile were granted the right to vote in presidential elections, the final step in full citizenship. Finally, in 1952, women first participated in presidential elections. Female low political participation was also evident in their slow enrolment in the electoral register the following years (Errázuriz Tagle, 2006).

The concept of time in politics is central to understand how political power is exercised. Bourdieu (2000a, p. 228) asserts that "making people wait, of delaying without destroying hope (…) is an integral part of exercising power". The late granting of women's suffrage rights in Chile and, as I will discuss later in this chapter, the state of limbo in which women's political demands have been kept after Chile's return to democracy in 1990 reflects the deep dimensions of exercise of power through a possible but uncertain horizon of expectations. Schedler and Santiso (1998, p. 11) observe that in politics "where waiting costs are low and solutions uncertain, rapidity tends to become expensive" and that "the pace of decision making political actors can adopt depends on other actors whose support they think they need". In the case of Michelle Bachelet's presidential candidature and electoral triumph, this can be seen in the motto of her campaign 'women's time', which reflects the growing need in

politics for women's support. I will come back to this topic in Chapter Five and Six.

Returning to Errázuriz Tagle (2006), the author asserts that the process of the incorporation of women in the political realm required some degree of self-consciousness for their advancement. The foundation of the Feminist Civic Party in 1921 was an initiative in that direction, which incorporated the struggle for modern individual rights, including suffrage without abandoning the push for civil rights. The growth in women's suffrage organizations during the 1930s and the 1940s gained momentum until 1949, when woman acquired complete full suffrage, beginning a more active period. In 1950 the first woman deputy, Inés Enríquez was elected and in 1952 Adriana Olguín de Baltra was appointed as Minister of Justice, becoming the first female member of the cabinet in Chile and in Latin America (Montaner, 2006). In 1958, Inés Enríquez presented the first divorce bill project to the congress.

In spite of the female political achievements from 1949 women's movements fell into decline, losing leadership in the public sphere (Errázuriz Tagle, 2006). In fact, after women's suffrage was granted the Feminine Civic Party closed down, in part because it wanted to distance itself from the masculine political parties, with a critical posture towards them for their refusal to recognize women's issues (Stuven, 2003). As Kirkwood's research *Ser Política en Chile: Las Feministas y los Partidos* (1982b) – To be Female politician in Chile: feminists and political parties – argues the relationship between political parties and women's organizations has been problematic. Historically parties have tended to co-opt women's struggles. This helps to understand why during the 1930's and 1940's in the heyday of the struggle for women's suffrage, women's groups consistently and stubbornly attempted to maintain their autonomy from political parties. However, after the vote was won in 1949, women

abandoned their organizations and became absorbed into existing political parties (Chunchryk, 1994).

One of the reasons that can explain this shift in women political activism is in a central episode narrated by Kirkwood (1982a) in her study on *Feminismo y Participación Política en Chile* – Feminism and political participation in Chile, personal translation –. In 1953 Maria de la Cruz, the founder of the Feminist Party of Chile (1946-1954) and the first female senator, also president of the parliament was, without a proper investigation, subjected to impeachment losing her office in the Congress. The accusation was presented by three women, arguing corruption. This particular event would lead to the gradual disintegration of the Feminist Party, the last female autonomous political party in Chilean history.

In fact, after the struggle for suffrage of the 1940's, women political participation declined. Female membership never reached 10% of the active membership in political parties from the right, centre or left wing, and in many cases their membership was due to family relationships (F. Klimfel, 1962, as cited in Kirkwood, 1982b). Some of the interviewees asserted that the inscription of female family members is still an extended practice in political parties, which in order to gain more recognition base their popularity in terms of the numbers of their members. In this respect, Pepe Auth, ex-president of the Party for Democracy and current deputy points out that though a more even membership of women and men can be observed in political parties, the political activism in parties continues to be largely masculine:

> ...you know that the registers of the political parties were made in the street and therefore all are somehow fictitious. In the sense that people were registered at the street and the husband registered his wife, the wife registered her sister and the sister registered someone else. Therefore, there are no studies of activism. The few studies of activism that I know speak of a male predominance. However, it is true that if you look at the register of political parties today there are just as many men as women (Pepe Auth Stewart, personal communication, January 24, 2008).

Returning to women's political participation after obtaining full political rights, because of a large number of women did not register to vote (Errázuriz Tagle, 2006; Kirkwood, 1982b) female representation in politics was very low (to be proposed as a candidate a woman has to be registered to vote and has to be member of a political party).

In Chile, the progressive spirit of the 1960s was rather modest, showing some signs only in the last years of the decade. During that period, the number of women in universities increased, the spectrum of programs degree chosen was wider, which brought with it the concept of 'women's liberation', which alongside labour and civic rights included women's reproductive rights. This was the change that the "contraceptive pill" brought, which modified moral and family patterns. In first years of the 1970s, birth control policies started up, but in terms of political participation, those years saw the women's movement subsumed into more and more acute general social fights. Women's organizations underwent a process of fragmentation, except for those that were at the centre of the policies of popular promotion arising from the Eduardo Frei Montalva's government. During his administration two major institutions for women's support arose, the *Servicio Nacional de la Mujer* (SNM) and *Central Relacionadora de los Centros de Madres* (CEMA). The SNM was the first institution and first state entity that took care of women's issues in a centralized way. The CEMA was a national institution to coordinate and support the existing networks of housewife workshops that were under the umbrella of religious institutions. In those workshops women used their 'natural' abilities to create products that could be sold through the organization and thus were able to increase the family income. Although the idea was participative, it was an attempt to positively associate women's paid work to something related to home (Meza, 2004).

The new political phase that Salvador Allende's socialist government brought in during the 1970s sought to stimulate women's participation in

different areas. Due to the lack of strong women's organizations, women's social leadership under the Popular Unity Government (UP) was oriented to develop a deeper political class-consciousness instead of a gender consciousness. However, it is important to acknowledge the significant improvements in women's condition during this period. In spite of this and beyond Salvador's '40 measures of the Popular Government', the predominant view of women was as housewives. The initiatives of the time tended to guard the family and children's needs for health and feeding, but they did not conceive of women as independent beings, despite assuring their rights to work and participate in the public realm.

Margaret Power (2002) asserts women were relevant actors in the overthrow of Salvador Allende's government. She points out that though organized by women from the Chilean upper class, feminist movements, especially Women Action of Chile and Female Power, included women from the middle and popular class. The author observes that the fact that women in all sectors shared a traditional view of gender was a central element to the national spread of political female movements, in the sense that their feminine roles were being wife and mother, and that from this premise they defended the country. Furthermore, the author states that despite the support of the National and Christian Democrats parties and the United States government, the female movements acted independently.

For Margaret Power (2002) women who were against Salvador Allende's government were not feminist. The author questions why female organizations of that time categorically rejected feminism as an alternative. She suggested that the explanation could be found in the political ideas and effects that caused the fear of communism in women who were not ideologically linked with the partisan left. Communism was perceived as a threat against family values, values that they projected onto the nation in their struggle against Allende's government. In the 1960's, the hippies, the Cuban revolution and the discourse of the Cold War had a significant

impact on the apocalyptical imaginaries, fomenting the disarticulation of class as much as gender discourse (Stuven, 2003).

In this regard, Kirkwood notices that during the 50 years preceding the 1973 coup, the democratization process in Chile involved the gradual incorporation into the political community those who were previously excluded, such as the middle classes, workers, peasants and youth. However, women were the only group that was not specifically addressed. Kirkwood argues that it was partially due to women's conservative political behaviour. She notes that traditionally the focus on women's political participation was on the obstacles that impeded women's integration into existing political organizations such as political parties. Kirkwood suggests that this obscured underlying political parties who sought female political participation to support their particular agendas rather than to improve women's situation (Kirkwood, 1982a, 1982b).

Women in politics during the dictatorship and transition period

There is agreement that in spite of the reduced spaces for women's participation in politics, the female presence in politics has been more or less, permanent throughout Chilean history (Crummett, 1977; Klimper, 1962; Stuven, 2003). However, changes in this participation have recently taken place. The shift started in the decade of 1980s and was mainly due to the economic crises that compelled women to join the work force. The shift was also a consequence of women's active role in community organizations developed to face the financial crisis, as well in human rights organizations during and after the dictatorship period. This argument has been discussed by several scholars (Baldez, 2001, 2002; Chuchryk, 1991; Dandavati, 1996, 1998; M. E. Valenzuela, 1987, 1995) and reinforced by research participants. The following quote from one participant reflects this view:

> The process of the incorporation of women into politics was a process prior to democracy. It arises, mainly, from socio-economic demands that exist in society that forced women to leave the domestic space. That is, when a country gets to rates approaching 30% of unemployment the woman becomes one of the economic supports of households and that strongly activates the social and political role of women, as in the 1980s for example (Gonzalo Duarte Leiva, personal communication, November 30, 2007).

> ...First is the incorporation of women into the paid work sector, not necessarily formal. There is a large area in the informal economy in which women are inserted, are in many cases complementary income, occasional work, transitional jobs, economic activity of enterprise, micro enterprise, this process comes since the military regime and the economic crisis in 80'. Secondly, there is women's prominence in the field of community organizations (Gonzalo Duarte Leiva, personal communication, November 30, 2007).

Until 1973, women's situation was rather marginal in terms of participation and representation in politics. During Pinochet's dictatorship from 1973 to 1990, formal democratic political activity was banned. The violent installation of the military government not only disarticulated political movements, but also it changed the sense of social organizations. By means of a decree, the dismantling of the directives of the organizations that were syndicated as opponents was legalized. The *Centros de Madres* (CEMA) were forced to function with permanent intervention from the government. The Woman's National Secretariat (SNM) changed its statutes and it was dedicated during all its existence to ratify the family role of women (Meza, 2004). Women from the opposition, in line with their traditional roles assumed a central role in the defence of human rights, and developed survival strategies to maintain their families during what were difficult economic times in Chile.

Walkers (1986) suggest that even though in many respects women were simply extending domestic roles into the public realm, their work also represented collectivization of these roles. His thesis is that though women's actions were seen outside of what is conventionally considered political, they moved beyond the limits a patriarchal society imposed on them by collectivizing and thereby transforming women's traditionally

defined roles. By creating the need for alternative economic survival
strategies, the regime's economic policies compelled women to organize
collectively. Similarly, the political crisis mobilized women around human
rights issues. Both experiences led women to a self-awareness of their
political action (Walker, as cited in Chunchryk, 1994, p.69-70). However,
the reopening of the political spaces did not find a consolidated internal
process in the parties, which assimilated women's roles and presence
during the dictatorship period (M. A. Garretón, 1990). In fact, in the 1980s
there was some indication that political parties forced by circumstances to
redefine their role in Chilean political culture, responded to the need to
address gender concerns. What was not clear at the time was whether
these responses represented yet another attempt to incorporate and thus
co-opt women, adding gender issues to the long list of sectarian conflicts
(Chunchryk, 1994). On the other hand, women gave a blank cheque to the
incoming Concertación government, with the thought that democracy
would gradually address their demands, including those of political
representation. As one interviewee notes:

> ...At least during the Aylwin's government, there was a water stilling eh, in
> the union world, in the world of women, in the social world, of workers, of
> giving a sort of truce, (...) and then I think women's movements, as the rest
> of the other social and political organizations of this country, in this case
> gave a blank cheque to Aylwin (...) that the fight for demands to achieve
> progress was not necessary. I think women's movements were also not
> absent from this blank cheque of no longer ...perhaps with less intensity, to
> keep fighting and making visible their demands (Ángela Rifo, personal
> communication, National Treasurer CUT, December 4, 2007).

Regarding this, Baldez (2001) asserts that to a certain extent the
experience of living under authoritarianism and the fear of return to
military rule elicits cooperation among groups that ordinarily would be
opposed to another. From this perspective, those who suffered under
dictatorial regimes have been willing to moderate their demands in order
to enhance the stability of the new system and to limit the chances that
dictators would return to power (Baldez, 2001; Hipsher, 1996). Power

(2002) notes that the generation that lived their adolescence during the government of the Popular Unity manifested in their combination of the ideology of law and order with the defence of the family the effects of the military regime. Feminism was reinterpreted as an attack on western Christian civilization, which in turn convinced the right-wing women to dissolve their organizations. The growing participation of women in the political arena indicated a change in this pattern. Having said that, the feminist struggles from the twentieth century and political activism did not have any impact on the public agenda for gender topics. In the twentieth first century women's participation, in spite of the official recognition of the role of the women, the increase in their job opportunities and the legitimacy granted to their demands, did not have the passion that accompanied the feminine struggles from 1934 (Stuven, 2003).

Although there is still not agreement about what we should understand by democratic transition in the Chilean case, I agree with Godoy's approximation, which understands democratic transition as a process through which the minimal procedural conditions occur so that democracy enters into a phase of consolidation and deepening (Godoy, 1999, p. 84). Before the return of democracy there was a long period of negotiation between the right wing supporters of Pinochet and the opposition to agree on the conditions under which the democratization should occur. Some of these conditions were to establish the autonomy of the economic system, protected from political contingencies and allowing the continuation of neo-liberal policies implemented during the dictatorship period, which led the state to loss the control over the economy (Larraín, 2001). These negotiations were also orientated towards reforming the strongly antidemocratic Constitution, though few agreements were achieved. In this context the return of democracy occurred under a non-democratic Constitution (1980) with the consequences that that implies such as

restriction of the executive attributions, restriction of individual liberties and a majoritarian electoral system, among others. Valenzuela (1997, p. 3) observes the singularity of the Chilean case, in which a constitution dictated by an authoritarian government became the means by which the opposition obliged it to cede power and it became the fundamental legal frame for the incoming democratic government. I will further discuss this topic in Chapter Five.

A significant number of interviewees expressed a profound discontent with the lack of a democratic culture and the consequences that this has brought for Chilean society.

> when democracy arrived, the democratization process in Chile was 40% not 100%. It has cost us years and years to break the existing levels of atomization (Arturo Barrios, personal communication, November 16, 2007).

> The discourse of democratic participation is an absent issue from our authorities (…) There is a huge democratic deficit (Ricardo Halabí, personal communication, November 14, 2007).

> …There is a lack of belief in a true democracy; one tends to think that the traditional political world is afraid of more democracy… (Andrea Zondek, personal communication, December 17, 2007).

The legacy of the dictatorship period as well as a precarious and weak Chilean democratic culture, according to interviewees, explains one of the main faults of the Chilean political system; that is to say, overall low levels of participation, expressed as a relative de-politization of society (Larraín, 2001). This raises the need to work on the issue of participation as part of the educational curriculum and to work on re-educating the population on democracy and political participation.

> …. more participation of all is required, more for all, not just for women (…) you have to have more participation for all. Wherever you go the issue of participation, it's a key issue in Chile; political parties complain about more participation, more in the senate, more in the system, more in the parliament. The consumers want more participation in the laws that involve them, the workers want more participation in their unions and in the company... (…) from a general point of view, more participation is

> required, but I do not feel that there is a system to do so (Arturo Barrios, personal communication, November 16, 2007).

This claim is evident in the score given to Chile in the Democracy Index, in which Chile scored their lowest mark in political participation and political culture. Chile was ranked 60 and 68 in political participation and 51 and 48 in political culture in 2006 and 2008 (The Economist, 2007, 2009). Thus, the Chilean democratic deficit is another factor that contributes to preventing a greater participation of women in politics. The following quotes give an account of this:

> The discourse of democratic participation is an absent issue from our authorities. Usually what is done to popular sectors (which are the majority of the country) is welfarism (Ricardo Halabí, personal communication, November 14, 2007).

> We have to work on the issue (of participation), and that relates to preaching, you see that priests do not speak of this, nor in the religious congregations, nor the Freemasons, that's not relevant in this culture, among celebrities even less (Ricardo Halabí, personal communication, November 14, 2007).

> The State does not give real participation to women at a local level; a more important role of women in the definitions of politics is needed ... (Ricardo Halabí, personal communication, November 14, 2007).

The process of incorporating women into public life is slower than in other countries of Latin America. According to interviewees, due to 17 years of dictatorship, democracy is not consolidated in Chile. This argument has been analysed by several scholars (Barton & Murray, 2002; Godoy, 1999). The existence of a long-term dictatorship entailed the institutionalization of an undemocratic culture, which had its roots in the colonial heritage of the country, but was also deepened by the institutional and legal framework developed during the dictatorship period. The following quote exemplifies this:

> The Rettig Report[14] confirmed a great democratic deficiency. It caused me pain to read it. When you were arrested and the militaries asked others people about you, people said he must be communist, or he did something.

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[14] The National Commission for Truth and Reconciliation Report, Chile 1991

> There was no consciousness of defending a fair trial, no one believed in the
> structure. Then, we see that in the report, why in Chile that was allowed?
> Why the police that was so peaceful, immediately after the coup began to
> draw their nails... So, when democracy is restored, a great debt about the
> pedagogy of what democracy is remains, because the electoral fact that of
> having voted does not restore the democratic culture (Ricardo Halabí,
> personal communication, November 14, 2007).

With the return of democracy in 1990, a new political party system was articulated, and this marked a new beginning of participation in politics through its formal channels – as politics under the Pinochet regime had been an underground, risky activity. In this new political landscape as a result of the electoral system, two main political blocs (the centre left wing, namely *Concertación* and the right wing coalition) became the dominant actors of the political system. The *Concertación* formed by the Socialist Party (SP), the Christian Democratic Party (CDP), the Party for Democracy (PFD) and the Radical Party (RP) was the coalition that remained in power since 1990 to 2010. The spectrum of the political field in Chile has also been composed of other collectivities: National Renovation (RN) and Independent Democratic Union (UDI) both from the right wing that sometimes, for electoral purposes, have worked as a coalition; and the Together We can More Pact (JPM) a coalition of political parties and organizations (also for electoral purposes) formed by the Humanist Party (PH), the Christian Left and (IC) and the Communist Party (CP) among others. Recently other parties such as Broad Social Movement (MAS), Progressive Party (PP), and Regional Party of Independents (PRI) have emerged in the Chilean political landscape.

With the reactivation of political activity, women became increasingly involved in politics. However, the existence of two main blocs of parties has made it very difficult to articulate a common political platform to deal with women's issues. Firstly, women's issues have been examined in the context of family values. Secondly, the *Concertación*, the bloc of parties in office grouped very different values stances and some even opposed

gender equity measures. In this respect Baldez (2001) argues that "in a coalition system, there may be considerable slippage between the platform espoused by a particular coalition of parties at election time and the agenda that a particular government agency pursues once the elections are over. Coalition platforms represent an amalgam of the policies preferred by the various parties within a particular coalition; they reflect compromises reached among those parties as a condition of coalescing. But the agenda of a particular ministry depends on the party affiliation of the person chosen to head that agency" (p. 23). In this regard, ex-deputy and current president of the Party for Democracy, Carolina Tohá, asserts:

> .... gender issues are matters that fall within a spectrum of areas where there are many political differences. Gender issues are in the family and values ambits. (Gender) are the issues where there are more differences within the Chilean political system (Carolina Tohá, personal communication, January 16, 2008).

The *Concertación* remained in power for 20 years in part because its political parties managed to work together to secure the majority in the congress and to present a single presidential candidate. However, in order to keep the stability of the *Concertación* and assure the support of all the parties of the coalition in the electoral period, morally sensitive topics were left off the political agenda. Thus, the dynamic of the system of political parties has determined that gender demands, especially gender quotas has not been a priority for the different governments since the return to democracy.

Until 2000, the leading party within the *Concertación,* the Christian Democratic Party (CPD) sought to protect its interests and to prevent its main coalition partners, the Socialist Party (SP) and the Party for Democracy (PFD) from claiming the women's movement as an electoral constituency. Christian Democrats, consistent with the doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church, have tended to favour a more conservative line on

social issues, while the Socialist Party and the Party for Democracy have supported progressive views on issues such as sexuality, family, and women's roles. In this sense, the Christian Democratic Party is much closer to the right wing alliance in term of values than to the political parties of the *Concertación*.

The leadership of the Christian Democratic Party (CDP) within the *Concertación* ended when socialist Ricardo Lagos took office in 2000. Since then and until 2010 the leading role of the CDP has further decreased, which has provoked several attempts from the right wing coalition *Alianza* to attract the CDP to their coalition. In fact, right wing parties see the CDP as a potential ally to form a new centre right coalition of parties with a common platform based on family values and morals. In addition, an important element is the strong link between the Catholic Church, the CDP and the right wing parties. One should not underestimate this link in a country in which 70% of population declare they are Catholic (INE, 2002).

This has created a permanent tension within the *Concertación* and has made its parties soften their position in order to keep the unity of the *Concertación*. This has been especially strong in moments in which the government has been dealing with issues like divorce law, marriage law reforms, policies on sexual reproduction and birth control, gender issues including equal wages for women, more protection at work, benefits during pregnancy, child care support and gender quotas in political representation.

A concrete example of this occurred in 2008 when the Minister of Health approved the distribution of the morning after pill as a way to control the highest rate of unwanted pregnancies among poor teenage-girls (in Chile abortion under any circumstance is illegal). This measure has not worked because parliamentarians and bureaucrats of CDP and right wing parties boycotted the distribution of the pill in their electorates, which

undermined the authority of the socialist President Michelle Bachelet and

the Minister of Health at that time (Herranz R., 2009). Another example is

the strong criticism of the recent campaign against HIV, which promoted

the use of condoms (Araya, 2005). Both situations divided the country,

polarized opinions and to some degree threatened the stability of the

political field.

Research shows (Baldez, 2001) that during the controversial transition to

democracy in Chile from 1990 until 2000, the government not only failed

in promoting gender equality, but adopted policies that weakened

women's ability to demand empowerment. One of the interviewees

comment on this:

> There has been a cultural revolution, where women's issues have been
> incorporated into public policy, but from a logic of welfare rather than
> empowerment ...For example, what happens to the pre and postnatal
> policy? How can they protect labour rights for women to get into politics,
> which is a job. This is an issue that should be deepened, which means, in
> which way modern political parties allow the access of women (Ricardo
> Halabí, personal communication, November 14, 2007).

The legal system is also considered as limiting for women in the sense that

it limits women's rights, for instance, in marriage laws.

> There is a structure that prevents women accessing their rights. For
> instance, women need the signature of their husband to get a loan (Ricardo
> Halabí, personal communication, November 14, 2007).

In spite of the adverse cultural and political conditions that prevailed in

Chilean political system women's participation in politics showed a

significant change from 2000 onwards. Today, women constitute more

than half of the voters. Therefore, they define political outcomes. Moreover,

in recent years, they have been occupying important positions in politics

and find growing support among voters (Altman, 2004; Hinojosa, 2002;

Schuster & Poblete, 2008). The clearest expression of this was the election

of Michelle Bachelet in 2006.

It is important to remember that the dictatorship's legacy still remains in the collective conscience of Chilean society. One impact this has is that with the aim of preserving the current balance of the political forces, political parties are willing to make concessions to avoid conflict that could jeopardize to the government and the social establishment. "Chile's highly state-centric political culture has been reinforced by the military regime and a new constitution that gave significant powers to the executive branch" (Baldez, 2001, p. 3). Michelle Bachelet's presidential triumph in 2006, the existence of two presidential candidates from the Concertación running in the last election (1999) and the presidential triumph of the right wing candidate in 2010 are unprecedented situations that reflect changes in the political landscape, and in particular in Chilean society, which seems to be leaving behind the scars of the dictatorship.

In the trajectory of women's involvement in politics since the return to democracy in 1990, it is possible to see improvements. Betterments in women's representation in Chile can be seen in the numbers of women in the government executive, in the legislature, in regional and local governments and in political parties. The trend was relatively stable until 2000, when women in politics became more noticed by the public and media.

Interviewee, politician Marco Enríquez-Ominami notes that the dictatorship period had another consequence for Chilean society. As a result of the order established during the military government, in Chile until the decade of the 90s, information was restricted and innovation penalized (the concept of innovation is used here as opposed to being progressive). He asserts that the presidents in office after the return to democracy – Aylwin first and Frei later – were symptomatic of the Chilean culture of that time, which was very conservative and traditional. The governments of the Democratic Christian Party represented the continuation of the social order established during the dictatorship.

> ...The Christian Democracy (Party) and the dictatorship are part of the same, of an established order, with moral nuances of course. One were killers, the other ones were not, not saying that the DC was a dictatorship (Marco Enríquez-Ominami, November 26, personal communication, 2007).

Continuity in Chile was threatened and changed with the detention and subsequent arrest of Pinochet in London (October 8, 1998). This marks the rupture of an order, in which untouchable figures – the military – existed. This historic event marks the beginning of innovation and access to information in Chile. Pinochet's trial in a foreign country meant that information about the process was made public internationally, giving way to greater freedom of information. Later, the scandals in Rigg's accounts ended up demystifying Pinochet even in his own sector, dropping the primary referent of the right wing. Lagos, in this sense marked the beginning of the opening to innovation in Chile, as his government broke with this lack of innovation. Thus, at the beginning of his administration, in 2000, he designated five women in a cabinet of 16 ministers. Later the phenomena Tunick[15], the Boloccazzo[16] and the Wena Naty[17] were all news media events which generated a deep level of surprise and were signs of change and innovation in Chilean culture.

> ...The hegemony that the DC generated when it was in office, with Aylwin. Aylwin was a political leader in the year 73 and Frei was the son of a jerk who had ruled in the year 64, just when Lagos arrived, there was a shift in Chilean society... (Marco Enríquez-Ominami, November 26, personal communication, 2007).

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[15] Spencer Tunick is an American artist who photographs large number of naked people. He visited Chile in 2002 and photographed 5,000 people in an act that was considered as a sign of liberation of Chilean society.

[16] In the opening of the XLI version of The Viña del Mar International Song Festival in 2000, Cecilia Bolocco (the only Chilean Miss Universe) performed a dance. Lifting the leg, the dress was not well placed, which revealed of her intimate parts. The scene was captured by a seasoned photographer and the picture appeared the next day in all media of the country, remaining in the retina of the public as "the Boloccazo."

[17] Wena Naty is the title of an amateur video of sexual character widespread by the Network, which shows a 14 years old Chilean student having oral sex with one of her classmates. The video shocked the whole country and caused big polemic due to the age of the participants, to the fact that was performed in a public park during the day, to the students dressed in their school uniform and that all of the them were from upper class families, but especially because the participants made fun of the situation while one of them was recording it.

> ... [The shift occurred] because of the fatigue of a certain order...no?...I do feel that presidents are dramaturgic, are the product of a dramatic story of society. After this we will return to a conservative cycle, probably from here to about 5 years, ten years more, are cycles. I have always believed that there is a dramaturgy[18] of power, that is, after Chavez, when the era of Chavez falls, probably you are going to have a super conventional man, you are going to have a man of cufflink, conventional (Marco Enríquez-Ominami, November 26, personal communication, 2007).

> ...in the nineties there was little innovation. Anything new was weird, after Tunick, after the Tunick phenomenon there was a shift in Chile, and a crazy hunger for innovation. Today homosexuality is hyper-decriminalized, television is full of homosexuals, women have the power, the queers on TV, bisexual television announcers, promiscuity. Innovation is the phenomenon that allows the woman to be president (Marco Enríquez-Ominami, November 26, personal communication, 2007).

Marco Enríquez-Ominami also observes that another aspect of innovation in Chile can be seen in the depletion of the forms of language, as he state in the following quote:

> There is a depletion of the language, the language of show business is a brutal thing, it has no law, that you are a *bitch*, whatever.... on the screen, without laws, without rules, a language that politics has never been allowed, a politician never tells the other you're a *arriviste*, you're a *dog*, a climber, a litter, while in politics you have to be formal and talk about the importance of constructing agreements and arrangements, the importance of the national interest. Those are constructs of language and the show business comes to replace (Marco Enríquez-Ominami, November 26, personal communication, 2007).

This depletion of the language is a recent cultural phenomenon in Chile, where the language known for its euphemisms and rhetoric [19](which has its peak in politics, where the styles are very formal and traditional) has been replaced by the language of show-business, celebrities and spectacle, marked by dysphemism and brazenness. If politics masks what it wants to say, show-business exaggerates it. This displacement of the forms of language implies a displacement in the centres of power. The power

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[18] Dramaturgy should be understood in the Goffman sense. Here, power is considered dependent of values, culture, norms and expectation of the group or society over which is exercised. The power is considered as an expression of a historical moment.

[19] The rhetoric and euphemism in the language has made Chile a country with two poets as winners of the Nobel Prize for Literature, worldwide known writers and poets (Weber, 1978, p. 902).

becomes somehow show-business, allowing itself freedoms not previously allowed and using stylistic resources that were unique to other areas, power is demystified and becomes mediatised. The former speaker of Michelle Bachelet's Government, Francisco Vidal was a clear example of dysphemism in politics, a style that made him controversial and known by the public. In Chapter Six, I will discuss the style of political language and its implications for politicians and female politicians in particular.

Returning to Lagos' administration, in 2000 – as mentioned earlier in this chapter – the balance of the forces within the *Concertación* changed with the Socialist Party leading this left centre coalition. President Ricardo Lagos took charge that year and under his administration, the first significant signs of the presence of women in politics became visible. With the slogan 'growing with equality' Lagos's administration, stressed the full integration of women into the public sphere and the newly elected President appointed women in all areas of the executive.

In order to improve women's representation in politics Lagos' government implemented measures of affirmative action that favoured female participation in candidacies to elected and non-elected offices at national, regional, and community levels. In addition, women were nominated to high managerial positions: 17.6% of the Cabinet Ministries, 26.6 % of Regional Ministries, 15.3% of Regional Governors and 27.4 % of Governors of Provinces. In 2001, the first women took up office in the Supreme Court: one of them as Minister and another one as District Attorney (Statistics Chilean Government, 2005). Added to this, during 2003 the government organized training days for women leaders and the implementation of gender quotas in the public sector. Gender equity programs in 169 public service departments were incorporated and a Program of Improvement to Management of Gender was formulated (Achievement Chilean Government, 2005). In 1990 of a total of 2,897 political positions in Chile, 293 (10.1 %) were occupied by women, in

2005, women occupied 649 (19.2 %) of a total of 3,375 available positions in the political arena[20] (Hardy, 2005).

In spite of these achievements, women's nomination to appointed offices was not as promising as it might appear. In fact, Fries and Lorenzini (2006) assert that between 2001 and 2005 in ministries and sub-secretaries women's appointments dropped from 13.61% to 5.47% respectively. From 2002, there were only three female ministers (Women's National Service SNM, Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Foreign Affairs). This number further dropped to two ministers (MIDEPLAN and SNM) between 2004 and 2005. According to the authors, the drop in female political representation, from 31% of during the first period of President Lagos, to 17% at the end of his period – which was similar to the percentage during the 1990s – can be explained by the lack of legislative or administrative norms to promote greater female participation in the places of decision-making within the executive branch, leaving women's nomination to the will of the incoming president.

Nevertheless, the centrality of women's political representation during that period constitutes a point of inflection in women's in Chilean politics. For instance, ex-deputy and current president of the Party for Democracy, Carolina Tohá, asserts:

> ...The status that the government of President Lagos gave to women's issues.... I think that in that there was an instrumental thing.... He thought he would be remembered as the President that put in five female ministers... (Carolina Tohá, January 16, personal communication, 2008).

> I do think that was one of our major proposals, that one of the great strengths of the Concertación was being able to propose a candidate and that she has known how to impose herself and that the whole world had said there is a woman with leadership let's make the most of that leadership, not only as an electoral opportunism to win elections, but also with for the conviction that it was good for Chile, that the gender debate

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[20] Executive Power (ministers, sub secretaries, chiefs of services and independent organisations, regional ministerial secretaries, regional and provincial governors); legislative power (senates and deputies): regional and municipal governments (regional councillors, majors and local councillors) leader of national boards of political parties (Clarisa Hardy, 2005, p. 45). Personal translation.

was good... (Marco Enríquez-Ominami, November 26, personal communication, 2007).

In line with this argument, Navia (2006b) observes that Lagos' decision to nominate a greater number of women in important decision-making offices would be one of his main legacies. The author points out that Lagos as well as designating five women in his first cabinet of sixteen ministers was the first president to appoint a female judge in the Supreme Court. In fact, according to Navia, the number of women that Lagos appointed to important decision-making offices was greater than the sum of all appointed women in the last forty years (Navia, 2006a). It is important to note that in 2000 Lagos appointed the Christian Democratic Soledad Alvear as a Minister of Foreign Affairs and in 2002, socialist Michelle Bachelet, doctor of medicine, was appointed as Minister of Health. Though at that time Michelle Bachelet was unknown publicly, her affable and direct style alongside her visible friendliness and her sincerity in speaking with the media and people rapidly found the electors' trust. Thus, in 2002 she was appointed as Minister of Defence. These acts were highly symbolic in a society more accustomed to seeing women in Ministries associated with women's traditional roles such as Education, Family, and Health, than in more 'masculine' Ministries such as Defence and Foreign Affairs, which is consistent with international trends of nominating women to 'soft portfolios' (Galligan & Tremblay, 2005, p. 109). This marked a strong female presence in politics that become even stronger in 2005 when both Ministers Soledad Alvear and Michelle Bachelet were appointed as presidential candidates for the primaries in the *Concertación* and when finally Michelle Bachelet was elected as President in 2006.

Bachelet and Alvear were not the first female presidential candidates in Chile. In fact, "the Humanist-Green Party was the first political party in Chilean history to propose a female presidential candidate, Laura Rodriguez, who was later elected to the Chamber of Deputies" in 1989

(Chunchryk, 1994, p. 87). Furthermore, Gladys Marín, from the Communist Party, and Sara Larraín from the Green Party competed in the first round elections in 1999. The difference was that both Marín and Larraín represented minor parties that were focused on getting their message heard and unlikely to win the final race at the ballot box, whereas Bachelet had a real chance of victory.

At the 2005 election, Bachelet faced the centre-right candidate Sebastián Piñera (RN), the right-wing candidate Joaquín Lavín (UDI) and the far-left candidate Tomás Hirsch (JPM)[21]. At 46% of the vote, she failed to obtain the absolute majority needed to win the election outright. In the runoff election on January 2006 Bachelet faced Piñera and won the presidency with 53.5% of the vote, thus becoming the country's first female elected president. She was also the first president of a Latin American nation elected in a direct election who had not been the wife of a previous head of state or political leader. It was an historic situation considering that women's suffrage was instituted in Chile only in 1949 and democracy was only restored in 1990 after a break of 17 years. It is also noticeable considering that Chile is a conservative and traditional country.

Michelle Bachelet's administration gave strong signs of incorporating gender perspectives. In March 2006, she constituted parity Cabinet, thus the Chilean government became the one with the highest number of non-elected women in the world. In fact, one of the interviewee noted that:

> If one would do a gender analysis of the bureaucratic establishment of the state, you would be surprised by the presence of women and of course, surveys and the studies never evaluate this, never discuss this dimension of it. On the whole, in the democratic process the presence of women in frontline positions has grown significantly over time (Gonzalo Duarte Leiva, personal communication, November 30, 2007).

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[21] The spectrum of the political field in Chile is also composed of other collectivities: National Renovation (RN) and Independent Democratic Union (UDI) both from the right wing that sometimes, for electoral purposes, have worked as a coalition; and the Together We can More Pact (JPM) a coalition of political parties and organizations (also for electoral purposes) formed by the Humanist Party (PH), the Christian Left and (IC) and the Communist Party (CP) among others.

Notwithstanding those changes, female representation in politics has continued to be discretional and subject to the executive authority rather than the result of a sustained policy to incorporate women in the political field. In elected offices, women still have a very low representation, only 16% of the Parliament and 13.2% of the Senate are women (those are the percentages from 2010 election). In spite of this, there is still a strong resistance to incorporate effective gender quotas. It is important to bear in mind that the effectiveness of gender quotas depends largely on the type of electoral system in each country. Gender quotas work optimally in a system of proportional representation with closed lists, in which there is a mandate that obligates parties to place women candidates in the first places of the list (Matland, 2002). In Chile currently gender quotes are voluntary and have been implemented just in the Concertación parties, without any effective control.

> ... the process of political institutional expression of this phenomenon [women's advancement in the political field] has been going slower. It has been expressed more in appointed positions than in the elected positions, at the executive level clearly. At the legislative level, the process has been slower, but at the executive level has been very rapid (Gonzalo Duarte Leiva, personal communication, November 30, 2007).

Considering the factors above it is important to recognize that since 2000 governments have incorporated a consciousness of gender issues at the administrative level. There has been a sustained policy to improve working conditions in public administration, particularly in terms of wages and participation.

Nevertheless, the process of the improvement of women's situation expressed by their growing integration in the work force, their strong presence in the public realm and their growing access to tertiary education has not found a correlate in terms of cultural change. At a symbolic level, the country continues to maintain the image of woman-

mother, in charge of the family and caring for children. Similarly, the structures of social institutions have not been modified to acknowledge the change in women's position. Neither are there social policies that support the impact that women's incorporation in the work force has for the family.

Concluding Remarks

The development of the political field in Chile founded a society and a political habitus in which the central notions of modern democracy were not only weak, but also alien to the consolidation of the nation state. Political participation and representation was restricted to masculine political elites, which did not profess a liberal view on politics, democracy and citizenship. This marked authoritarian feature of the Chilean political field found a correlate in a conservative and traditional society. In this context women's movements, organization and political participation in the 20th century did not lead women to consider themselves as feminist from a liberal or western point of view. It is important to remember that liberalism asserts the centrality of the individuals as a subject of rights while republicanism sees the individual as a subject of duties. In this sense, the feminist view prevalent in Chile was the one that defends and fights for the advancement of women's recognition of their collective role. Thus, the triumph of the feminism did not imply the destruction of the family, but a deep compromise with their role in society, as mother, educator or intellectual or manual worker (Stuven, 2003). From this analysis, I suggest that in Chile women's movements, organization and political participation can be seen as feminine rather than feminist.

The late granting of women's citizenship (1949) in Chile reflects the limited political participation they had. It reflects the nonexistent female political representation until the second half of the twentieth century, when women obtained full political rights. Women's political participation

was aimed at fighting for their advancement in terms of civic and social rights, but little attention was given to the advancement of their political rights, in particular to political representation. In fact, throughout most of the twentieth century women's political representation did not seem to be an issue for most of Chilean women.

Tracking the origin of the development of Chilean politics allows us to put in a wider perspective the meanings and implications of female politicians in the Chilean political field. The foundation of the political field in Chile has had a profound impact in the way that the political community, political society and civil society interact in contemporary Chilean society. Following Bourdieu's social genealogy model, that is, applying the study of the social conditions of women in politics to unfold the meanings and implications of female politician's, interview analysis revealed participants' sentiment that issues of female political participation and representation reflect an underling lack of inclusion of broader sectors of society. Political participation and representation is not only seen in terms of bringing more women into the political world, but also in terms of incorporating different social actors that comprise society and which are still excluded from politics. In this regard, there is a generalized perception among interviewees that Chilean politics reflect a society that is not very participatory.

> This is a society super-segmented in some ways, segmented and not very participatory, in the sense that it does not gather the public opinion, here the public opinion is not considered, here the elite opinion is considered, isn't it? (Arturo Barrios, personal communication, November 16, 2007).

The weight of the past on the present helps to understand why issues of political participation and representation remain as pending tasks for Chilean politics. Bourdieu asserts that "people's wills adjust to their possibilities, their desires to the capacity to satisfy them" and that "expectations tend universally to be roughly adapted to the objective chances" (Bourdieu, 2000a, p. 216). Bourdieu's argument sheds light on

the fact that the expectations of political participation and representation in Chile were largely moderated by the trajectory of the conditions of possibility of that political participation and representation. That is, the belief that the political field is a space only for elites. The ingrained perception of an exclusionary political system finds its objective expression in a profoundly divided and segmented society which the Chilean political elite has perpetuated through the State. It has been done by means of a set of institutions that have reproduced and deepened the inaugural social divisions at the root of the political field in Chile and to some extent have naturalized them.

The fact that politics has been largely perceived and seen as separated from the interests and needs of civil society has lead, according to research participants, to dissociation between the State and society:

> The State's role should be to seek the common good of the citizenry, but in Chile, the State speaks little with civil society (Ricardo Halabí, personal communication, November 14, 2007).

One of the consequences of this disconnection is the inability of the State to follow up social changes. Further participation, representation, and inclusion are the democratic debts that the State has with Chilean society, which is perceived as disempowered. Ricardo Halabí, illustrate this argument observing that this feature of Chilean politics has more to do with political culture than with gender.

> The Mayor of Puqueldon (rural area), the only radical women in Chile, I put in cultural terms… she only does assistentialist policies, because in that part of the country I do not think she has a discourse on democratic participation (Ricardo Halabí, personal communication, November 14, 2007).

Low female political participation and representation in politics can be seen as bounded by women's lack of empowerment, especially throughout social policies and law.

> Social policies utilize women; they do not help to the advancement of women because they squeeze their time. Women have to go to different

ministries to get benefits/assistance. They (women) have to knock on too
many doors and that leave them exhausted, they have to be in too many
queues. People in the countryside have to go to the hospital, then to social
services, then to ... it is a chaos. Social policies should be centralized in one
place, so people can access to them easier. That is to create consciousness
of how social policies can collaborate in increasing female political
participation... As a lawyer I noted that juridical structure limit women
rights... there is a need of legal norms the make possible gender freedom,
that is a topic that has not been studies systematically. In addition, too
many administrative restrictions impede women access to their rights.
(Ricardo Halabí, personal communication, November 14, 2007).

In line with this sentiment, interviewed civil servants discussed the

challenges of policy making in Chile, which has to do with empowering

civil society in the solutions and mechanisms to solve their problems.

We need to work on the credibility of the institutions and the seriousness
with which civil society takes care of their problems with the support of the
State.... Therefore, we need to move forward in how we give power to civil
society so they can identify by themselves, which are their difficulties,
which are the solution they propose, so they can present projects and how
we (civil servants) can support them in the solutions they propose. This
way of doing policy has a more crossed and lasting effect through time
(Andrea Zondek, personal communication, December 17, 2007).

As I discussed previously, the features of the Chilean historical

development of patriarchy has meant that the concept of women as the

subject of rights has been weak. Furthermore, the strong paternalism in

Chile has lead to assistentialist social policies which see beneficiaries as

passive recipients of charity rather to policies that that enable individuals

in need to become more autonomous citizens.

This has lead to strong demands for more participation and inclusion into

the decision-making process and polity development from citizenry. It is

important to notice how this reality was articulated by Michelle Bachelet

who during her administration implemented the concept of 'gobierno

ciudadano', that is, of a government of citizens, by which she meant a

participatory and inclusive government. This capacity to gather the

collective sentiment of Chilean society was a feature of Bachelet political

leadership that was displayed when she was also Minister and could help

to understand the support that citizenry gave her. Interviewed participant
Teresa Valdes notes that President:

> Michelle Bachelet when she was Minister of Health promoted a health
> reform with discussion and participation, which ended generating (in spite
> of the rejection of the Chilean political elite, in particular the masculine one)
> spaces and ways of doing politics that were not traditional. That is, with
> less authoritarianism, more collective spaces, more generation of debates
> and search of consensus were things that previous presidents had not done
> (Teresa Valdes, personal communication, December 27, 2007)

These initiatives were highly resisted and criticised by both the
government and the opposition who considered them a displaying a lack
of authority (Besadilla, 2006). Another example can be seen in her
commitment to name an Ombudsman for Chile; however, this initiative
required a constitutional reform, which is still remains pending (see
Bachelet, 2007).

The previous discussion of the historical and socio-political roots of the
political field, political habitus, political participation and representation
and women's involvement in civil and political organizations avoids
essentializing and naturalizing the meanings and implications of female
politicians in the Chile in the 21st century. In fact, the evolution of women
in politics goes hand in hand with the evolution of the political field and its
dynamics. In the next chapter I will explore how changes in the political
field lead to changes in women's position within it and set the basis for
understanding the meanings and implications of female politicians in the
new millennium.

Chapter 5: Institutional dimensions of the meanings and implications of female politicians in Chile

From interviews and analysis of political institutions, the impact on democracy and political representation in Chile was unfolded as a predominant dimension upon which the significance of women in Chilean politics was constructed and deconstructed. From a discourse perspective, it constitutes the interdiscourse of political culture in Chile. The political institutional design was seen as an expression and reflection of the shortcomings of the political culture, which holds back the deepening of democracy and the advancement of female politicians. In this regard, discourses on the Chilean democracy, the binominal electoral system, the 1980 constitution, the military and political parties can be seen as the intertexts of the meanings and implications of female politicians in Chile, as they are elicited by interviewed politicians when talking about women in Chilean politics.

In this chapter I will discuss the institutional dimension of politics to advance the perspective that seeks to unfold the meanings and implication of female politicians in Chile within the interaction of objective and subjective structures of politics. Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and field reflect these two interwoven dimensions of the social. He asserts that there is an ontological complicity between mental structures, practices and institutions, and that the meaning is a relational property, which is unfolded in time through practices. The objective components of the political field externalize ways of doing and signifying politics. In this chapter I will unfold the intrinsic logic of the political institutions in Chile which in turns allows me to unfold the meanings and implications of female politicians.

The finding of this thesis drawn from interview analysis revealed a primacy of political structures over a gendered political culture. This

predominant attention to political institutions to elaborate on female politicians reflects to some extent a reification of Chilean politics, a way of looking at political practices and culture seen as epiphenomena of the institutional design. On the other hand, it reflects the lack of alternative models of political culture available, particularly regarding gendered practices, which is a topic that I will explore in Chapter Six.

Interview participants largely agreed on the fact that the institutional design of formal representation impedes descriptive, substantive, and symbolic representation (drawing on Pitkin's definition of formal representation as discussed in Chapter One) from fully taking place in the Chilean political system. This argument crosses the emergent meanings and implications of female politicians in Chilean politics, as any interpretation of political phenomena inevitably leads to the consideration of political structural factors, which are seen by the majority of interviewees as shaping the political dynamics and strategies.

Interview analysis demonstrated that perceptions on the extent of the impact of institutional design in political processes and their dynamics have a wide range of dispersion. However, the shared perspective is that the impact on democratic practices and political representation and participation is negative. There is some scepticism around issues of women in politics, even though the meanings and implications of female politicians in Chilean politics are perceived as positive for the political field. For most of the interviewees, the structure of the Chilean political system has a central role in explaining the low numbers of female politicians. Nonetheless, because the problem is seen as structural and not related to the lack of affirmative action, there is no agreement on the implementation of gender quotas. In this regard, discourses on women's under representation in politics seem to be eclipsed by discourses on the inadequacies of Chilean political institutions. Moreover, conservative and

traditional gender views have prevented further progress on issues of equal access to political representation.

Research has found that there are several factors that influence levels of female representation in politics, such as nomination for candidacies, funds for campaigns, masculine political practices, and self-selection and self-exclusion due to real and perceived gender discrimination (Lawless, 2010). Women worldwide face enormous challenges in making an space for themselves within politics, their achievements and pending tasks do not reflect women's advancement, but the effort that politics is willing to make societies more democratic (see for instance Dahlerup, 2006). While many factors have been premised to influence and directly affect women's representation in politics, in this chapter I will explore the trajectories of the Chilean political institutions that most shape the meaning of women in Chilean politics in the twenty first century.

Chilean political history has received ample international attention from scholars and analysts since the overthrow of Allende's democratic government in 1973. The length and cruelty of 17 years of dictatorship and an agreed transition to democracy, followed by political stability and economic growth, have been matters of study and discussion (see for instance Barton, 2002; Fernández Jilberto, 2004; Kritz, 1995; Loveman, 1998; Sznajder, 1996; Weeks, 2002). However, while most of the discussion has given considerable attention to the socialist republic period between 1970 and 1973, the dictatorship period from 1973 to 1989 and to the neoliberal republic from 1990 onwards (Angell, 2001; Baño, 1988; John M. Carey, 2000; Chunchryk, 1994; Diaz, 1993; Haslam, 2005), few studies have encompassed wider perspectives of socio-political processes.

Twenty years after the return to democracy, the implications and the extent of the political legacy of the dictatorship period are more evident and clear. The singularity of the Chilean political process is particularly

evident when consideration is given to the transition to democracy, which rather than break with the authoritarian order consecrated by the military carried it through to the 'agreed democracy' under the form of a 'protected democracy'. Consistent with this, the features of the presidential democracy, the electoral system, the 1980 constitution, and the political parties and their interconnected dynamics have had practical expression in the Chilean political landscape that relates mainly to the quality of democracy. Citizens' expectations of democracy have also evolved leading to higher demands for political participation and representation. In this context, the meaning and implications of female politicians in Chilean politics is intertwined with evolving discourses on how Chilean democracy should be, and on the role of political institutions in the deepening of democracy. In addition, sustained economic growth has opened up further questioning of the quality of politics and political institutions in distributing economic wealth and wellbeing to society in a country in with an alarming social inequality.

From an analytical point of view it is a challenge to isolate discourses on the different components of the political system, where interconnectedness is perceived and experienced by actors in various ways depending on the position they occupy in the political field; for instance, in the congress, in the executive branch, as opposition or in office, as leader of a political party, of a coalition, or of an independent party. In addition, the meaning and implications of Chilean female politicians in Chilean politics carries meanings that politics have as collective imaginary, with traces of their authoritarian, military, and patriarchal legacy, as discussed in Chapter Four.

In the following sections I will discuss the main structural features of the Chilean political system, I will provide a brief background on their evolution and I will illustrate through analysis of interview data how and why the structures of the political system pervade the meaning and

implications of female politicians in Chilean politics. The institutional design represents a trap for the political class because it establishes dynamics that they have to reproduce in order to be part of the political field. This in turn naturalizes and perpetuates the political structure to the point that, in spite of the frustration and discontent at the current state of affairs of Chilean politics, attempts at deepening democracy and improving political practices have been slow and not exempt from controversy.

The Constitution and the military in Chilean politics

There has been significant degree of discussion regarding the causes and consequences of the Chilean democratic breakdown, between 1973 and 1990 (see for instance Drake & Jaksic, 1993; A. Valenzuela, 1978) which are not part of this research. However, observing the political structural design from a historical perspective, Chilean politics from the constitution of the nation-state and the republic has showed a strong Presidentialist tradition. In fact the 1833 constitution had an authoritarian character, which conferred ample executive powers on the president of the republic, such as the suspension of constitutional rights and designation of ecclesiastic authorities ("Constitución Política de la República de Chile," 1833). Due to its authoritarian nature, the 1833 constitution underwent several modifications that lead to the parliamentary republic period, which started after the Civil War of 1891 and finished with the coup d'état of 1925, after which a new constitution was approved. The 1925 constitution re-established the presidential system, assigning ample power to the executive but securing public freedom and individual rights ("Constitución Política de la República de Chile," 1925). The current constitution, approved in 1980 under the dictatorship, gave even stronger attributions to the president, consolidating the power of the president of the republic. In this sense, the 1980 constitution did not represent a shift in the orientation of Chilean politics but a stronger version of the existing

Presidentialist tradition (Siavelis, 1997), which accentuated the role of the executive at the expense of the legislative, and left the congress without authority over the legislature agenda and national budget ("Constitución Política de la República de Chile," 1980). However, because the context from which the 1980 constitution arose, that is, from a long-standing authoritarian military government, it differed significantly from the previous one, which determined that the political project that inspired its design was a philosophy of mistrust and fear of democracy.

The constitution of 1980 was approved under the dictatorship period in a tightly controlled plebiscite. Foreseeing the eventual return of elected governments, the constitution sought to perpetuate the armed forces' political power by establishing a series of constitutional provisions and institutionalizing the "active participation of armed forces in Chilean society" (Bravo Lira, 1996, p. 2). It established that nine non-elected senators, four of them former military and police commanders, would sit alongside 26 (now 38) elected ones; it gave General Pinochet a Senate seat for life "ensuring military representation in the Congress and codifying the military's role as guarantor of the country"(Weeks, 2002, p. 402). In addition, it deprived elected presidents of their right to dismiss military commanders-in-chief or the chief of police. Furthermore, the 1980 Constitution put "legal-constitutional restraint on civilian policy makers" (especially through the binominal system) (Weeks, 2002, p. 402).

In its original permanent dispositions, it gave the President of the Republic a large amount of power such as the capacity to control the legislative process and determine the legislative agenda through urgency on bills. In addition, it gives to the president almost exclusive control over the expenditure of the national budget (Siavelis, 1997). The President, among other prerogatives also nominates the members of the cabinet and local, regional and military authorities, public servants, board members of state-owned companies and of national broadcasting (see "Constitución Política

de la República de Chile," 1980). However, dispositions such as the power of closing the Lower Chamber of Congress and serving eight-year terms with possibility of re-election were modified or eliminated after 1990 when the country regained democracy and the Congress was re-established. Constitutional organic laws regarding the organization and configuration of public powers such as the electoral system, political parties, national congress, judicial powers, constitutional tribunal, the armed forces, the central bank and comptroller general among others were also approved.

The constitution was designed in a way that any modification or reform requires, along with the approval of the president, high quorums from both the Upper House and Chamber of Deputies. It is important to bear on mind that in every politically organized society the constitution poses some level of rigidity and pre-eminence above existing general laws, which is necessary and important because it guarantees fundamental rights. In the Chilean case, this is not different. However the attributions of the 1980 Constitution regulates all public powers as well, which were designed under an extreme concentration of power and authority on both the president and the military. The problem is that due to the introduction of the binominal electoral system the high majorities that the 1980 constitution requires for reform have hardly even been reached. The reason for this is that in this electoral system, each constituency elects two members to each house. To get both seats, a party or coalition must have double the votes of the runner-up (see "Constitución Política de la República de Chile," 1980).

The combination of the electoral system and the qualified quorums and majorities to reform the constitution has made it more rigid and reforms to advance further democracy in Chile have been slow and difficult. Therefore, in Chile the democratic transition period as a stage that has already ended remains still questionable. The analysis of the links between

the Constitution and the military shows that strong authoritarian component in the foundation of the political field and the singular view on political representation. The meanings and implications of female politics have to be located within this logic, in which democratic principles and citizen rights have not been at the centre of the institutional political design. In this regard, at a latent level there is a structural homology, using Bourdieu's terms (Swartz, 1998, p. 129) or an elective affinity, using Weberian terms (Howe, 1978) between patriarchal, authoritarian and military cultural traditions which share an ontological complicity consistent with the political institution. They are not explicitly gendered, they operate from a logic in which equality of any type (including gender equality) is not an in issue.

The "transition to democracy"

Cristi and Ruiz-Tagle Vial (2006) observe that from an institutional and judicial point of view, the transition to democracy in Chile as a political process had two stages. In the first stage the country passed from an authoritarian regime to a 'protected democracy'[22], which was established by the Constitution of 1980. While in the second stage, which according to Cristi and Ruiz-Tagle Vial is still ongoing, the country has passed from this 'protected democracy' to a formal democracy.

Regarding the transition from the authoritarian regime to a 'protected democracy', I argue that in Latin American countries the principles behind the 'protected democracy' can be traced to their colonial period and pro-independence process. Throughout the nineteenth century the principles that lie behind Latin American's conception of republic (Stuven, 2001, 2003) led them to inaugurate their republican history with governments

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[22] By protected democracy here, I refer to the authoritarian enclaves present in the Constitution of 1980, such as "the designated senators and life time senators, not chosen in the National Congress; electoral rules that facilitate the over-representation of conservative minorities and the majority military representation in the National Security Council, which has ample powers of control over civilian authorities" (see de la Parra, 1998's discussion on this issue).

and a political culture that assigned to the military a role of guardianship. In Chile this has meant that the armed forces have the role of guarantor of the constitutional order (J. Gutiérrez & Coronel, 1993). In fact, the armed forces were developed before the construction of the republic[23], and the independence of the country was achieved by military forces (Bravo Lira, 1996). Furthermore, several members of the military have been presidents or chiefs of State in Chile, governing for several periods and four constitutions[24] have been developed under governments led by military Chiefs of state. This has generated a constitutional design that has proved to be incompatible with limited government and has set a rationale for unrestricted exercise of government authority and a protected democracy instead of a liberal democracy. The fragility of political institutions and political culture means that the military forces often have been assimilated by political junctures and called to interfere in government politics, as in the case of Chilean coups d'état by the military in 1891, 1924, 1932 and 1973 (Cristi & Ruiz-Tagle Vial, 2006; Gómez Leyton, 2004). Between 1924 and 1932 the country was marked by "military dictatorships and civil-military conflicts, culminating in the reestablishment of civilian rule, democratic elections, and the military leaving power in disgrace" (Weeks, 2002, p. 402). This contradicts the long standing political stability of Chile pre-coup period, often praised by scholars (see for instance Collier & Sater, 1996; Power, 2002).

Loveman (1998) argues that in Latin American countries rulers have assumed the mission of protecting the interest of the nation and directing the future of the country rather than representing voters and defending individual freedom as I have already discussed in Chapter Four. The

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[23] The military exist within an institutional order, but their functions are previous to it (Fernández Jilberto, 2004, p. 52).

[24] The Constitution of 1833, the parliamentary interpretation of 1891, the Constitution of 1925 and finally in 1980 - have been enacted by rulers who came to power by the use of force, including coup d'état and civil war, while governments that promoted these constitutional formulas were authoritarian or dictatorial governments (J. Gutiérrez & Coronel, 1993, p. 5).

protected democracy has institutionalized this ideology through the vigilance of norms and values and through constitutional provisions that broaden the armed forces' attributions, as in the case of the 1980's Chilean constitution. In this regards, Godoy (1996) argues that the 1980 Constitution distorted the original constitution and its fundamental principles because it gave to the Armed Forces tremendous political power and status as guarantor of the institutions that go beyond the rule of law and is inconsistent with the democratic system (p. 306). "This constitutional mission (supplemented or interpreted in 'organic laws') makes the armed forces virtually a fourth branch of government. The military does not intervene in politics; it carries out its constitutional and statutory mission" (Loveman, 1998, p. 137). Protected democracy conveys the existence of a "guardian or constitutional tutor: the armed forces" (Godoy, 1999, p. 81). In fact, the attack and defeat of those who threaten or contravene the established order has formed part of the duties of the armed forces. Furthermore, it has set up the rationale for their great powers in matters of security, and it has justified military coups and regimes of exception.

It is important, in this regard, to remember that the 1973 military coup was supported, among others, by several senators and by the President of the Senate (Kritz, 1995, p. 92; Pereira, 2005, p. 168). Patricio Aylwin who at the time of the pre-coup political turmoil asserted that "only a military dictatorship can re-establish the order and authority indispensable for the salvation of our future as a nation" (Haslam, 2005, p. 92). Later, Aylwin played a central role in the transition from the military regime to protected democracy, and in 1990 became the first democratically elected president since the overthrow of Allende's government in 1973.

The second stage of the transition commenced after the 5 October 1988 plebiscite set by the 1980 Constitution. In this electoral event, Chileans voted for or against a single candidate for president, that is, for Pinochet

himself, who was the candidate proposed by the Military Junta. Due to the unfavourable outcomes for Pinochet in the plebiscite, in 1989 legislative and presidential elections were held (Navia, 2006b), which marked the beginning of the transition to democracy. From this moment onwards, the reconstruction of democracy was centred on modifying the authoritarian enclaves of the 1980 constitution.

From 1989, several reforms to the 1980 constitution were approved. The most significant changes came in 2005, when after more than fifteen years of debate and several attempts to modify the constitution, over 58 reforms were approved. These reforms eliminated some of remaining undemocratic areas of the text such as the existence of non-elected Senators and the inability of the President to remove the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces and the National Security Council. The constitutional reforms included eliminating the status of the Armed Forces as guarantor of institutionality, a function that was assumed by the State (Ministerio Secretaría General de la Presidencia, 2005) These reforms aimed to end the military intervention of the Armed Forces in the Chilean political system, which had been part of its political history. In spite of these modifications, the constitution of 1980 still remains questioned because of the way it was conceived and approved and in particular because it is the legal basis of a limited democracy under the current binominal electoral system.

The sentiment of politicians interviewed for this thesis elaborated on this issue arguing that :

> ...[Chile] is a very presidentialistic country, due to its history, its constitution, and its juridical normative... (Arturo Barrios, personal communication, November 16, 2007)

> ...A new constitution is essential, a new law on political parties and changing the binomial are essential. Furthermore, having a unicameral parliamentary system instead of a bicameral is essential (Gonzalo Duarte, personal communication, November 30, 2007).

> The binomial, the Constitution itself are all institutions that remain from the dictatorship…I will warn women about that, that the political structures in this country are poor. If I could I would tell the President to call for a new constitution to change these things (Carmen Lazo, personal communication, December 26, 2007).

Cristi and Ruiz-Tagle Vial (2006) observe that in spite of the constitutional changes that have take place in Chile since 1989 to date, in the republic that commenced in 1990 a totalizing neo-liberal ideology inherited from Pinochet's authoritarian anti-republican regime still prevails and this prevents the re-establishment of civic republicanism. For the authors, the current democracy in Chile supports an extreme and oppressive presidentialism, as well as the established order instead of freedom. For these authors, during the Chilean neoliberal democracy, there has been an exaltation of property rights and lack of sensitivity to social inequality, and a dramatic deterioration of the quality of education. Chilean democracy functions within an exclusionary electoral system of minority groups, prioritizing governance rather than democracy. At the same time, it supports neo-liberal hegemony and preaches that the state is evil. However, this is only until business gets spoiled, because then the private sector run to knock on the State's door to ask them to clean up the mess they make (Cristi & Ruiz-Tagle Vial, 2006). Within this logic, the gendered political culture somehow becomes an epiphenomenon of the shortcoming of a 'democracy' without truly democratic principles in a neoliberal society, in which politics is increasingly becoming depoliticised due to its lack of legitimacy.

Participants claimed that women's lack of representation and political advancement is mostly related to political structures. This can be seen in the 1980 constitution, which is embedded in the military rule and supported by an authoritarian political culture. This is the frame of a conservative ideology that is at the core of political practices, beyond the tradition political divides of left-wing and right-wing, in which resistance

to change and acceptance of inequality pervades political practices not only inhibit greater women's political representation by maintaining male dominated political structures, but also does not acknowledge gender political equality as a priority.

The process of unpacking the history contributes to setting political structures helps to locate the meanings and implications of female politicians in Chile in a broader context. Moreover, it allows going beyond the junctures to identify and understand the underling tensions and contradictions that cross the process of unfolding meanings.

Formal representation, democracy and Chilean Presidentialism

As I argued at the beginning of this chapter, in Chile there has been an elective affinity or structural homology between authoritarian, military, and patriarchal traditions, which has led to a type of democracy that has not been favourable for the extension of political society and for its own advancement. The meaning and implications of female politicians in Chilean politics necessarily questions the quality of democracy in Chile and its future. Interview analysis showed that it is intrinsically interwoven with the institutional dimension of Chilean politics as shown in the following quotes:

> …we have a constitution that is super exclusionary; we have an electoral system that is super excluding. That starts excluding important and representative groups of this country where men and women come together… (Ángela Rifo, personal communication, December 4, 2007)

> The degree of centralization of power (...) of the presidential constitution is ultimately, why we have not expedited mechanisms for participation, and then as there are few they are disputed a lot. If they were more open, we would have a greater degree of participation. The other problem is that the existing mechanisms of participation are voluntary. If you do a master plan in a municipality and invite citizens to participate, if you want, you listen to the community and if you do not want, you do not (Alejandro Navarro Brain, personal communication, January 22, 2008).

> In this system if you don't reach agreements it is the president who commands…if you look at the cake and do an analysis of power in Chile,

> you could talk about presidential monarchy, about presidential Caesarism. The president of the republic is the only one who has spending initiative, the only one who has the initiative on labour and social security matters. And then you see what a deputy does? Nothing, because everything that could mean public expenditure cannot come from an initiative of a deputy or from an initiative of senate. Then, what do you generate? Tension in the relationship between a deputy, senator and the executive… (Gonzalo Duarte, personal communication, November 30, 2007).

The Chilean political representative system has been considered one of the most Presidentialist of all democracies (Angell & Pollac, 2000; John M. Carey, 2000; Siavelis, 2000, 2005), sometimes termed as hyper-presidentialist (M. Garretón, 2003; Klingemann & Van Beek, 2005). or even as Caesarism (Nunn, 1970; Rickard, Brown, Stepan, & Americas Watch, 1988; Valdés, 2010). In addition, the Chilean electoral system for parliamentary elections has a unique majoritarian proportional design. Moreover, it has a constitution that in its original design granted significant powers not only to the president, but also to the armed forces, as well as containing several undemocratic prerogatives. All these aspects of Chilean political design contribute to the slow progress of female political representation, in spite of the political stability of the country since democracy was restored in 1990.

In this context, the relevance of Michelle Bachelet's political success cannot be underestimated. It is important to observe that in spite of the similarities that Chile shares with the rest of the countries in the region (matriarchal-male chauvinist, flawed democracies due to military coups and low political participation) the country represents a unique case in many respects. For instance, since the return to democracy in 1990, Chile has displayed a consistent political and economic stability, and sustained economic development (see Fernández Jilberto, 2004). Chile also has one of the higher rankings in the region with regard to transparency and safety (Transparency-International, 2010; UNDP, 2010). These positive aspects have prevented further questions on the legitimacy of political institutions in Chile. Moreover, they have eclipsed issues on furthering democracy and

equity. For example the fact that women's representation in politics and their participation in the labour force has been and is lower compared with the average level in Latin America (Social-Watch, 2008) is an issue that has been taken into consideration by political authorities only in recent years. This has been partially due to demands on further economic competitiveness and growth. The previous issues show the current challenges for further democratization, in which I locate the argument of this chapter with regard to the meaning and implications of female politicians for Chilean politics. To fully understand those challenges and how they shape the meanings and implications of women in Chilean politics the concept of presidentialist democracy requires further attention, it allows us to understand how in a political context where notions of strong authority, conservative and traditional views, poor democratic outcomes and low numbers of female politicians Michelle Bachelet became president of Chile.

Political scientists (see for instance Cheibub, 2007; Linz, 1990; Mughan, 1994; Puguntke & Weeb, 2007; Toro Maureira, 2007) have researched and discussed the features of presidentialist democracies, compared with parliamentary or mixed ones, concluding that presidential systems impart inflexibility and rigidity to the political process.

> In presidential systems, an executive with considerable constitutional powers – generally including full control of the composition of the cabinet and administration – is directly elected by the people for a fixed term and is independent of parliamentary votes of confidence. He is not only the holder of the executive power, but also the symbolic head of the State and can be removed between elections only by the drastic step of impeachment (Linz, 1990, p. 52).

Moreover, presidential democracies have been shown to be more unstable systems and more prone to breakdown. Two aspects of presidentialist democracy have been highlighted as the cause of that, namely dual democracy and fixed term in office (Cheibub, 2007; Linz, 1990).

Dual democratic legitimacy means that because both the president and the parliament have been popularly elected, both can claim to speak for the people. However, when the president and the parliament disagree, there is not a mechanism for deciding between their claims (Siavelis, 2000), which creates tension between the executive and legislative brunch. In terms of accountability, this has tremendous implications because it leads to a logic of mistrust between these two branches (see O'Donnell, 1998). For instance, Moreno, Crisp, & Shugart assert (2003) that "when institutions are formally independent of one another" – as in presidential systems – "they are not accountable to one another". Furthermore, they assert, "independency and accountability are two contradictory features of institutional design" (p. 84). The authors state that in presidential democracies the executive and legislature have to negotiate with one another in order to develop social policies.

In the Chilean case however, this has some particularities. Siavelis (2000) notes that in Chile the executive and legislative branches lack of balance in terms of access to staff and access to information which determines a stronger executive power in policy making. Furthermore, the author observes that the role of the congress in the process of policy-making is undermined due to budget restrictions on bill initiatives. This in turn affects the image of the legislative power and reinforces the electors' support for a presidentialist democracy as in the Chilean case.

Moreno, et al notes that "in all presidential constitutions, the Congress has the authority to demand information and hold hearings into alleged executive-branch wrongdoing" (2003, p. 88). However, in Chile the *interpellation* only was approved in the 2005 constitutional reforms. Through the *interpellation,* the congress can monitor the executive performance by calling cabinet members to the Chamber of deputies to give an account on their policy. The authors note, that "because of the separation between executive and legislature, each has an incentive to

point out misdeeds by the other, which in theory at least, helps reveal information about scandals or other breaches of faith (p. 88). In the Chilean case, this has had a perverse effect; it has contributed to the deterioration of the reputation of politics and policy-making processes and a depolitization of electors that often see politics as conflictual and inefficient.

Fixed terms in office are the second main feature of presidential democracy. It means that unlike a parliamentary system, premature elections cannot be called to allow people to decide between the competing claims of president and legislature. The result is rigidity in the system which promotes deadlock and eventual breakdown as the military intervenes to resolve the problem (Linz, 1990). In terms of accountability, this means "instead of being accountable to the legislative majority through votes of no confidence, the executive has a fixed term and serves as a check on the ambitions of the legislative majority" (Moreno, et al., 2003, p. 87).

It is important to remember that in representative democracies, citizens through the vote grant authority to, and hold to account their representatives. However, there are significant differences in terms of authorization and accountability depending on the type of representative democracy and electoral system in place, with significant implications for women in politics. While the impact of electoral systems on the levels of female representation in politics has been widely researched (Jones, 2000; Larserud & Taphorn, 2007; Norris, 2000), the impact of accountability practices on such representation has received little attention. This is particularly relevant when parliamentary and presidential features of democracy are taken into consideration.

The concept of nested hierarchies developed by Moreno, et al. (2003) is useful to understand the impact of accountability on women in politics.

They assert that nested hierarchies are a type of vertical accountability present in parliamentary democracies, in which "each link in the chain is uniquely accountable to its principal" (p. 86). To illustrate this, the authors assert that in parliamentary democracies:

> …the executive enjoys no constitutional independence from the legislature and no direct connection to the electorate. It is instead a pure agent of the parliament, and accountable to that majority in the most simple and direct way: subject to being ousted at any time by a vote-of-no-confidence. The cabinet is also accountable through oversight committees in parliament or through other institutions…(Moreno, et al., 2003, p. 86)

Moreover, the authors add that even though some public servants might enjoy special prerogatives, they are obligated to "carry out the legislation and ministerial orders by which their political principals delegate tasks to them" (Moreno, et al., 2003, p. 86). The cabinet can sanction bureaucrats through its control over budgets or, ultimately, the structure of the agencies and the civil service system itself (Moe and Caldwell 1994 as cited in Moreno, et al., 2003). Nested hierarchies favour women's representation and performance in politics because they promote collective responsibility over the pursuit of individual political careers, responsibilities are clearly identified, and there is less room for informal or external social networks. This favours women's strategies, which are oriented more to performance than to figuring out how the system works, to clear structure and to a less mediatic influence.

Returning to presidential democracies Cheibud (2007) observes that presidential systems tend to exist in democracies with a high probability of breakdowns due to concentration of authority. This means that this type of political system *per se* does not lead to instability and authoritarianism. The author illustrates this argument with his thesis on the military-presidential nexus:

> … the military has preference for the presidential institutions. Faced with a process to transition to democracy, the military prefers the hierarchical structure and concentration of authority in one national office over the

> explicitly partisan, contentious, and precarious existence of parliamentary governments, subject as they are to the whims of the current majority. Hence, the argument would go, when the military rules the dictatorship, transitions to democracy are more likely if civilians consent to the presidential institutions… (Cheibub, 2007, p. 145).

This argument fits well with the Chilean transition to democracy in which dictatorship institutions remained after the return to democracy. As I argued earlier in this chapter, in Chile the presidential-military nexus has been particularly important given the centrality of the armed forces within political processes. This is a significant aspect if we consider the weak civic tradition that Chile shows beside a very low political participation (Larraín, 2001; Stuven, 2001, 2003; The Economist, 2007, 2009). In spite of strong constitutionalism, the republican tradition has been undermined by restricted access to political society and the lack of a collective project with shared meanings, which corresponds with an institutionalized authoritarian democracy. The military-presidential nexus can further help to understand the disadvantages that women face in terms of their access to the political realm, as the patriarchal and authoritarian political culture share structural homology with the military, as I have already discussed. This argument is particularly salient in the Chilean case.

It is perhaps the Chilean military tradition that can help explain the sudden rise to leadership of Michelle Bachelet, the former Chilean president. From a military family, her father was General of the Air Force during Allende's government, and died after being tortured in the Air War Academy for 'treason against the homeland' following the coup d'état (F. Ramírez, 2006). Bachelet and her mother suffered torture by the military as well and later both underwent long periods of exile. It was not until the Government of Ricardo Lagos that Michelle Bachelet captured the media's attention, first as a Minister of Health and later as Minister of Defence. This second appointment set an historical precedent, because she was the first female to hold this title in Latin America, complemented by her personal

history. Her election to this position was not based only on her dramatic

biography, however, as she attended courses on Military Strategy in Chile,

and Continental Defence at the Inter-American Defence College in

Washington, DC (A. Ramírez, 2009). The figure of Michelle Bachelet

guiding the military parade on the national independence day

commemorating the 30th anniversary of the coup d'état in 1973 was a

very powerful image for the country (see Figures 5:1, next page). Gestures

were made by both civilian politicians and the military to bring about

reconciliation within the country. Regarding her popularity, as one of the

interviewees expressed it:

> The click occurs when she (Michelle Bachelet) was appointed as Minister of
> Defence, above the tank, as the daughter of someone who had been
> murdered by the military. There is a confluence of factors to explain her
> success and election to the position of Commander in Chief of the military.
> These are the phenomena [ex-president Lagos´ trademark pointing finger
> and then Michelle Bachelet's photo above a military tank, see Figures 5:1
> and 5:2 next page] that media analysts attribute to their success and are
> part of the tipping point in their political trajectories (Alejandro Navarro,
> personal communication, January 22, 2008)

Figures 5:1
Michelle Bachelet in the military parade

www.fotopresidencia.cl.c

www.fotopresidencia.cl.

www.elporvenir.com.mx/notas.asp?nota_id=339300

Figures 5:2
Ricardo Lagos's trademark: the pointing finger

www.atinachile.cl/content/view/149303/el-dedo-traidor-de-
Lagos.html

http://ticopanop.blogspot.com/

Moreover, Bachelet's personal and public reconciliation with the Armed
Forces opened up a possibility for the reconciliation of the nation with one
of the main icons of its history, the military. From that moment, her
leadership became unstoppable, which is interesting as her leadership was
spontaneous, in the sense that there were surveys and opinion polls that
showed that her level of popularity was going up and up every day
(Contreras, 2009) even though she was relatively unknown when first
appointed as Minister of Health. Michele Bachelet's candidature came from
the common people not from the political class, who faced with the
inevitable ended up supporting her candidature. Ironically, the military
tradition that has determined an authoritarian and male dominated
political culture in Chile contributed to her reaching the pinnacle of her
political success. Paradoxically, after Michelle Bachelet's election as
President the same surveys and opinion polls that brought her to the top,
systematically highlighted her lack of authority and leadership (see for

instance the monthly reports on the Assessment of Government Management between 2006 and 2009) the attributes most appreciated in a president of the republic for Chileans.

My argument in this section has been that a critical analysis of presidentialism in Chile encompasses a strong critique of its current Constitution. This is central as it leads to one of the main issues the interviewees manifested across this research, which is the low political participation and the marginalization of many sectors of society from the political processes, which directly affects the representation of women in politics and, therefore the meaning and implications of female politicians for Chilean politics.

In spite of the strong criticism interviewed politicians manifest about the current presidential system in Chile, initiatives attempting to modify the current constitution have found little support. The findings of the Bicentenary National Survey (Adimark, 2009) demonstrated that Chilean society prefers presidentialism over the parliamentarian option. The strength of presidentialism crosses party lines, though it has more support from people from the left wing (78% vs. 69% from people from the right wing) and among people of the upper class, 81%. The attachment to presidentialism is also seen in the degree of rejection of the possibility that Congress gain the power to change members of the cabinet, propose laws independently, and remove the President of the Republic. The opposition to granting Congress these three powers is widely shared by the population. None of these three faculties was defended unanimously among those who want to give greater authority to Congress (20%). I suggest that the reasons for Chilean adherence to presidentialism can be better understood in the light of the events that lead to the 1973 democratic breakdown. At that time, the opposition in the Congress was who called the military to intervene and restore order, which contributed to legitimization of the coup. The poor judgement of a wider part of the

congress over the political future of the country meant that the powers of the congress were further undermined by the authoritarian constitution of 1980. Moreover, because of their support for the military intervention, citizens' mistrust of the congress increased. Along with poor legislative outcomes during the post-Pinochet period and corruption scandals, the role of the congress has deteriorated in the eyes of public opinion.

The Bicentenary National Survey 2009 investigated the characteristics most sought in a president and found they were transparency and reliability (50%) – characteristics of modern leadership- and authority and capacity to take decisions (42%) – more in line with the Chilean republican tradition. Moreover, approachable (36%) followed by honesty (34%), energy and enthusiasm (17%) and sobriety and austerity (8%) were the qualities next most appreciated in a president. These attributes were not mentioned in the same way by different socioeconomic classes[25]. While transparency and authority were especially important in the middle and upper class, closeness and honesty had a place as important as the first two for the lower class.

The analysis of the Chilean presidential system is very relevant for the topic of this research because it sets the foundations for the political system, characterized by the exclusion of many sectors of society from politics, women in particular. My argument here is that the authoritarian nature of the Chilean presidentialist system disadvantages women's representation in politics. However, following Cheibub's argument (2007) the presidential system itself is not what prevents women's advancement in politics, but the political culture of countries that have implemented this type of democracy.

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[25] The socioeconomic classification in Chile in opinion poll is normally based on the following categories: ABC1 (e.g., Rich and high average annual incomes, multiple cars and property ownership); C2–C3 (medium average annual income, single vehicle and property ownership); D and E (low income, little post-secondary education, general lack of car and property ownership (San Francisco, 2007, personal translation).

The presidential system, the constitution, and the electoral system were strongly criticized by the majority of interviewees. According to interviewees, the Chilean presidential system displays a high level of centralism, which in turn prevents a greater political participation, and the development of a stronger political culture in Chile. A special mention should be given to the electoral system applied in Chilean legislative elections, which for many politicians represents one of the most visible legacies of the dictatorship period and impediments to deepening democracy.

Presidential system, around the world have been characterized by personality driven politics (Puguntke & Weeb, 2007) Chilean has a presidentialist democracy. The leadership is developed around a person rather than around an ideology or political party. Chile, as presidentialist country, sees their political leaderships strongly influenced by the presidential leadership. One could see this in the great attention that the President Michele Bachelet attracted and in how she was perceived by politicians and by mass media. The following quote about the victimization of her as political leader reflects this.

> There are not different leaderships as women politicians. The great leader (Michelle Bachelet) in my opinion has squashed any other type of leadership, because she has installed a logic in which she is a victim, things happen to her, she is defrauded, they lied to her about the Tran-Santiago, the politicians do not leave her to govern, everything happens to her .... when presidential leadership is built on the victimization of the president... If you say you do not agree with her, you disregard her. If you say that you agree with her, you are patronizing her…she has built a leadership or it has been built over a surface in which any movement you do around her becomes gendered. I think she was trapped into the worst positioning that a woman can have in politics, the victimization one (Marco Enríquez-Ominami, personal communication, November 26, 2007).

The figure of Michelle Bachelet seems to be very relevant for the perception of different female political leaderships in the country. Thus, it is considered that other female leaderships are being eclipsed by Michelle

Bachelet's leadership, which has been harshly criticized, as the previous quotes reflect.

> ...she (Michelle Bachelet) unwittingly removed any possibility for any political dialogue detoxified from the status of gender. Then, I find it very serious at the level of positioning. Now, as I said, I do not think that is she, is people like Camilo Escalona[26], the group of leader supporters. They wanted to build that leadership, but I think some people lacked intellectual analysis, because they believed that it would be easier and did not realize the damage they did and this is reflected in the opinion polls where she (Michelle Bachelet) fails in leadership (Marco Enríquez-Ominami, personal communication, November 26, 2007).

Some interviewees pointed out that the leadership built by the president is based on her victimization, which could be due to her gender. Frequently she was criticised due to her lack of leadership in this regard. Regardless of the previous critics, at the same time, some interviewees stated that she is not responsible for this, but her advisers, who wanted to get political advantage. In this sense, the gender issue acquired a high relevance since the closest political advisers are male politicians, who, according some interviewees instrumentalized the gender issue around the figure of the President Michelle Bachelet in order to gain more political power. In this regard, one of the interviewed asserts

> I think they (public opinion) have blamed her (Michele Bachelet) for the fact that she is a woman, even members of the *Concertación*. This is to avoiding having to admit that the coalition is under a process of deterioration. In some way or another, the *Concertación* has helped to transmit the idea that the coalition is not deteriorated, but that the problem is her leadership (Karla Rubilar, personal communication, December 11, 2007).

Roberto Mendez observes that contrary to popularity of former president Ricardo Lagos, who found strong support among political elites of the Concertación and Business sector, the support of Michelle Bachelet came from the base. While Lagos was a political leader that first seduced the elites and then public opinion, Bachelet's popularity came from the common people and the elites did not have the same appreciation for her

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[26] Senator and President of the Socialist Party of Chile (PS).

as that observed in the citizenry. Michelle Bachelet became president because the opinion polls showed that people had the illusion she would become the next president, but not because the Concertación chose her as their best candidate (Contreras, 2009).

In the following section, I will extend my analysis by examining the dynamics between the 1980 Constitution and the military and their impact on Chilean democracy, in particular on political institutions such as the electoral system.

The binominal Electoral system

Electoral systems are today viewed as one of the most influential of all political institutions and of crucial importance to broader issues of governance. It is important not to see the electoral system in isolation. Successful electoral system design comes from looking at the framework of political institutions as a whole (Helgesen, 2006, p. 1). In the case of Chile, the electoral system in place for the legislative power is regarded by interviewees as one of the major obstacles to increasing women's representation in the congress. The electoral system generates a deep negative reaction, in the sense that it constitutes one of the most visible legacies from the dictatorship, and prevents the consolidation of democracy. Probably the most controversial part is the inability of the political class to change this system. The system is seen as corrupting and transforming politics in an electoral contest.

The binominal electoral system in Chile was designed by the military and has been in place since 1988, following the plebiscite of 5 October, which sought to approve the 1980 constitution and to elect General Pinochet as president for a further eight years (Huneeus, 2005). Due to the unexpected results of the plebiscite, the military introduced the binominal electoral system that sought to "simultaneously over-represent parties of the right and to reduce the number of significant parties in the country" (Siavelis,

2005, p. 58). The aim was to secure at least half of the seats in the congress for the right wing parties, force political parties from the opposition to work together and preventing left wing parties from controlling the legislative process. The system was designed to favour the two right-wing parties, which while supporting the Pinochet's candidacy feared the likelihood of the triumph of the *Concertación*. However, it has proven to create a perverse political electoral dynamic that prevents political renovation and democratic practices, which has disadvantaged female political representation

This electoral system is unique because in practice it favours the largest minority, not the majority. It is thus not a majoritarian system. It is a system which uses a proportional mechanism, but the results it produces are not proportional since it allows an electoral list to take half the seats with only 34 per cent of the votes (Huneeus, 2005, p. 79). This is an important point when attention is given to the impact of electoral systems on female representation in politics. Current research demonstrates that list proportional representation (PR) systems are the best for increasing the number of women in politics based on three factors: high district magnitude, high electoral threshold, and closed party list (Jones, 2000; Larserud & Taphorn, 2007; Norris, 2000).

In list proportional representation systems, political parties can compete for and win several seats, which allows them to go further down the party lists, where women are usually listed. In the binominal Chilean political system however, the district magnitude is two; this means two members are elected for the 19 Senatorial districts for a period eight of years and two parliamentary seats apportioned to each of the 60 chamber's electoral districts for a four-year period.

On the other hand, in the binominal system, the high electoral thresholds force the parties into electoral coalitions to win a seat. Since the number of

seats for a district is two and for a party to win both seats it needs 66.6% of votes, each coalition will normally win one seat. Finally, in a proportional representation system with closed party lists, female candidates cannot be struck off or demoted by the rank ordering of candidates that party determine. However, the binominal is a system with two-member district structure within an open list proportional representation system, which is unique in the world. The current binominal system is in essence a form of open list proportional representation with two member districts. It shows in practice a feature, which its designers undoubtedly intended, that is, that big movements of votes are necessary to make any significant change in the makeup of the Congress. The system strongly encourages the establishment of the two major coalitions, builds on Congressional stability towards the point of frozen immobility, and thereby protects the position of the less popular coalition (Helgesen, 2006, pp. 4-5). The system in theory "could create competition between the two candidates on a list for the one seat it will win, but in practice even this is severely limited by elite accommodation within both coalitions" (Huneeus, 2005, p. 79).

Typically, the two largest coalitions split the seats in a district, as we could observe in Table 1, Case 1, in which candidates A and C are elected. However, when the largest coalition has two candidates with the largest majorities, like in Case 2 but it does not double the voting of the second most voted coalition (coalition 2), the elected candidates are the ones with the highest voting of each coalition, in this case candidates A and C. Only if the leading coalition ticket outpolls the second-place coalition by a margin of more than 2-to-1 the winning coalition obtains both seats, like in Case 3, when the coalition 1 reaches 66.6% of voting.

Table 5:1

Electoral Coalitions	Case 1	Case 2	Case 3
Coalition 1	40%	50%	66,6%
Candidate A	30%	30%	50,0%
Candidate B	10%	20%	16,6%
Coalition 2	40%	30%	33,3%
Candidate C	22%	18%	21,3%
Candidate D	18%	12%	12,0%
Coalition 3	20%	20%	
Candidate E	11%	11%	
Candidate F	9%	9%	

The example provided in Table 5:1, Case 2 has been predominant, which has benefited the right wing coalition. The left wing coalition has also benefited when situations described in Case 3 have occurred. Furthermore, both coalitions have been favoured by the system, which disadvantages independent candidates or candidates from small parties as shown for Coalition 3 in Cases 1, 2 and 3. The flaws of the binominal electoral system in terms of representativity have led the government to consider electoral reforms, proposing instead of the two-member districts, larger districts that would yield results that are more proportional. However, this has made little headway because the parties from the *Concertación* fear the resulting uncertainty, and the opposition defends the current system because of the advantage it gives them (Huneeus, 2005, p. 80). Interviewed participants shared this perspective on the negative impact of the binominal system over democracy and political process:

> …the binomial system puts all political actors in complex situations, there tends to be a fight within the political apparatus. This system favourites those that were previously installed, it does not open spaces for renewal, for the emergence of new leaders. The system tends to be very exclusionary, but not only of women, but also of young people, of innovation, of others, that is, it is conservative (Carlos Montes, personal communication, December 2, 2007).

> The binominal system is a perverse system; it does not allow real
> competition, only competition between the two most powerful coalitions,
> that is all. Therefore, it is not about citizenry's representativeness, but the
> representativeness of the power of political parties. On the other hand, one
> sees that these laws reflect a lack of belief in a real democracy. Then one
> tends to think that the traditional political world is afraid of further
> democracy. Because today they know how this democracy works, but they
> do not know how Chileans will vote if there is a voluntary vote or if the
> binominal ends. What happened with all traditional politicians, why they
> do not change it (the binominal). Then I think the answer to that is they
> fear losing a quota of power (Andrea Zondek, personal communication,
> December 17, 2007).

This system has proven to be highly problematic because it generates a
perverse dynamic within coalitions, and their political parties. In fact, "the
real contest takes place among the member parties, rather than between
rival alliances and parties" (Huneeus, 2005, p. 80), this makes more
difficult the nomination of female candidates, since two candidates need to
be nominated from each coalition. For instance, the Concertación (the left
wing coalition in office from 1990 until 2010) is formed by four political
parties, in the most optimistic case it can only win two seats, but due to the
high threshold in the majority of cases only wins one. This has generated
fierce competition for nomination between political parties from the
Concertación, which have to agree which parties will not nominate
candidates in each district, since the district magnitude is two. This means
that in the best-case scenario each party from the *Concertación* can
nominate only one candidate for half of the electoral districts. In this
scenario the incorporation of new actors, in particular women, is very
complicated because there is a complex network for candidates'
nominations which tends to favour those who are already elected for
subsequent nominations. For women who lack a long political trajectory,
nomination remains a main obstacle because of the high competition with
already established politicians.

The case of the right wing coalition is different; the fact that is formed only
by two political parties allows each party to nominate one candidate for

each electoral district. In the best-case scenario, each party can win one seat. Furthermore, because until 2010 they were the opposition, candidatures from the right wing coalition did not serve as a political platform for potential public offices nomination, as in the case of the governing coalition, but they only aimed to win seats in the congress.

However, in both coalitions, the internal party' disputes "endanger stability in the coalitions, which make them sometimes name a single consensus candidate, or run only a weak competitor who would not challenge the leadership's candidate" (Huneeus, 2005, p. 80). Thus, the nomination of female candidates faces great obstacles that are due to not only the gendered nature of politics, but also the perverse dynamic that this system created among parties within coalitions. The high level of competition set by the system, along with male dominated party structure make female candidates' nomination very difficult, as much because parties disregard women as because women do not consider they can be nominated, thus do not apply to be candidates. Moreover, independent candidacies outside of political parties' formal structures are virtually impossible. The nature of the system forces non-partisan candidates to form alliances with parties in order to win an election.

Because of the benefits that this system eventually brings to candidates who are already elected, who are largely male politicians, neither the right wing nor the left wing coalitions have managed to agree to modify the binominal electoral system.

> The legislative power is evidently an obstacle to change the conditions that generate the legislative power (Pepe Auth Stewart, personal communication, January 24, 2008).

Another critical consequence of this electoral system is that it distorts the representativity of the party and promotes non-democratic practices. "The system hands enormous power to the party leaders, who virtually choose the winners when they make up the lists" (Huneeus, 2005, p. 80). In this

scenario, potential female aspirants for candidacies are less likely to succeed. Furthermore, "with no real competition in many districts, the elections hold little interest for the voters, and even less so when there is not a candidate of their own party to vote for" (Huneeus, 2005, p. 79). Interviewees commented on some of these issues:

> The binominal system does not allow a third party to enter the competition. Members who are elected are very difficult to unseat, except if you double them, which is impossible. Therefore, in this scheme that is equal for men and women, is worse for a woman. (Ricardo Halabí, personal communication, November 14, 2007).

> The binomial system is obviously an obstacle to innovation, not just for women. When you have a binomial system, in which the number of candidates to choose has a maximum equivalent to the number of elected positions. It would be different if you could have six candidates to choose two. You could present women, youth, Mapuches, whatever and there is an open space for them. But, when you have a binomial system, in which also by the Chilean political logic wins one from each side and only two can remain, and also from different political parties that also compete each other and various other parties also compete. The innovative incorporation of leadership, not just from women, but also from any other groups, threatens the partisan livelihood, threatens the government's political success, the strategy of the coalition, it is impossible (Gonzalo Duarte, personal communication, November 30, 2007).

> The binomial system punishes and generates this thing of binominal that is worse than the bipartisanism. A hyper-presidential system was built, which therefore requires consensus (Marco Enríquez-Ominami, personal communication, November 26, 2007).

> The reasons for not opening political space relates to the institutional system, that is, a mechanism that requires the construction of coalitions and that avoids the partisan fragmentation. Therefore, starting from that principle, it generates consequences that prevent the renewal of political leadership, prevents the emergence of new leaders, and prevents the incorporation of other sectors of society in political activity. It is a funnel (Gonzalo Duarte, personal communication, November 30, 2007).

For the majority of interviewees, the binominal electoral system is perceived as one of the major impediments for reaching a greater democracy from an institutional point of view. In addition, as has been signalled it is one of the main obstacles to implementing affirmative action measures such as gender quotas.

...everyone tells you that they really agree with the importance of incorporating women, but they block all the spaces... that is, I can guarantee that the modification of the binomial system that allows for expanding the number of candidates per constituency or district, establishing quotas would be a solution absolutely viable. But that is not acknowledged... (Gonzalo Duarte, personal communication, November 30, 2007).

In the binominal system *per se* it is very complex to apply any type of affirmative action and changing the binominal system is even more complex, without even thinking of a gender quota law. I am in favour of changing the binominal system, as I have always said. I believe we have to open spaces, I believe we have... we are not going to finish, but at least we are going to improve the issue of exclusion (Karla Rubilar, personal communication, December 11, 2007).

For Chilean politicians, the political culture and political institutions play a central role in this feeling of discontent and frustration. Due to its political institutions and political culture, the Chilean political system seems to be unable to connect with society, keep up with social and cultural changes, and finally, to consolidate a project of social development in democracy.

For many, the growing number of women in Chilean politics has to do with a strategy to re-enchant an electorate tired of unfulfilled promises and conflictual politicians, though this has not had the magnitude that Chilean society expected. However, female politicians in elected and non-elected offices have taken on a new dimension since the 2006 election of Michele Bachelet, the first female president of the country opened up a new era for women's participation in politics. A 'cleaning up of the house', fresh ideas and more horizontal and participatory styles of leadership were among the expectations that many Chileans had in the triumph of Bachelet, a triumph that was perceived as women's triumph in a traditional, conservative and male chauvinist Chilean society.

A few years after this political milestone, female politician's numbers have risen slightly. In 2009, five women were appointed as senators (13%), which meant an increase of three females from 2005, in an Upper House composed of 38 seats. Moreover, in 2010 14% of those elected to Congress were women, which was itself a drop from the 15% of 2005. This figure is

below both the world average of 19.1% and the regional average of 24.4% (data from the Inter Parliamentary Union at 31 of October 2010). This is broadly, what would be expected under the current system in Chile.

The number of women that actively participate in formal politics in Chile is still small and there is a need to incorporate more women in the political field in order to fulfil national and international agreements for improving gender equality in politics(ONU, 2009). The negative and conflictual image of politics in Chile does not make the political field more inclusive and, consequently, the incorporation of sectors that historically have been marginalized from politics, such as women, is still a pending issue.

Gender Quotas: paradoxes between right and left wing parties

Scholars and analysts (Helgesen, 2006; Htun, 2005; Veloso, 2001) have discussed the impact that a change in the binominal system would have on women's representation. The impact is likely to be limited if quota legislation is not introduced. Helgesen asserts that "Peru, which uses list proportional representation, 30% of candidates on each list must be women, and 18.3% of those elected in 2001 were women" and "when Argentina introduced legal quotas for the nomination of women, the proportion of women elected jumped from 7% to 28% in one election" (p. 8). The author observes that in countries that have list proportional electoral systems, the link between statutory quotas is evident, since most of the quota systems are present in electoral systems that work with proportional representation. Within the context of the binominal system, the application of statutory quotas is very difficult because the electoral districts are small. Helgesen asserts that legislation that requires "any party or coalition nominating two candidates in a district to include one man and one woman (…) would be almost certain to increase the proportion of women elected – any district in which the same party/coalition won both seats would have 50/50 representation" (2006,

p. 9). However, as I discussed, under the binominal electoral system coalitions tend to win only one seat. This type of initiative would not prevent parties continuing to nominate female candidates for districts in which they are unlikely to be elected, thus undermining the purpose of the legislation, which is what has happened to some extent with the voluntary gender quotas in the parties of the Concertación.

> If you create incentives or a statutory quota law, female candidates are going to get the difficult districts, where they have no chance to be elected. Then, in an electoral system like ours it is impossible first to have a quota law and second it is ever more difficult to have affirmative action (Lily Pérez, personal communication, December 4, 2007).

> There is the quota law of political parties, that forces political parties to have a minimum number of women in their list, which I understand has had adverse effects. Because what political parties do is to meet the quota just to comply, and throw women to the most difficult districts, and they, the men retain the best (Marco Enríquez-Ominami, personal communication, November 26, 2007).

In this regard it is important to bear on mind that the debate about statutory gender quotas does not have cross party support nor in the *Concertación*, nor in the right wing coalition. Some interviewees assert that in the context of the binominal system, the existence of a formal gender quota framework is not viable.

> The quota law operates in plurinominal systems, where many candidates can be supported. This is an institutional design that is not consistent with the political scene. It is impossible in a binomial system in which the number of candidates equals the number of seats to choose from. It is not a problem of will or not, it is a problem of political realism and viability and stability of the political system (Gonzalo Duarte, personal communication, November 30, 2007).

Political parties from the Concertación have shown more support to legislate for statutory quotas than parties from the right wing coalition have. The argument from left wing parties is to ensure greater female political representation.

> The debate on gender issues has not been sufficient to generate changes. Therefore, the law must take care of this and design a transitory law to reverse this situation, the gender quota law is one example. This will work

like an impetus for both genders to have the same entry opportunities (Marco Enríquez-Ominami, personal communication, November 26, 2007).

The system tends to be very excluding...The quota law, by being forced, I believe we can help in some way to break it ... or give more points for women in this dispute ... the problem is not of gender, it is the system that tends to keep out the young, women, different options, so that's why I think the quota law can help but will generate reactions among young people and others excluded (Carlos Montes, personal communication, December 2, 2007).

Currently, only parties from the left centre coalition have gender quotas, which are voluntary and weakly supported. Gender quotas in left wing parties have proved to be problematic to implement because of the nature of the binominal system, the gendered political practices, lack of funds for campaign support, high party internal competition and internal parties structure.

Chilean politics has a very low degree of professionalism, then, party institutions are fragile; they do not have party finance. Therefore, political parties do not have permanent qualify staff...(Pepe Auth Stewart, personal communication, January 24, 2008).

I do not feel that the gender issue is installed. I do not see it at the PS [Socialist Party] ... rather I see the Minister of SERNAM [National Women's Service] preoccupied with these issues and I do not see the president of my party, or the secretary of my party or my party's vice-president concerned with the quota law or for other similar formulas. It is rather the SERNAM, which today is responsible for these issues (Marco Enríquez-Ominami, personal communication, November 26, 2007).

According to interviewed politicians, in spite of the effort by all political parties to some degree to increase women's representation, the way in which political parties function does not contribute to it. The structure of political parties is seen as an aspect that does not encourage female representation. Parties from the *Concertación* have very rigid structures, meetings at night and centralism, which do not help to achieve a balance between politics and family life. The centralism affects women's representation in political parties because it demands more economic recourses and time from those who are not from Santiago or Valparaiso (a 130 kilometres from Santiago), where the Congress is located. Women

often have less financial resources and time to participate in politics and

because of that they could abstain from participating.

> I think that we should revise the political parties...political parties without
> militants, more independence, so that women could not be in a Chinese
> shoe shape, having more flexibility. The parties here are very centralistic.
> You have to come to Santiago, imagine a woman in Punta Arenas [extreme
> south]. The centralism also contributes to the exclusion of women (Ricardo
> Halabí, personal communication, November 14, 2007).

> I know sometimes that due to affirmative action a woman has been
> nominated to be member of the central committee, but she never comes to
> the central committee, because she has to fly, or come by train, but the
> members of local party are not willing to pay the ticket. Then of what
> positive action are we talking about? When it would be fair that the local
> committee will say we will pay for her because she earned the right to go to
> Congress (Carmen Lazo, personal communication, December 26, 2007).

There is some resistance to accepting affirmative action. This could be

seen in members of political parties that hold gender quotas.[27] Some of the

interviewees considered gender quotas as going against the democratic

principles and against the variability of politics.

> You have political parties with a 40% of affirmative action.... Then, male
> candidates who have 300 votes are removed from the lists by entering a
> female candidate with 10 votes. So, I think things have led to some
> extremes, no... (Arturo Barrios, personal communication, November 16,
> 2007).

> ...there is a cultural problem, not just the gender quota, not just the
> statement of participation; there has to be a pattern. When politics has
> been so discredited as in Chile, the woman, who is very careful, does not
> get involved either. Then, the gender quota law is worthless if there is not a
> different context, this is an issue too (Ricardo Halabí, personal
> communication, November 14, 2007).

Former deputy and Speaker of the House and current president of PPD

(Party for Democracy) Carolina Tohá presents a comparative analysis of

women's situation within parties of the Concertación and within parties of

the right wing coalition. Her analysis helps to understand why quotas are

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[27] In Chile, the Socialist Party (PS) and the Party for Democracy (PPD) have gender quotas for their
internal election and the designation of candidates.

accepted in left wing parties and offers insight on why right wing parties

do not support them.

> If you think on parties that have a strong ideological conviction on issues of gender equity in politics and that are from the beginning fighting for that, like the PPD [Party for Democracy], they are the parties that present the lower number of female candidates for councillor elections. In spite of all our effort, in reality a party like the PPD, with their norms, where the people are who have most fought for women in politics, with the leaderships and with more visibility on women's issues presented less female candidates than a party like the UDI [an ultra conservative right wing party] (Carolina Tohá, personal communication, January 16, 2008).

> I think it has to do with how parties function. That is, in the UDI candidates are nominated and supported, in the PPD members tear their eyes out to be candidates, and you are on your own. In the UDI, they see a potential good female candidate, they invite her, they support her, work on and the pay for her political campaign. In the PPD, there are internal fights; therefore, the initiative comes from the candidates, while in the UDI it comes from the top. Then they search for female candidates, call them and support them (Carolina Tohá, personal communication, January 16, 2008).

> In our parties (parties from the Concertación) if you want to be a candidate, you are on your own in making the campaign, getting funds, getting support, you have to open spaces in a sea of candidates (Carolina Tohá, personal communication, January 16, 2008).

> (In parties from the right wing) There are two things that are greatly solved, the fight for the nomination, which is less, and the funds. They have a greater capacity for generating resources centrally than we do, I mean we almost do not have capacity (Carolina Tohá, personal communication, January 16, 2008).

Carolina Toha's analysis of candidate nomination shows the complex

dynamics between resources and competition and how those can benefit

or disadvantage women's nomination as political candidates for elected

offices. Because left wing parties have fewer resources than right wing

parties (which historically have been associated to wealthy business

sector), the competition for resources in left wing parties is higher. This

means that finance for campaigning is harder to get in the left wing, and

even more so for women, who normally have less economic power than

men. In the right wing parties funds are more available. Because they

operate in a conservative rationale, the organization and direction of the

campaigning is largely managed by the party board. This has the benefit

that the complex and costly process that women face when they enter into

electoral politics are managed centralizedly which makes politics

friendlier to women who are new to politics because they find a more clear

structure of how the process works.

> From our point of view, the quota law would help in these two issues,
> finance and nomination. The system would obligate parties to nominate
> female candidates and would provide more funds for their campaigns
> (Carolina Tohá, personal communication, January 16, 2008).

> What happened in Chile is that the financing law of political parties of
> elections establish a percentage of what one receives from the government
> for every vote. A candidate who loses, beside suffering the loss and
> suffering the moral shock, has a brutal economic cost, even more when in
> Chile political activity is an unpaid activity, which puts on you more and
> more restrictions. To be a candidate you cannot be working in the public
> sector and to be candidate you cannot receive resources from A, B, C and
> also if you are elected the following day you lose your job. Then those
> people how do they survive the next day? So, it is not a matter of saying
> okay let's integrate them (women) and then okay now they are integrated,
> it is not my business. Moreover, if due to the campaigns you got in debt,
> which normally occur, you are on your own, you pay the debts as you
> can...(Gonzalo Duarte, personal communication, November 30, 2007).

From Tohá and Duarte's analysis, it is possible to conclude that

nomination and finance are the central issues that determine the current

levels of women's political representation in Chile, particular in the

Concertación. However, right wing parties have a different view. They do

not support gender quotas, their argument is that they support female

candidates (see for instance Hinojosa, 2009) since their nomination with

finance for their campaign, and suggest that the lack of more women in

politics comes from women's self-selection and self-exclusion.

> I think there is a self-discrimination from women themselves, because
> when you are in a meeting with deputies, and they ask who wants to be the
> president of the commission, all men raise their hand (...) but what I see is
> that women tend to be more reluctant to raise their hand when there is an
> offering (...) I think the reason is women have more demands in their lives,
> family issues (Lily Pérez, personal communication, December 4, 2007).

> I think women do not think they can be candidates. For a man it is natural
> that if he stands out he can be candidate, women do not think about that,
> they do not seek that (Evelyn Matthei, personal communication, January 15,
> 2008).

The perspective from right wing parties is that a need for gender quotas is
reasonable for parties that do not support female candidates, like parties
from the Concertación, but in their case, it has no purpose and meaning.

> I am convinced that the quota law will not solve the underlying problems.
> The left parties have voluntary quota law but neither they do meet it. Then
> I honestly, what I see instead is that we in RN (right wing party) without
> quotas, but always... I have been twenty years in this party and from the
> foundation my role has always been to insist on those issues and to look for
> female candidates. I believe that when you have people aware of the issue I
> think is easier than by a quota law, you make a conscious effort to search
> for women candidates (Lily Pérez, personal communication, December 4,
> 2007).

> I totally and completely disagree with the quota law because you cannot
> force political parties to put up candidates, especially if there are not
> female candidates. How you are going to force parties to put certain
> candidates?...What you can do is to tell to women that you see that they
> have qualities "hey you why aren't you candidate, that is, open their eyes
> that they could be candidates (...) I would say that at least in our parties, we
> are always looking for both, female and male candidates. That is, we see
> someone that could work and we ask her right away, but our problem is
> that we lack candidates. I remember when I was a candidate for Senator for
> the first time and eight hours from closing the list we lacked candidates in
> several districts (...) This is why the situation of the *Concertación* is very
> different from the Alianza [right wing coalition]. There, are plenty of
> candidates of every type; therefore, it is harder for women to be candidates
> (Evelyn Matthei, personal communication, January 15, 2008).

 Furthermore, it could create problems because right wing political parties
continuously lack candidates, both female and male. The argument here is
that because the right wing parties have been the opposition the public
sector has not being seen as source of job opportunities and appointed
nominations as for the left wing parties that are part of the coalition in
office, the *Concertación.* In the right wing this leads to their political
parties – whose member mostly operate in the private sector – to have less
partidist life, that is to not seeing the party as an life style. In Chile where
the wealth is so unequally distributed this division is exaggerated leading

to politics being seen not only as a source of political power, but also
economic. In this sense access to the appropriation of public or private
resources has been at the core of the classical division of left and right
wing ideologies.

> They (left wing parties) have a tradition of living, I'll put in an almost
> pejorative way, it not that is pejorative, I do not want to say it, but they are
> used to living from public resources and our people do not like that, they
> look down on that. That is, it is regarded as something undesirable. They
> (people from right wing parties) look at them (people from left wing party)
> almost like drones, I mean. In the area in which we move about, us in the
> Alianza (right wing coalition) see that someone working in an NGO is
> because she or he has no job, it is because she or he is profiting from it, I
> mean? That is the perception out there, this is the view that there is, I'm not
> going to say that necessarily I share that perspective, but that is the view. In
> the left wing to live from a NGOs is totally natural and is allowed and from
> there you will seek a nomination as a candidate. For them, that is an
> accepted life path, for us that is a rejected life path (Evelyn Matthei,
> personal communication, January 15, 2008).

On the other hand, interviewees assert that parties from the right wing
tend to have internal structures that are more permeable, which in turn
favour women's nominations and representation. This could explain why
party members from the right wing coalition both female and male have
not manifested interest in implementing any type of quota law.

> …that two families rule the party, like in the DC [Christian Democratic Party]
> to give you an example, does not happen to us [RN]. There are other parties
> where there are groups, warlords or clans that rule the party; here, that
> does not happen and if anyone tries it does not work. Then, as a party, we
> are more permeable to more people and that gives more opportunities for
> women to participate. A woman sees the example, if I am a woman I can
> participate, if I go to RN it is not going to require a certain name, is not
> going to demand a particular religion, is not going to require such and such
> things and I think that makes people dare to participate and I believe that
> RN is a party where women feel more comfortable (Lily Pérez, personal
> communication, December 4, 2007).

The previous quotes reflect the conflictive dynamic between political
parties, practices and political culture, and contravene common beliefs on
the support that women's representation in politics receives from left and
right wing parties. Furthermore, it allows contextualizing gender quotas

on a micro level, which shows the complexity of considering gender quotas without acknowledging particularities of party practices, beliefs, and structures.

Final remarks

In this chapter, I have showed how the meanings and implications of female politicians in Chilean politics are interwoven with discourses about Chilean democracy and political institutions, which were considered in a broader context of socio-political processes. In this sense, the military legacy from the dictatorship period and its influence in political processes in Chile is an issue that requires attention, since it opened up full understanding of the genesis of political institutions and their role in supporting authoritarian, conservative and male dominated structures and political practices. An explanation of how from this logic women's incorporation to politics takes place is that female politicians operate in a field that is adverse to the increase of female politicians. Within this context, the binominal electoral system and quota law requires a closer examination to understand their complex articulation within the reality of each party. Contingencies like being the governing or the opposition coalition mark fundamental differences in terms of demands and access to political power. This is also cut crossed by the ideological leaning of parties, which determine the meaning and implications that political power has for political parties and politicians.

The analysis of the objective structures of the political field showed a logic that needs to be understood in order to unfold the meanings and implications of female politicians in Chile. How changes Michelle Bachelet's election occurred in a context so adverse for women in politics, with authoritarian political practices and little priority of gender equality is what I will discuss in the following chapter.

Chapter 6: The times of Chilean politics, the meanings and implications of female politicians in the twenty first century

> ...the structures that are contested must themselves be in a state of uncertainty and crisis that favours uncertainty about them and an awakening of a critical consciousness of their arbitrariness and fragility (Bourdieu, 2000a, p. 26).

Why do things happen in the moment they do and what do they mean were the questions that drove me to undertake this research. Bourdieu speaks about double truths when he discusses gift exchange, he observes the temporality of practices noticing that the lapse between the gift and the counter-gift denounces the hidden truth of a practice, that otherwise would remain as a disinterested act (1977a). Time is a fundamental dimension of social practices, in fact as Bourdieu argues the "practice is not *in* time but *makes* the time" (2000a, p. 206). In her opening speech as the first female president in Chile, Michelle Bachelet said:

> ...today Chile has a new government, led by a woman, which is also an expression of new times, time of joy, men's time also, young and children's time, senior adults' time and certainly, woman's time... (2006)

In his studies on time and politics, Santiso (1998) analyses the relationship of time and power as a political act, "politics consists first and foremost in structuring time"(p. 26). For instance, a significant difference between Presidentialism and Parliamentarism is time; while the former relies on fixed executive and legislative terms, in the later the maximum term has variable dates of termination. The temporal dimension is also central to differentiate authoritarian from democratic governments, regular elections, time budgets and terms of public offices for example (Schedler & Santiso, 1998). In the course of this research the temporality of political processes, practices, and institutions – women's late citizenship,

the dictatorship, the transition to democracy – are seen as central in unfolding the meanings and implications of women in Chilean politics.

Time as a perspective of analysis in studies on women's participation and representation in politics has largely been overlooked. As I have shown the relationship between time and power is central to understand political practices. In this chapter, I will discuss the temporal dimension of politics in connection with processes, practices, and political identity. I consider politics a social phenomenon of the public sphere that not only refers to a different domain of action compared with the private life, but also to different temporalities, in which practical experiences generate identities bounded by a set of expectations and chances. Mills (2000) notes that an individual social accessibility is centred on the division between private and public time. Private time is "… deliberately designed to prevent, or at least discourage the formation of human contact, and to separate people from one another" (p. 107).

In the first section of this chapter, I will address the process that led to Michelle Bachelet's election and the growing visibility of women in Chilean politics in recent years. The central argument is that this is a process goes hand in hand with the process of deterioration that Chilean politics has undergone. In the second section, I will discuss perceptions of female politicians and political practices, as bounded in the deep gendered perceptions prevailing in Chile, both in the political class and in society. This reveals complex paradoxes in terms of women's advancement in politics and gendered political dynamics. I will argue that gendered political practices are structured around perceptions and uses of time, which correspond to divisions of public and private space and time. Women's incorporation in to representative politics in Chile has made visible the temporal dimension of political practices as a source of control of political power.

Woman's time?

Bourdieu (2000a) asserts that structures can be contested when they are in a state of uncertainty. For instance,

> ...why did Michelle Bachelet's leadership exist? Michelle Bachelet, a person who was rather anonymous, and suddenly rose like foam and the whole story... what this society is demanding is a different style of politics, a style culturally distinct, less vertical, more participatory, more affectionate, more horizontal, of less...I don't know...(Arturo Barrios, personal communication, November 16, 2007).

Chilean intellectuals and political analysts have attempted to explain the factors that lead to Chile – a rather traditional, conservative and male dominated country – to elect its first female President. According to Tironi (2005) the Chilean historical process was demanding a new type of leadership, one which was empathic, cosy, hospitable, which takes more care of the fragility of people, as opposed to focusing strictly on the balancing of institutions or systems. This new type of leadership, expressed in the rise of women in Chilean politics, was more concerned with daily life than utopias, with the present than with the future and with happiness rather than with reforming or changing the system (Tironi, 2005). Such a notion was confirmed by interviewees:

> In politics, little is talked about collective topics, little is talked about education, about everyday issues, about other issues; social issues are losing relevance within politics. In our case, politics has the tremendous challenge of bringing collective issues in the way it does. Because if you look at the current juncture, if you look at how from a political level the issue of education was resolved, it was an institutional agreement between the elites. If you look at the security issue, it's the same. Then what relationship between the children and schools with the specific agreement reached exists? Then, that way of looking at the micro, I think that is something that women can do more easily, I do not think this is unique to women, but I think there is a way of making politics more integrated... (Carlos Montes, personal communication, December 2, 2007).

The demands of the new type of leadership that Tironi speaks about are not the result of a spontaneous change of individual preferences on leadership but in deterioration of politics as an institution. Santiso (1998)

addresses the present-centred orientation in politics as a loss of utopian expectation and perspectives. In the case of Chilean politics, the displacement of the future by the present reflects its lack of capacity to predict and anticipate the future.

> …our culture is a culture of management by crisis, that is, every time there is a crisis, society pays attention, politics pays attention, the mass media pays attention and therefore, things happen: legislation, the creation of a commission, of an especial group…. There is a reaction. But there is not capacity for changes, of taking care of structural problems without having a crisis (Marcelo Trivelli, personal communication, December 5, 2007).

This runs parallel to the disenchantment of a society that transited from the 'socialist project', to a 'military dictatorship' and then to a 'neoliberal democracy'. If during the military regime, Chilean society was under the visible hand of repression, during the democratic era, it has faced the in(visible) hand of the market.

Analysis of interviews with Chilean politicians revealed a rather pessimistic view of politics in Chile that is beyond structures and institutions, a view that has more to do with the capacity of politics to articulate projects of collective meaning. Politics is perceived as out of tempo, as lacking synchronicity between present, past and future. Negative perceptions seem to surround the way politicians understand, construct, and represent politics, the political field, and their political work. Throughout the interviews, the meanings and implications of women's participation in Chilean politics is shadowed by a strong critique of the political field and their participants, which encompasses to some extent women's marginalization from the political world. The politics of the elite has prevented politics from advancing in rhythm with social changes, a topic that I discussed in Chapters 4 and 5. Politics is seen as poorly integrated with social processes, reactive rather than proactive and lead by traditional political leaders who do not respond to changes in Chilean society and to people's needs.

> …Politics is poorly integrated with social processes (…) if you go to a complex area of a region or community and you said what does the state do here? The state is doing something in health, public safety, education, but all dispersed (…) each one of those things might be achieving goals, but on the whole they are not achieving them because in Chile there are strong processes of social disintegration…(Carlos Montes, personal communication, December 2, 2007).

At the same time that interviewees revealed their negative perceptions of Chilean politics, the meaning and implications of female politicians arose. In a combination of gender essentialism and hope there are certain expectations that women in politics would help to improve the quality and functioning of politics.

> The fact of having a woman president speaks of a total change, but I insist it is not a change of parties or political structures; it is a change of people. That is, in Chile voters are far more modern, much more advanced than the political and economic elites…(Lily Pérez, personal communication, December 4, 2007).

> …I think people are much more open, much more pragmatic; they are interested in reliable people. Moreover, now politics is so decadent, it generates high levels of distrust and apathy and in this evil world women are seen as more reliable than men (Lily Pérez, personal communication, December 4, 2007).

> …a large part of the explanation of why spaces in politics in Latin America are open for women has to do with the feminization of politics, that women are seen as more virtuous…(M. de los Angeles Fernández, personal communication, 21 of January 2008).

> …in the case of Latin America there are surveys done by the Inter-American Dialogue, which show that Latin Americans in different countries saw that it was very good that more women enter to politics. So basically because they think that women represent a hope for healing politics, are more honest, are more concerned with the poor, the practical problems of the people, they steal less, they are less corrupt…(M. de los Angeles Fernández, personal communication, 21 of January 2008).

On the other hand, the idea that power is an intrinsic attribute of politicians is something that is questioned by people. For interview participants the notions of time and power appear inherently interwoven with the Chilean political elite, which have prevented the advancement of democracy and political leadership renovation.

People do not sympathize with this thing where a deputy remains in office for 20-years, people want more change… (Arturo Barrios, personal communication, November 16, 2007).

In Panguipulli, a councillor is elected, and he does not move any more from Panguipulli. He remains as councillor in Panguipulli, because he believes that he won that position forever, then there is not a democratic game there, there is something else. And then he put a secretary with a picture of Bachelet in the wall and then he starts to do a job to stay in charge of this council forever. These are the vices and defects that I see women will be shocked by (Carmen Lazo, personal communication, November 29, 2007).

The members of the *Concertación* are a generation cap that did not allow others to access to power, prevented the generational renovation in politics. There has been a generation of women without access to politics. On the other hand, the right wing has had a debt of access to power for women; there is a lost generation, which now wants to recover the lost time… (Ricardo Halabí, personal communication, November 14, 2007)

…there is a deterioration (…) perhaps the time, the weakening of spaces of the Concertación, the weakening of being 17 years in government, etc. (…) there are problems in the Concertación, in short…(Arturo Barrios, personal communication, November 16, 2007).

The temporal dimension is essential to understand Chilean political dynamics, which have been haunted by profound divisions and antagonism which were accentuated by the breakdown of democracy in 1973. This has largely prevented Chilean political elites from acknowledging the transitory nature of political power, which is essential for the deepening of democracy. The lack of renovation of political leaders due to the stagnation of political parties and their members has configured an image of politics, in which political power is associated to politicians' individual interests rather than to a collective project. This is particularly visible in the parties from the Concertación who remained in power for twenty years since formal democracy was restored in 1990. On the other hand, right wing parties remain perpetually marked by their support and participation in the dictatorship and its legacy after democracy was restored. It is important not to forget that right wing parties started to distance themselves from Pinochet only after he was arrested in London in 1998. The criminal charges brought against Pinochet in an international

context meant that the Chilean right wing has had enormous difficulties overcoming their bloodstained, anti-democratic reputation and political credibility. Unfolding the meanings and implications of women in Chilean politics requires unfolding the processes that have shaped politics in Chilean society. Michelle Bachelet's election and government represents both the success of Chilean society in being open and willing to changes in the political power and the failure of a coalition that forgot the transitory nature of power. Ironically, the motto of the right wing coalition in the 2010 presidential election was 'the coalition for change, which helps to understand the electoral triumph of Piñera.

As I have argued, the discourse of politicians reflects their often very critical views about politics. They tend to hold negative perceptions about both the structural and the cultural dimensions of politics, which reflect politics as contentious, with little emotional involvement and a markedly distance from common people. There is also a general lack of enthusiasm and sense of moral involvement, mostly due to the low levels of efficiency and *real* change that political activity displays. Moreover, political parties and politicians are seen as conflictual, belligerent, opportunistic, male chauvinists and displaying clientelistic practices to remain in power.

> I think the parties are in a crisis so brutal, that gender is an issue ... but they have bigger problems such as nepotism: political parties have today 80% of their members working for the government (...) I have the worst opinion of political parties, the worst! For their political practices, for what they embody, for the lack of reflection, for the discussions they present. And in between, there is the gender issue that seems to me another evidence of their deep vulgarity (Marco Enríquez-Ominami, personal communication, November 26, 2007).

> I have the impression that political parties have incorporated many more women for a completely utilitarian view of politics (Gonzalo Duarte Leiva, personal communication, November 30, 2007).

> In the political world the election is a time for people's petition, it is like a telethon…. Then, not because there is democracy the historic bribery is eliminated, there is clientelism ... it was used by the parliamentarians to say I got that from the FOSIS, I got this from INDAP, I got this from the Ministry of Housing... Then, I said let's not be liars, this money is from the taxes of all

> Chileans. But there, there is also a very important fact, how do you change this structure? The political world is giving money for receiving votes (Ricardo Halabí, personal communication, November 14, 2007).

> ...sometimes you see some real jerks as deputies and senators, really pathetic, that every day contribute exclusively and constantly to making the population feel that politics is shit and they are not women, they are men, you got it? I think they contribute so much that they make us think that politics is the worst vocation... (Arturo Barrios, personal communication, November 16, 2007).

Regardless of the female presence in politics, however, perceptions about issues of corruption, dishonesty, and reproachable behaviour of MPs and public servants remain synonymous with Chilean politics. Such negative associations prevent the political field from becoming more gender inclusive; female politicians in Chile are still a minority. Dishonest political practices project conflicting and contradictory perceptions of the political field for those who are not part of it. This makes harder for newcomers to figure out how the system works both in terms of formal and informal networks. Therefore, getting into politics becomes both a confusing and intimidating endeavour for those new to the game.

Interview analysis demonstrates that politicians' own discourse about politics is negative. Their views represent politics as a brutal, rough and exclusionary career, which is accompanied by practices that reinforce that image, for example, authoritarian and exclusionary behaviours within political parties, troublesome policymaking outcomes, poor capacity to reach agreements, offensive and defensive declarations through mass media and corruption scandals. These practices tend to represent politicians as either (a) people with low moral and ethical standards or (b) people with high altruistic motives, who enter such an unpleasant business in order to protect citizens from 'evil politicians'. Thus, refreshing the political environment with new faces, as well as increasing women's participation in politics is no easy task. Newcomers, including women have to deal not only with their lack of familiarity with the political world, but

also with the fact that politics is largely discredited and viewed with

serious contention.

> ...Politics in practice is not a fair play; to participate in politics requires a lot of ambition, to be convinced that you want to have a political office on the grounds that you want to contribute to society. A person who wants to be in politics has to have ambition, that ambition is legitimate and ethical when dealing with somebody that says I want to improve the country, I want to bring my work to solve social problems this country has, that is very legitimate. But sometimes, the lack of ethics could mean that this passion is concentrated sometimes only on having a political office to meet your life, to have a job. Sometimes with great passion politicians discuss something looking to further their own interests instead of the interests of the country. For example, if two candidates of the same party or if one is being displaced there are few politicians who gentlemanly would give up for a better candidate... (Oscar Sepúlveda, personal communication, January 25, 2008)

It is important to bear in mind that capitalism and the liberal market

economy has imposed a type of society based on competitiveness and

individualism (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002; Martinelli, 2005) which has

permeated the police field as reflected in the above quote from Oscar

Sepúlveda. Former Senator Evelyn Matthei has a pragmatic view about

politics, which she sees more as job than just having political power, the

fights for political power thus can be seen as form of securing a job within

the political field, at this respect she argues,

> When you accept the role of minister or MP you unlink from your work and enter to a different world and then you start to know it and later it is not always so easy to return to the private world. There are many deputies who have lost the re-election... it is an issue that changed the orientation of your life, and in that change being a parliamentarian is not too bad. There is a livelihood issue, because of that politics is not just about having power. In fact is I would say that it is more about making a living, about survival in the field in which one operates (Evelyn Matthei, personal communication, January 15, 2008).

> Paradoxically, the growing recognition of the political activity as a paid job, as a mean making a living goes hand in hand with lots of centrality of politics in a society under a neoliberal economy. For many, in an increasingly depoliticized society politics is no longer the site where power lies. This phenomenon, according to Depute Carlos Montes is leaving empty spaces in politics and to some extent helps to understand why women are having a greater participation and representation in politics. As he states,

> if no one cares about political parties anymore, men are not interested either, and then there is more space. There is a process of privatization, of abandonment of collective projects, of taking distance from life, men is not interested anymore. This has not happened yet in politics, but it has happened in unions, students, neighbourhood, sport, and lays religious organizations. This has to do with a weakening of the State, in a market economy like ours in which democracy does not have much weight (Carlos Montes, personal communication, December 2, 2007).

For this reason, Depute Carlos Montes is courteous when discussing the increase of women in politics. He asserts that more women are entering in the public sphere in part because simultaneously men are retreating from it.

> At the base level, the man has been privatized, then women's participation has not been necessarily to do with the opening of spaces to them, but with men's abandonment of the public space. This is very strong in communitarian organizations, even in the sport clubs there are more female leaders. Then it is not the reflection of a balance of roles between women and men. Men's privatization, I do not think only in Chile, is very marked, in the youth, though less. Before for the young the public activity was very masculine.

The direct consequence of the depolitization of the society in Chile has been the weakening of communitarian networks, a central aspect of integral social development. In this context is where there is a redefinition of women's place in the public sphere,

> Today in community organizations women are the majority (…) yesterday, for instance, we have a popular assembly and there were no more than 10% of men, that is, only women, and this is a phenomenon that one sees repeatedly in all type of organizations. That is, it is the woman, who feels responsible for the community life, but also there is another view, the one that says that is not interested in the community life, that is, the view of the man (Carlos Montes, personal communication, December 2, 2007).

The meanings and implications of female politicians then have to been looked within a context in which multiples and interconnected phenomena are occurring in parallel. First it is the discredit of politics, second it is the loss of power of politics as a result of the neoliberal ideology, third it is perspective of politics as mean of making a living, fourth it is man's progressive retracting from collective projects and its

growing privatization. The advancement of women in politics reflects thus a deep change in the power structures on politics in the twentieth first century.

Changes in the paradigm of political leaderships have a counterpart in the changes of leadership style. The leadership of the twentieth century was instrumental, hierarchical, ambitious, diplomatic, aggressive, independent, autonomous, and self-sufficient and with transactional relations sustained in rewards and punishments. The growing tendency for reflection regarding social priorities has brought a strong need for connection with the concrete and real problems of people. Thus, the new leadership of the twentieth-first century should take care of the needs that are present in the collective unconscious of the society. It is believed a female leadership would respond to these social demands (to understand why this a global phenomenon female political leadership could insert in the discussion about late modernity and contemporary socio-political trends).

In Chilean society, women in politics are perceived as a way to improve the whole society rather than only just women's position within it. According to Tironi (2005), Chilean society is demanding a type of leadership sustained by the commitment to the community, solidarity, honesty, closeness, participation, family, team work and has more concern for the wellbeing of people who form the organization than the performance of structures. Women are considered more able to display this type of leadership than men are. In this sense, for example, some of the interviewees assert that the need to take charge of the social changes in Chile was demanding from politics a greater recognition of women's role in society. Santiso (1998) argues that "the democratization process is similar to the delicate enterprise of managing the population's dreams" (p. 28). The author adds there is an insistence on the future and in an imminent transformation of the present. This is seen in interviews:

> ... (Women's participation in politics) has to do with ... ... how political parties like ours also take care of progressive policies. I mean we cannot have a progressive policy with women at home, it would be super sexist, and it has nothing to do with the left wing... (Arturo Barrios, personal communication, November 16, 2007).

> I believe that political parties crashed with reality ... not because they wanted to find it. Political parties crashed with the reality that having women was very relevant in terms of how they are seen by the people (Lily Pérez, personal communication, December 4, 2007).

The emphasis of Chilean female leadership seems to rest more in the idea of complementarity than equality. Interviewees assert that in Chile due to their authoritarian political legacy as discussed in Chapter Four and Chapter Five, and due to the authoritarian type of leadership of ex-President Ricardo Lagos, authoritarian and masculine types of leadership started to be questioned by Chilean society, demanded inclusive leadership and more horizontal networks of power. The following quotes reflect this point:

> ...the masculinity that Lagos was, there was nothing more 'macho', he was the caricature who knows everything, of an authoritarian person... (Pepe Auth Stewart, personal communication, January 24, 2008).

> ...Chileans tend to reward very paternalistic and bossy leaders in office... (Lily Pérez, personal communication, December 4, 2007).

> My impression is that people voted for her (Michelle Bachelet) because they were fed up with that male leadership we have had for centuries. If Lavín almost beats Lagos. Lavin was Michelle and Lagos was Piñera. Lagos was the male and Lavín the woman. Piñera was the male and Michelle the woman. Piñera was the male that knew all... (Pepe Auth Stewart, personal communication, January 24, 2008).

Interviewees argued that there has been great progress in the evolution of women's participation in politics since the return to democracy. However, social processes are never completely coherent, that could be seen in particular with regards to cultural changes. Gender relations are a fertile terrain to see an overlap of different and sometimes even contradictory points of view, attitudes, and behaviours. Taking into account the rapid transformations occurring in other spheres of Chilean society, such as

greater female education and the cultural changes associated with a
greater acceptance of equality of roles between men and women, the
political institutions and culture have been not very responsive. Thus,
while some changes have taken place in the political arena, there is a long
way to go to achieve a real equality between women and men. In this
regard, interviewees assert that:

> ...in Chile it has changed people's willingness to see female politicians and
> vote for them in elections, but much less has changed with regard to the
> willingness of the parties to select them and let them occupy the spaces
> that correspond to them in the instance of leadership and senior popular
> representation...(Pepe Auth Stewart, personal communication, January 24,
> 2008).

> I do not think that today the political system fully reflects what is
> happening in society as a whole, in the relationship between man and
> woman.... (Carlos Montes, personal communication, December 2, 2007).

> It is curious, in terms of voters, being a woman is an advantage, because as
> we are few we are visible, I think voters in general like to vote for women,
> they perceive us as more honest, more assertive. But what is an advantage
> among voters it is a disadvantage for facing political parties. I believe that
> Chilean political parties have very male chauvinist structures... (Lily Pérez,
> personal communication, December 4, 2007).

On the other hand, respondents point out that the media has been a factor
for understanding the growing visibility of women in politics.

> ... The media began to see that here was a thematic niche, and began to
> exploit it and these things of women entrepreneurs, of the 100 most
> outstanding women, of female leadership, of women's style started to
> emerge... (Carolina Tohá, personal communication, January 16, 2008).

Furthermore, electoral analysis showed the historical tendency for women
in Chile to vote for the right wing candidates (Altam, 2004; Errázuriz Tagle,
2006; Flisfisch, 1990). As shown in Figure 6:1 below, from 1989 to 2000,
the percentage of female voters within each electoral pact or political
sector consistently favoured the right wing candidates. This corroborated
the more conservative trend of women in politics, observed
internationally (Norris, 2004). However, this has shifted since 2005
election, when Michelle Bachelet ran as presidential candidate (see Figure

6:1). Women electoral preferences are seem to be more evenly distributed among the centre-left and centre-right coalitions (see 2005, 2006, 2009 and 2010 elections). Moreover, small parties (see green line in Figure 6.1) such as the Communist and the Humanist, as well as independent candidates had greater support from female voters compared with the 1993, 1999 and 2005 presidential elections. These changes in female electoral preferences show that Chilean women are moving away from their conservative profile as voters.

Figure 6:1
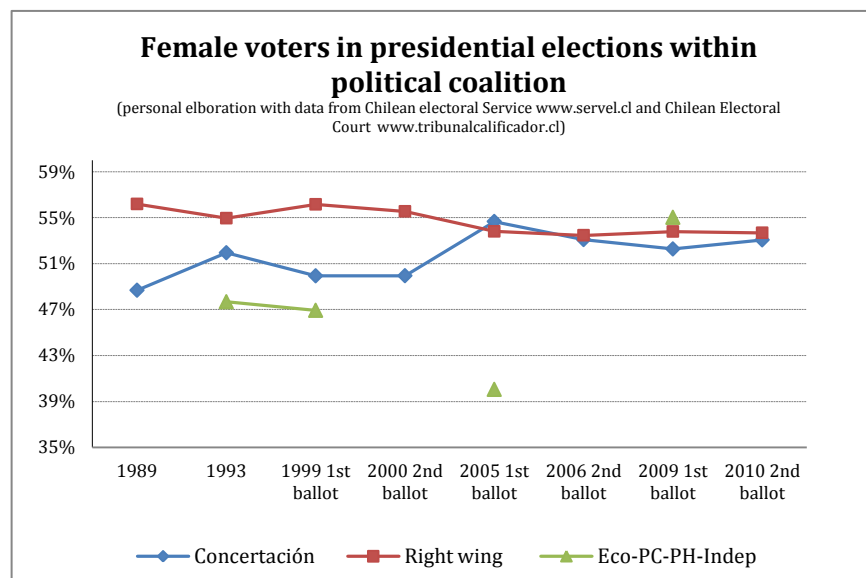
This trend was also noted by the participants of the study:

> The Concertación at some point saw that more women voted for the right wing, for the Alianza than the Concertación. Moreover, for a topic that belongs to the left wing, which is to promote the rights of minorities and that they do in any field, is characteristic of them. Then, they (the media) begin to show them (women) in surveys where they had not been and then a female Minister of Defence was named. I think it was a symbolic topic and from there Michelle Bachelet acquired popularity, because she is incredibly nice and because of that, she wins, she has an empathy that is impressive (Evelyn Matthei, personal communication, January 15, 2008).

On the other hand, analysis of municipal and parliamentary elections showed the tendency of more female voters to support female than male

candidates (Altam, 2004). This was confirmed by the greater female electoral support to Michelle Bachelet, as shown in Figure 6:1. Interviewed politicians also comment on this:

> ... Where the female vote goes is one of the questions that many presidential candidates have asked of themselves, and therefore the same pressure has generated the need to include them (women) in the cabinets or to put some visible faces of women to acknowledge that part of the electorate that define elections (women)... (Karla Rubilar, personal communication, December 11, 2007).

> ...The fact that women voted for a woman was an issue that was evaluated at that time... due to the surveys and polls, it was evaluated ... the fact that women voted for women – because women were who finally decided the outcome of the election – did not happen due to a cultural progress (...) Women voted for her (Michelle Bachelet) for other factors, maybe they saw her as closer (...) even for reasons that have to do with machismo, in the sense that women are better at taking care of the house and finances... (Ángela Rifo, personal communication, December 4, 2007).
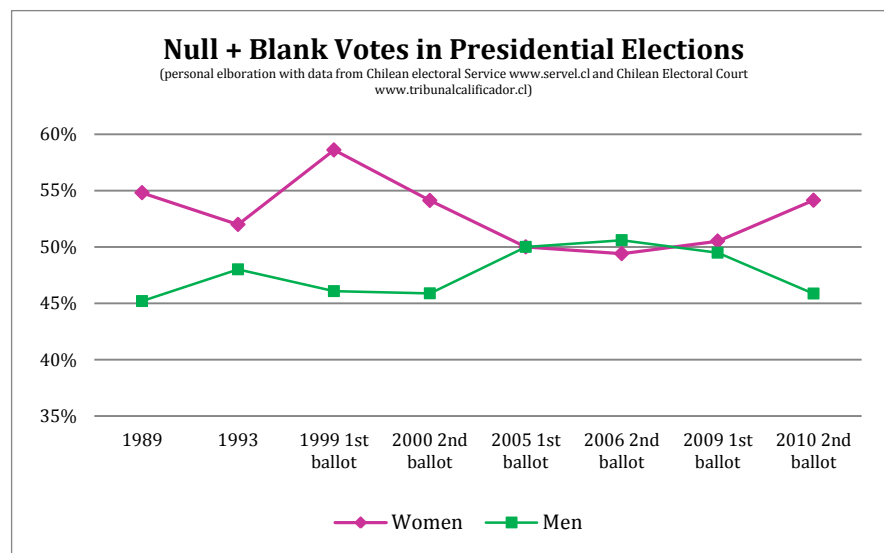
The more conservative trend of women in politics and the electoral gender solidarity are made more significant

because there are larger numbers of female than male voters, as shown in Figure 6:2.

Figure 6:2
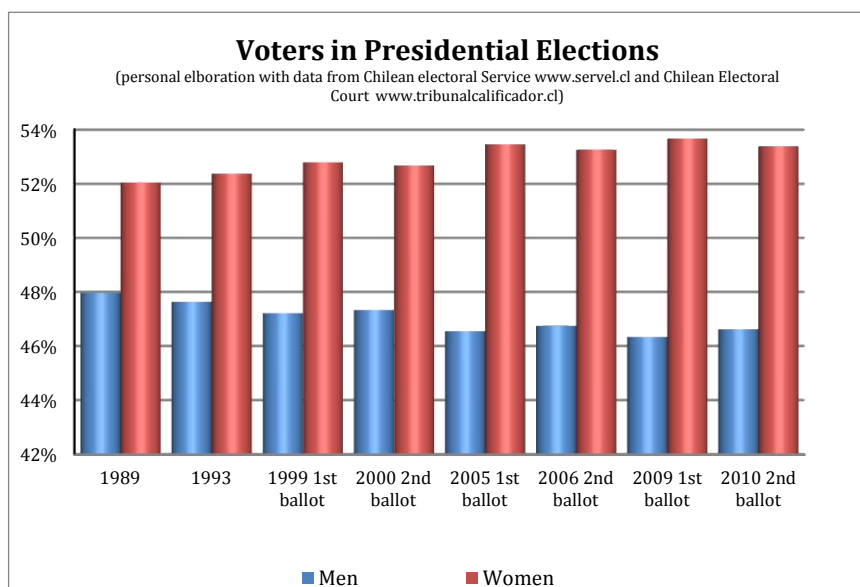
The 2000 election in which Ricardo Lagos was elected President of Chile, shows a remarkably high number of female null and blank votes when compared with male votes (see Figure 6:3). This dramatically changed in 2005 and 2006 when Michelle Bachelet ran as a presidential candidate. In the last presidential election in 2009 and 2010, female voters remained somewhat volatile, showing less political support to candidates in the second ballot, which contrasts with the opposite male electoral behaviour.

Figure 6:3

Null + Blank Votes in Presidential Elections
(personal elboration with data from Chilean electoral Service www.servel.cl and Chilean Electoral Court www.tribunalcalificador.cl)

Thus, these three issues: a) more female voters than male voters b) female voters' preferences for female candidates and c) female voters' preferences for right wing candidates were considered in electoral strategies. Since 2000, women in politics have had greater visibility and positioning as candidates, appointed officials and leaders of political parties. It is important to remember that the margin of difference between the presidential candidates Joaquin Lavin and Ricardo Lagos in the 1999 elections was 31.140 votes, that is, almost a difference of one vote in each polling table (source: Chilean National Electoral Service, www.servel.cl). Moreover, in both the first and the second ballot (1999 and 2000 elections)

female voters chose the right wing candidate. Instrumental use of female

political candidates as a political strategy is an issue that has been

discussed in other investigations (Franceschet, 2006).

There was a large consensus among interviewed politicians that the 2006

election of Michelle Bachelet as the first woman president in the country

took Chilean society and politics by surprise. The country historically

accustomed to male leaders, at that time wondered, with some amazement

and pride, about the moment when women moved so quickly in elite

politics. Most participants agree on this point:

> There was a jump in the political class in accepting a woman candidate and
> president, and she, in turn caused a jump in the balances, in the political
> apparatus, but this was not the product of a molecular process of
> modernization of the political class, but rather was a break. It is something
> new that is just being consolidated in the collective imagination, and as a
> result, it makes inequality more visible (Carlos Montes, personal
> communication, December 2, 2007).

> Basically, this woman president is a kind of mirage, because one would say,
> this is the last step of a great advancement no? no! (...) We gave the last step
> before giving a number of previous steps in the advancement of women in
> politics (...) (Carolina Tohá, personal communication, January 16, 2008).

The inequality and the number of previous steps that are still pending are

reflected in the low women's representation in elected and appointed

offices (Fernández Ramil, 2008; Franceschet, 2005; Hardy, 2005), but

mainly in the degree of power that women in politics have. This is

confirmed by various investigations (Urrejola & Gardella, 2009) and

participants:

> I think the role of women in political power continues being super
> precarious ... what is weak is women's political power... (Carolina Tohá,
> personal communication, January 16, 2008).

The meanings of female politicians in the twentieth first century

Despite the social and cultural changes Chile has experienced since 2000, it is still a traditional and conservative country (Franceschet, 2005; Hinzpeter & Lehmann, 1995). There is ample agreement in terms of considering Chile as a traditionalist and male chauvinist country, where there is ongoing discrimination against women, despite having had a female president. (Chuchryk, 1991; Fundacion-Chile21, 2005; Gray, 2003; Haas, 2005; Hardy, 2005; Hinzpeter & Lehmann, 1995; Lehman, 1995; Mlynarz & Muñoz, 2003; ONU, 2004; Sckolnik, 2003; Sernam, 2002; Urrejola & Gardella, 2009; Wenstein, 2009; Yáñez, 2009). This view is also shared by both male and female politicians who were interviewed for this thesis. Although new generations seem to have more flexible views on gender roles and equality between women and men, research has found in youth behaviour that women as subject to male interests and decisions are patterns that still prevails among new generations. Moreover, gender power relationships tend to ambiguous enough to make uncovered aggression towards women hard to be questioned by them. There is a lack of emotional resources to identify and resolve conflict between women and men (Corporación Domos, 2003, p. 13).

The same study observes that there have been changes in the functions assumed and expected by women and the way of conceiving the relationship between man-woman, greater degrees of freedom and a demand for equality. Simultaneously, representations of marriage, couples and family have not changed. Therefore, the ways in which degrees of freedom and respect for the rights of individuals, and possibilities for the development of a personal project can be maintained in these social relations have not been elaborated yet. This could explain the delay in the establishment of stable emotional relationships with higher degrees of commitment. This is particularly evident in women's discourse that make visible inevitable renouncements that the status of "mother and wife"

means to them (Corporación Domos, 2003, p. 89). For interviewed politicians the challenge is to ensure that the public discourse on gender equality is translated into the private sphere. At a rational level people accept gender equality, but in their everyday practices, that gender equality discourse is lost.

> There is still a public discourse of private practices and this discourse values and recognizes the equality of women, recognizing the need to promote women' inclusion, but private behaviour is not necessarily consistent with that (Gonzalo Duarte Leiva, personal communication, November 30, 2007).

According to interviewed politicians, the revaluation of the feminine has led to greater visibility of situations of injustice and violence against women. First, this is because contemporary women are less willing to accept forms of domination and oppression, which makes for greater potential confrontation between the men and women. Secondly, it is because increasingly there is less tolerance and social acceptance of gender inequality. Thus, for instance, the increase in complaints of domestic violence and the rise of femicide are the result of a rejection and intolerance of women to violence and oppression at home and on the other hand, an unbalanced reaction from men to gender changes that are occurring. Interviewees noted how those changes have been taking place in Chilean society:

> I think you have a substantive impact, the revaluation of the feminine. That a woman assumes the presidency of the republic is quite remarkable and has irradiated the most diverse of areas of national and social events, and the family relationship has changed, it has become more egalitarian, the inequality historically accepted today is not longer accepted (Gonzalo Duarte Leiva, personal communication, November 30, 2007).

> ...the access to certain positions of power, particularly to the presidency of the republic, has generated a different perspective and a greater awareness of gender equality, greater rejection of certain forms of machismo, culturally (...) of a more egalitarian view of things between men and women. I think that has progressed in Chile ... from the campaign (Michelle Bachelet) so far in an impressive manner, I see that, I see it. Before it was developing, but in fact it has given a jump.... the counter-reaction of this has been the idea that has emerged in relation to the President that women are not

equal than men, that has been emerging from sexist sectors (Carlos Montes, personal communication, December 2, 2007).

This shows that the impacts of Michelle Bachelet's election are contradictory and mixed. While it has brought greater awareness and acceptance of gender equality across society, it has also lead to the resurgence of the deepest forms of sexism. The relationship between the persistent machismo and the transformations in politics and gender relationships has created a complex dynamic in which actors often display contradictory and conflicting views regarding women's political power. Sudden and accelerated changes that have not gone along with alternative models of socialization have proved to be difficult to assimilate and generate perverse dynamics. For instance, critiques of now ex-President Michelle Bachelet, regardless of her support from the citizenship, were commonplace among supporters and opposition, which at that point was regarded as political femicide.

> I believe that with President Bachelet has emerged a very strong machismo that is affecting all women. It is not because the president is doing things differently from other authorities or other political roles, but by the mere fact of being female. So here the presidential election was because it was women's time and I think that was very well done from the standpoint of political marketing, as well picking up citizenship's demand for gender equality. But I think they (government) have continued to get benefits from that and now with the problems that have emerged in the country the responsibility has been blamed on her for being a woman, which was the main attribute in the election on which she and her team campaign worked (Marcelo Trivelli, personal communication, December 5, 2007).

> I think the president came to power with the help of many men who then abandoned her and neglected her, and questioned her and competed over who has more power. I mean her political ministers and that is the definition of femicide, the murder of a woman in the hands of a man who once said he loved her and that is the image assassination. Men who once helped her and told her they loved her, took her to power and then abandoned her. What she used was a term super hard and strong, perhaps exaggerated, but I think from the standpoint of what happens to women is quite correct (Lily Pérez, personal communication, December 4, 2007).

> I really believe and I have said repeatedly, I've never believed in the political femicide until I saw former President Lagos's attitude, and the attitude of former President Lagos is supported by his collaborators, does

> not emerge by itself, it is part of the *Concertación*' history. It was easier to kill Bachelet than killing Lagos, it is complicated, and then the woman is blamed and not the Concertación (Karla Rubilar, personal communication, December 11, 2007).

> ...from the beginning of Michelle Bachelet's presidency, politicians even within her own political party discounted her ability to lead the country (Ricardo Halabí, personal communication, November 14, 2007).

From previous quotes the strong tension that female political power generates can be observed. The case of former president Michelle Bachelet illustrates the difficulties that women in politics have to face when competing for power in a masculine dominated field such as politics. The changes that women in politics have brought to Chilean society, particularly in terms of gender equity, coexist with deeply ingrained machismo supported by a culture with a strong attachment to continuity and established conventions, moreover conservative because family values, gender roles and religious morals have remained relatively stable, starting to change only in recent years (Lehmann, 1995, 2002). In Chile a sexist culture still exists, which has been confirmed by various studies (Baldez, 2001; Corporación Domos, 2003; Franceschet, 2005; Montecino & Acuna, 1998; ONU, 2004; Stuven, 2003), by the existing legislation (Blofield & Haas, 2005; ONU, 2009) and by respondents:

> I have felt that for a long time, I recognize, there has been a recalcitrant male chauvinism... (Arturo Barrios, personal communication, November 16, 2007).

> I believe that we have an infinite machismo, an active machismo, and a passive machismo. I believe also that without realizing I can be part of it, as I am not surprised that the Indigenous are not represented, sometimes I can sit at a table with 20 men, and I do not realize that there are not women. Then this is a passive type of machismo (Marco Enríquez-Ominami, personal communication, November 26, 2007).

In this respect, according to the interviewees one of the main problems and difficulties that women have to face in politics is balancing their domestic life with their work, making domestic issues compatible with work. Issue that has been widely researched by scholars internationally (A.

Eagly & Carli, 2007; Kanter, 1976; Lawless, 2010; Moghadam & Senftovan, 2005; Zwingel, 2005). The difficulty in balancing home and family responsibilities with paid work is an extended issue in Chile, not just for women working in politics, but for all women who work outside of the home (Yáñez, 2009). In fact, one of the major issues currently faced by the Chilean economy is to increase the low number of women in the work force, which has remained around 40%, compared with 76% for male work force participation (see UNDP reports). One of the reasons that accounts for these figures is the traditional division of gender roles and separation between private and public life. As discussed at beginning of this chapter, the Chilean republican tradition determined a political system in which the subject of rights was implicitly masculine and as a result of that women's issues were largely neglected within politics and policy-making. Therefore, it is not surprising that government and state agencies present low levels of state feminism. In addition, partially due to the military regime and to the centrality of the Catholic Church in Chilean society, this phenomenon has been even more marked than elsewhere in Latin America. In relation to the public sector, one of the interviewees commented that:

> The public apparatus has all the sexist remnants of 200 years of republican history. In the public apparatus is where there is a stronger resistance... it is the political regressive, it is the bureaucracy, the verticality (Alejandro Navarro Brain, personal communication, January 22, 2008).

Chile has a strong family orientation. The 1980 Constitution asserts the family and not the individual, as the core of society (Alessandri R., Somarriva U, & Vodanovic H., 1998). The association woman-mother family is deeply rooted in the collective consciousness of Chilean society (Adimark, 2007, 2008; Mori, 2000). This is expressed in the social demands on women, in terms of being responsible for the family and home and in the central role women assume in relation to the family and home.

These generate a lot of tension in women's lives, which is also seen in
female politicians, as participants of this study expressed:

> ... On Sunday evening, we have a meeting with a minister... I go with three
> men of the directive board of my party, and three of them are calm because
> it does not matter that it's half past nine at night. They are going to get
> home, the children will be at home, for those that have children, or his wife
> is at home waiting for him so they can eat together. However, I am
> concerned that my husband wanted us to have dinner early... (Lily Pérez,
> personal communication, December 4, 2007).

> the majority of female politicians are widowed or separated. In the case of
> men, it has implications that this is a work (politics) 24/7. What happens is
> that I think for cultural reasons male parliamentarians' wives are more
> accustomed to the abandonment that this work brings to the family. On the
> contrary, female parliamentarians' husbands do not accept it. There is a
> cultural issue, the topic of children, in Chile we like it or not, it is a women's
> job, men generally do very little, then the responsibility at home, the
> children, etc. (Evelyn Matthei, personal communication, January 15, 2008).

> ...It is a theme that the woman is always pulled in more direction. If you see
> women in general, women who are in frontline positions are women with
> children grown up, many are grandmothers, or are in a stage of life when
> they can be less necessary for the rest of the family (Lily Pérez, personal
> communication, December 4, 2007).

The centrality of women in family life not only makes their incorporation
to the political world difficult, but also to the labour force, because the
time she must spend on her work competes with time that she should
devote to her family (Dussaillant, 2009; Flisfisch, 1990) and also because
in the political world the concept of family is not present. This is a very
central in Chilean politics, which in its rhetoric suggests that it protects
and safeguards the interests of the family. However, in its institutionality
the family has a low priority. All participants to a more or less degree
shared this view:

> ...It is a real feeling that in Chile family is highly valued, but is a bit
> schizophrenic in reality itself. It is schizophrenic, because nothing is
> organized, not work, not politically, nothing in the public sphere is
> organized to tune with working life ... with the family, that it is not. It is a lie
> that the family is at the heart of the definition of work policies, schedules,
> organizations, political parties (Adriana Muñoz D'Albora, personal
> communication, January 17, 2008).

> ... in the public service you leave your wife and children abandoned. I lost ten years of my children's lives for being in the public service. As a man you do not complain about it, but you felt the loss, without resentment. But for a woman it is more complicated, with the political structure and parties at night, seminars... (Ricardo Halabí, personal communication, November 14, 2007).

> There is tension between the world of the family and the political world, the family does not promote the political world, because in the political world there are many separations, many marriage breakdowns (Ricardo Halabí, personal communication, November 14, 2007).

The tension between family and work is a social issue that has been widely studied worldwide and in Chile when trying to explain low levels of female participation in the job market (Flisfisch, 1990; Hola & Pischedda, 1993; Mlynarz & Muñoz, 2003; Sckolnik, 2003). However, this seems to be even worse for women who work in politics since, according the interviewees, political work is very invasive, toxic and it does not respect schedules. As Chile is a male chauvinist country, this is much more difficult for women to handle than for men, who do not take care of the domestic responsibilities and feel justified in arriving home late. In the political world, understood also as a work place, this tension is seen most dramatically, due to schedules, dynamics, and styles of political activity. Their hours of functioning still show a masculine logic that favours the male political actor. There is an acknowledgement from both male and female politicians that men assume little responsibility for the home and family. Interviewees note that even opening up spaces for further women's political participation, such as affirmative action, quota laws, and incentives for female candidates to reconcile political and family life poses great difficulties for women. This is one of the main reasons given by respondents, in explaining the low numbers of female politicians. While acknowledging other aspects such as the electoral system, funds for campaign, and being nominated as candidate, as discussed in Chapter Five, this feature of the political functioning was the most emphasized as a barrier to women's approach to the political world.

> ...Politics is designed, built and is being developed by men, and the element, the family factor, home, commitment, is not incorporated because from the point of view of people's family commitment they are devastating organizations. The schedules are until one, two, and three in the morning (Adriana Muñoz D'Albora, personal communication, January 17, 2008).

> ... I suspect it is more difficult when you are a married woman to allow yourself to get back home as we (men) straight face, at 12 pm, as it was an acceptable schedule, because we do not assume responsibilities... (Marco Enríquez-Ominami, personal communication, November 26, 2007).

> Politics is an environment tailored to the needs of men, then it is very complex for women in politics due to its cultural dynamics, its schedules and its languages. So women in general find it difficult to accommodate to it, as much get incorporated into it as making it compatible with other aspects of their life (Carolina Tohá, personal communication, January 16, 2008).

From this argument emerges one of the central points I have attempted to make in this chapter, the relationship between time and political power. While financial constraints faced by women in politics have been widely acknowledged, issues of time and power have received less attention. As discussed in Chapter Two, Bourdieu regards free time and enough economic resources as conditions for the possibility of access to the political field (2000b). The schedules of political activity are directly related to the fact that politics is traditionally and continues to be a male dominated institution. Thus, politics demand a very masculine communication style and in turn determine highly extended schedules. Men according to respondents, talk more, say less, and are less accurate in their communications, which significantly extends the schedules of political activity. Participants identified this as one of the main differences between male and female politicians.

> ... One often sees women's difficulty and distress, and one sees that men delay the conversation. That is the style, to begin to address serious issues in the second hour having wasted the first. Because, well…there is nothing urgent to do at home, no children waiting for bedtime no check of their homework... So, the end that is generating is that women leave just before decisions are made or that decisions are taken immediately after women are gone... (Pepe Auth Stewart, personal communication, January 24, 2008).

> When you are in a meeting with men or mostly men, speeches extend and expand and extend unnecessarily, it is the practice of traditional politics, which to some extent reflects the communicational male culture... (Gonzalo Duarte Leiva, personal communication, November 30, 2007).

> Clearly, men give longer speeches than women do... talk more than women. I would not say they say more, but they talk more (Pepe Auth Stewart, personal communication, January 24, 2008).

In political meetings, where all or almost all members are men, the speeches and interventions are dilated and expanded. This reflects a traditional politics that is the result of a masculine communicational culture, which reflects a different relationship with the time. This can explain the male tendency to theorize in politics and female practical sense. In a traditional culture such as the Chilean one, men have little or no responsibility for domestic issues and caring for children, which implies that they do not have problems participating in politics until very late or in weekends.

The 'talking tough' is another feature of political communication that the participants noted, which has profound implications for the interactions that occur between male and female politicians and how women are perceived by their male peers.

> In politics talking tough is still valued... remnants of this masculine culture of talking tough remain... (Pepe Auth Stewart, personal communication, January 24, 2008).

> Suddenly Carolina Tohá, who is a brilliant woman ... makes a tough talking speech and everybody comments on how well she spoke. This was the first time she spoke tough, spoke as a man.... In my view that was not one of her best speeches because she was very angry... much more convincing with more tranquillity. Nevertheless, I noted that the speech was evaluated for its toughness. Because when I talk, I talk tough, when Ricardo talks sometimes he also talks tough. Girardi talk tough and when women talk they do not talk tough (Pepe Auth Stewart, personal communication, January 24, 2008).

Women in politics are forced to adopt a more masculine communication style in order to be heard. However, this is not always well received, by

either male or female politicians and women who talk tough are considered less feminine.

From the foregoing analysis, the characteristics of political activity show an objective and a subjective dimension, which correspond to the centrality of men in politics. The objective dimension refers to the political institutions, practices, schedules, and performance, while the subjective dimension is related to communication styles and values, that is, the political culture. Both dimensions determine the logic of political functioning as clearly masculine, which was widely acknowledged by participants in this research. However, there was much resistance from the interviewees in recognizing gender differences in political practices. Despite this, significant contrasts emerged from the interviewees' discourse.

On the issue of political communication, participants raised clear differences in relation to how male and females communicated their ideas. Masculine communication was described as indirect and vague, while female communication was depicted as concrete, direct, honest and consistent. At the same time, it was regarded as more efficient and confrontational because women in politics tend to be more specific and direct on the topics proposed. Furthermore, because women are more likely to say what they think, they are perceived as more confrontational.

> Women are more direct and less 'politically correct'. On one hand, women are extremely assertive in their communications and relationships, but on the other hand, they are less diplomatic at the time of confrontation and debate, and that makes the useful times of political activity increase significantly (Gonzalo Duarte Leiva, personal communication, November 30, 2007).

> In the field of politics, in the public sphere, women are much more concrete in their communication; they are not going to do big analysis, nor lucubrations. They are less speculative and that makes them much more specific... much more direct and therefore also often the communication is perceived as much more confrontational (Gonzalo Duarte Leiva, personal communication, November 30, 2007).

> ... There is less political manoeuvring from women, more openness and this
> in politics is seen as rudeness. There is a strange thing, that openness is
> seen as rudeness ... Also among men, but coming from a woman to a man is
> rude. Being direct is being rude. What corresponds is mucking around,
> going in circles.... Therefore, everyone is surprised and then they begin to
> fear her, because she is a character (the woman) that talks about thing
> frankly (Alejandro Navarro Brain, personal communication, January 22,
> 2008).

As was already noted, the more efficient and direct women's
communication style can be explained by demands of time. As working
time competes with the time that family and home demands from women,
female politicians have to maximise their working time, which leads them
to be more precise, less speculative and, more concrete. In the same way
that talking tough is a communication style that defines the majority of
male politicians but is rejected and criticized when it is adopted by female
politicians, the direct and concrete female politicians' communication style
is often time not accepted the by political class either.

> ... The political class is obviously more accustomed to the lyric than to the
> realization ... more to metaphor than numbers. Then when she (Michelle
> Bachelet) wanted to be clear in her commitments, the political class would
> say 'but if she is making a grocery list', eh? ... That was the phrase that
> circulated (Pepe Auth Stewart, personal communication, January 24, 2008).

> ... politics has no capacity to grasp more ways of speaking than the
> traditional ways that politics has had ... I mean, you can say we are starting
> to talk as if all politicians speak or try that politics speak in thousand ways
> and not in that way that all (male) politicians talk. (Carolina Tohá, personal
> communication, January 16, 2008).

> ... I think that still women are not heard the same as men... it is much harder
> for them to get their opinions taken into account, that their opinions have a
> strong influence... There is an issue with the language and styles, which
> means that the same ideas raised by a man and by a woman, go straight
> when a man say them. When a woman says them they are not understood,
> or only the marginal and not the important is understood, or there are
> more nuances, and all is understood wrong, not understood, the message
> does not remain, it hits less...(Carolina Tohá, personal communication,
> January 16, 2008).

According to respondents, the difficulties that women face in politics, in
terms of communication are due primarily to their recent incorporation in

political activity, which determines a shorter trajectory and a process of
socialization in political codes later in life.

> A visible feature by the citizenry is that in general women have a more
> accessible language and discourse. It is less codified in the political
> language. Therefore, it is closer or more diverse. I would say rather more
> diverse as it is the language that exists in society. I think that is quite visible
> from the point of view of people (Carolina Tohá, personal communication,
> January 16, 2008).

There is also a shared perception that greater involvement of women in
the private and family sphere determines experiences that make female
politicians generally display a greater empathy and ability to communicate
with ordinary people compared with men. Moreover, women in politics
tend to have a more practical and pragmatic sense of life. In this regard,
there is a perspective that asserts that women in politics broaden the
political horizon, not just to a rational reading of life, but also to an
emotional reading. It follows that women bring a more integrated view of
the human and social. On the other hand, some male politicians
interviewed observed a certain lack of capacities for complex,
philosophical abstraction by female politicians; that is, of being able to
make complex political analyses detached from the direct reality they try
to explain. This 'attribute' of some female politicians is mostly considered
an advantage in the sense that it allows concrete solutions and emphasis
in people. This view shows a prevalent gender essentialism, which was
often unnoticed by the interviewed participants. Thus, for instance several
politicians commented women are connected not only with social
problems but also with the way people experience these problems.

> ...Then, one suddenly falls in the judgment of saying this chick speaks from
> the stomach, as if she has a little political matrix, and suddenly this is what
> this society wants, that speaks to them not only from the formal and
> structural matrix of making politics...(Arturo Barrios, personal
> communication, November 16, 2007).

The 'socialization' or experiential specialization of most women translates
into the fact that female politicians are perceived as closer to and use

forms of language more accessible to voters. These qualities are not seen as only feminine; however, participants agree that they are more present and marked in female than in male politicians, though exceptions are acknowledged. Life experiences that mark women's life, like motherhood and the centrality of them in the family, would account for these features being regarded as typically feminine. The greater level of closeness that they achieve with voters would be one of the reasons that would explain why political parties, even reluctantly, have been forced to incorporate women into their agendas and programs.

> What merits or different things I see in women than in men who do politics, ... the closeness to the people (...) in short, the core from where politics begins (Arturo Barrios, personal communication, November 16, 2007).

> ... What I feel is that many people come to a deputy or senator with requests that would not dare to ask a man, with requests from the private sector. We are seen more as Moms, because there is greater closeness to a senator or deputy, of seeing her as like a mother... (Evelyn Matthei, personal communication, January 15, 2008).

Female politicians' discourse, because of their life experiences, tends to be much more diverse than male politicians as they tend to have perspectives that incorporate a wider range of factors.

> ... The topics they (female politicians) propose tend to be more diverse, not only functional to politics, but also related to their personal lives, emotions, and feelings (Carlos Montes, personal communication, December 2, 2007).

> ...While it is being said that women talk a lot more, the truth is they is that they talk much more on many topics than we (men) talk about... (Carlos Montes, personal communication, December 2, 2007).

There is a sentiment from some research participants that this feature of women in politics can disappear due to the pressures that the masculine style from the political system imposes on female politicians. This critique is observed in the fact that some female politicians have difficulty in recognizing what their distinctive qualities are in relation to male politicians, which lead them to adopting masculine styles.

> I am a leader while being a woman, because I think that in general women who are in leadership positions adopted many masculine leadership styles, shouting, very aggressive. The political world is very hard and is very dry, but I think there are women who look like men in politics, that makes me laugh. I remember at the Parliament as men raise their voice and hit the table to be heard and that is something very masculine. There are women who fall into that trap and act very similar and for me to display my femininity is very important, I like to be recognized as a woman, I do not want to be one of those men (Lily Pérez, personal communication, December 4, 2007).

Gender socialization processes are in contradiction with the pressures that the political system imposes. While women who triumph in politics often have to neglect their female attributes and become like men, male politicians assert that 'female qualities' are necessary and can make important contributions to politics. The masculization of female politicians could prevent women from being recognized as a singular actor in politics.

> ... There is a part of the woman that has sensitivity that looks close to the facts, that is not satisfied with giving only a generic explanation, but tries to see the processes themselves and see how to take action on those processes. Now, this is a challenge of politics in general. Women can make a strong contribution in that, but they may not make it... There are many women that go straightaways to the conflict. Women that have very totalizing views, that is, there are many women that have masculine traits, because the model of political relations is a masculine model (Carlos Montes, personal communication, December 2, 2007).

From the foregoing quotes it can be observed that gender views in interviewed politicians relate more to women and men's life experiences and social learning than to inherent qualities and attributes. This helps to understand two conflicting views on female politicians' masculinisation. One perspective sees this as a result of the historically low female participation in the political field. This has meant that female politicians are still in the process of recognizing their comparative advantages and developing a female political identity. In this process of identity formation female politicians tend to reproduce the predominant political identity, which is masculine. On the other hand, there is the view that claims that the one way for women to remain in power is to become more masculine.

> I think it is inevitable that women who get into politics have to become more aggressive, because it is a dispute. Power is not going to be given to women; they have to win it as well as men have won it. Because the man that has power is not because he is a man, but because he has moved away those in competition. For who wants to get into politics, it is a very ungrateful job because there is almost no consideration in the methods used to defeat the adversary, who may be from your same political tendency, from your same party. It can be your brother, but if you want that chair that is available for you in the Senate, you have to get rid of your competitors (Oscar Sepúlveda, personal communication, January 25, 2008).

The latest perspective presented help to understand why some female politicians adopt male-like or masculine behaviours when they have been in politics a long time. However, the greater female incorporation to politics can be also seen as a process of feminization of politics, motivated by voters' support for female candidates and increasing gender equity in elective and non- elective offices. While opinions are not conclusive, the masculinisation of female politicians or the feminization of politics remains a puzzle to solve.

There are certainly contradictory and conflictual views on gender roles and expectations on how women and men should interact in politics. The meanings and implications of female politicians in Chile display several levels of contradictions, which are the reflection of evolving conceptions of gender relationship and politics. Furthermore, the past, marked by tradition and conservative views is still ingrained in categories of analysis and is projected into the present. Politicians apply their experiences to understand and explain the present; however, those experiences are no longer relevant to account for current changes.

Another important point is the acknowledgement that women generally lack opportunities to display their potential. An observation in this regard is the fact that when women have the opportunity to display their capabilities they usually excel. Women must overcome so many barriers to access decision-making offices that once they reach those offices the rewards are very high. Therefore, women tend to display their full

potential, which ultimately ensures they are perceived as more efficient, organized and systematic. One of the interviewees stated that when he served as Mayor more than 50% of his municipal staff were women. In his view their capacities, dedication, and potential were of a high standard, an opinion that was shared by interviewed politicians. The following quotes reflect this idea:

> I would say that they are probably much more systematic with political work itself. Probably because they have to overcome many more obstacles, so the effort they have to develop normally makes them much more hard-working (Gonzalo Duarte Leiva, personal communication, November 30, 2007).

> If you give me the choice between two equally capable candidates, I prefer the woman. In my experience of governance the woman is occupying a space that she feels she is conquering, not conquered already, then they have performance that is a lot more… I do not want to say they (female politicians) are more responsible… but they strive more (Gonzalo Duarte Leiva, personal communication, November 30, 2007).

> In general, at municipal level I find them (female politicians) better, more consistent, solid, that is generally what I've known. In the local area, I would say they assumed the leading role, they took the responsibility. In the parliamentary level, they are few and are very different. In the field of ministries globally greater presence of their singularities is needed, that their own approach is more strongly felt. I feel that the model has been very strong and has absorbed them, especially at the level of ministers and secretaries; they have been absorbed by the masculine model of relations. Now in the relations within ministries, I do not dare to say, but in relation to the general ministry, of the superintendents, municipalities, in the paritary government the masculine model has been very strong (Carlos Montes, personal communication, December 2, 2007).

According to most interviewees, it is women's practical sense that explains why they are considered more systematic and organized. These distinctive aspects of women in politics seem to be invigorating and bringing energy to the political world. In line with the reflection above, another aspect that interviewees highlighted about female politicians was their capacity to link macro and micro phenomena simultaneously. That was explained as a female ability of being able to have a comprehensive view of social phenomena, but at the same time not forgetting particularities. An

interesting analysis on this reflection mentioned by some interviewees is related to the Marxist paradigm that dominated most of the political ideology during the 20th century. The Marxist ideology emphasised the essence of the phenomena rather than the phenomena themselves. Thus, political analysis tended to reduce the phenomena to their abstract dimensions, neglecting the phenomena itself. It seems to be that female politicians do not fall into this essentialism so characteristic of the left wing. Deputy Carlos Montes illustrates this idea below:

> I see the micro linked to views, to contents and to reflections, not just styles, which translates into a style. The female analysis combines factors in other ways. So in the old Marxism the analysis was reduced to the essence of things and phenomena were forgotten and that was very characteristic of who was more abstract, and that was very masculine, was not looking at the facts as occurring, but to go to the essence of the facts and forget the facts, which is itself a kind of Marxism which was prevalent in Chile for many years. I am looking at that sort of thing, which is not only related to analytical instruments, but by weighing the different areas, the analysis of the essence of the phenomenon was not always wrong, but it was partial, always thought that was fundamentally most totalizing (Carlos Montes, personal communication, December 2, 2007).

An important aspect of political leadership is the ability to be in tune with the citizenry. As already discussed, male politicians believe female politicians are more likely to have a greater ability to be in touch with people. The argument underneath this view is that women are better in dealing with emotions and feeling. In order to connect with others, emotional skills are necessary, which is particularly relevant in leadership. More male politicians are recognizing the importance of incorporating emotional skills in their political performance, as a mean of getting greater support from citizenry. There is agreement among participants that all political parties to a greater or lesser degree promote female participation. However, this would be mostly due to the flourishing of female leadership. Therefore, it could end up as fad that fades away.

Interviewed politicians argue that in politics there is little room for emotional involvement, which helps to understand why it seems distant

from voters. Most of the participants asserted that there is a lack of enthusiasm and involvement; therefore, there is a great need for incorporating emotions in politics. For many women emotionality needs to be part of politics for making politics more humane, which takes over the problems, pain and suffering of people. In this fashion, there is a shared view that women's experience in social relationships and emotional bonds would be a great contribution to politics. Despite the difficulties that being in politics brings to women, the low numbers of women in politics, the distinctly masculine environment (which is described as hostile, brutal and conflictual) both by female and male politicians themselves note that female politicians are slowly affecting the dynamics of politics. Participants noted:

> The incorporation of the affective is clearly another variable that women incorporated in public activity. [That can be seen] in relation to their peers and in relation to citizenry. It is obvious that the emotion starts being a variable that exists in the game of the power; feelings start to have a space. I always remember a few years ago the impact when Ricardo Lagos apologized. It was a political upheaval in the country, which acknowledged that they (government) had made a mistake. That is the male reading of the expression of weakness. When Aylwin was moved during the speech resulting from the Rettig Report[28] and apologized to Chile that was a shock. That today does not impact anybody, I think that is largely because the feelings and emotions begin to play a role in political communication and that is a result of the incorporation of women, I have no doubt (Gonzalo Duarte Leiva, personal communication, November 30, 2007).

> ... I have seen in this last time ... the subject of emotion ... also it have been more and more visible in men, but it is something that comes from the point of view of women ... and that men's style towards the unions, the workers and the militants, hard, rigid, so flat is changing and being less present. I think this has a contribution that comes particularly from us women (Angela Rifo, personal communication, December 4, 2007).

Even though the emotionality of women is affecting Chilean politics, the impact of the participation of women in politics is still very marginal. The small number of women participating in political activity, the presence of contradictory cultural patterns such as the centrality of the family and lack

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[28] The National Commission for Truth and Reconciliation Report release in 1991

of social policies to achieve a balance between family and work can help to understand why this occurs. Finally, the political difficulties of adapting to cultural changes and redefinitions of gender that are occurring within Chilean society are also part of the problem.

> ... If one were to say what would be best for what you wanted, women could make a difference, but while we are a minority, it is very difficult to make a difference. I do not see any feasibility of how to say women will emerge and will have to do things differently. Except, on the side of the collective strength among women, women learn little by little to develop mutual solidarity (Carolina Tohá, personal communication, January 16, 2008).

So-called female 'attributes' or 'qualities' in politics reflects somehow the difficulties that women face in politics, which determines first, that women work harder and prepare more, and second, that the women who enter politics normally have to have a higher profile to be accepted and recognized. Female politicians not only have to face the difficulties of reconciling family with political activity but also the features of political language, which are more subtle aspects of politics, but not less important. Political language, the functioning times of political activity, their dynamics, style, and their structures determine an institutional political culture that still sees women in politics with scepticism.

> There is still a super sexist view of what women come to do into the political world... men are sexist, they have a hard time in ceding part of the power they are absolutely overwhelmed by women entering the political world (Andrea Zondek, personal communication, December 17, 2007).

> Women are still like strange creatures in this thing... There is less respect for woman's role, her value as a female politician is less respected. Women remain as a woman before a parliamentarian, before a political leader, before than... she is a woman and later comes everything else, and a woman with what it means to be a woman in Chilean society. That is, they are treated, they are seen and heard as women, and that has a strong impact, and I think it is extremely strong, extremely strong (Carolina Tohá, personal communication, January 16, 2008).

The inclusion of women in Chilean society is considered as part of social, economic, and cultural changes that the country has experienced in recent decades.

> ...I feel that there is recognition of women in this society, that recognition did not exist before...This has been a phenomenon of inclusion, identity, of conversations about power. I do not mean the issue of the minister or deputy, or president, but a conversation about power in different areas and spaces; I believe that there have been changes in society, in the identity of the women, that is, in the leading role of them, in short (Arturo Barrios, personal communication, November 16, 2007).

Among all the changes in Chilean society, women's advancement in positions of power is regarded as the most progressive. However, it should be remembered that this has been an achievement made mostly by women. It has not been the result of an act of male generosity of opening spaces to women, but of the continuing female insistence and fight for equal participation.

> ...We need to give the triumph to the woman, it has not been by chance, nor that men have said okay all right come (women) and the whole issue, no way, you see (Arturo Barrios, personal communication, November 16, 2007).

Concluding remarks

The process of incorporating women into political activity in Chile has attracted attention only in recent years; therefore, it is still in development. However, women's political participation and representation offers today not only a great opportunity to reflect on the progress that women have had in different areas of society, but also to reflect on political practices as deeply gendered. The difficulties and obstacles experienced by women in political life are directly related to their experiences and to the formation of a female view of politics that does not seek to give up what it owns, but to be part of political activity from their own subjectivity.

In this Chapter, I have discussed the conflicting views and perceptions surrounding Michelle Bachelet's triumph as the first female president in a traditionally male dominated society. The paradoxes are evident. Gendered views on women's role and expectations of political behaviour mark their success as well as the perils they face in political life. Issues of

time and political timing allow seeing the political practice as inherently bounded by strategies to remain in power. In these, the progress of gender relations are blurred by a complex set of practices, institutions, and perceptions.

Conclusions

In the end, I return to Bohn's postulate that 'the most fundamental things cannot be defined', but can only be unfolded (Bohm & Factor, 1987). In this research, through the analysis of in-depth interviews with female and male politicians I undertook the task of unfolding the meanings and implications of female politicians in Chile. Inspired by Bourdieu's perspective on the social world, I embarked on a project to historicise the processes and events that led female politicians to become central actors in the Chilean politics of the twenty-first century. Although I am a native Chilean, the fact that I carried out the majority of this research from abroad (New Zealand) certainly contributed to shaping the approaches taken in this study.

In Chapter One, I sought to unfold the concept of representation, particularly political representation. Starting with Pitkin's approximation of the subject, I showed that political representation has been at the centre of meanings and implications of women in politics. While descriptive and substantive representation has dominated the emphasis in the existing literature on women in politics, formal and symbolic representation have received less attention.

Women's political representation as a worldwide phenomenon has meant that the context in which women take part in representational politics becomes more diverse and complex to analyse. Political systems and political culture thus become central issues to consider when global diversity is acknowledged. Chile as case study offers a singular combination of factors that makes the process of unfolding the meaning and implications of women in politics challenging. From the perspective of formal representation, Chile has a hyper-presidentialist democracy, a weak congress, a majoritarian electoral system and an authoritarian political culture. This unique system is a residual product of the

dictatorship period Chile had from 1973 to 1990. In terms of descriptive representation, the level of female representation in politics is below the regional and international average of female political representation. In terms of substantive representation, weak state feminism has meant little progress on women's rights and advancements. Finally, symbolic representation has been rather vague and the female constituency has been co-opted by electoral promises that remain unrealized. In spite of this context of adversity for women in politics, Michelle Bachelet was elected as the first female president in 2006 and with her, attention and acknowledgement of female politicians in Chile has increased.

Symbolic representation is central to understanding Michelle Bachelet's political success. Unprecedented in Chilean politics, Bachelet's motto 'woman's time encompassed and addressed not only historical debts of political denial of women's interests and needs, but also gave hope to wide sectors of society that felt marginalized and excluded from political projects. Her other motto 'government by the people' gathered the profound demands for further democracy and participation. Thus, her symbolic representation was built on a synthesis of claims of gender equality, inclusion, and democratic advancement. The concepts I used here to complement Pitkin's approach on symbolic representation helped to illuminate this case. For instance, Saward's representative claim highlights the fact that through claims and counterclaims, audiences are invoked or perhaps constituted. In Chile, this can be seen on several levels: for example, articulating the notion of female politicians, 'government by the people' and 'women's time'. The other side of this claim-making can be illustrated by Althusser's notion of interpellation, that is, subjects are hailed into these new positions, in which notions of democracy, inclusion and gender equality are reformulated, giving place to a new sense of self in terms of representation. Bourdieu's notion of *rites of institution* and *political alienation* helps to further illustrate the symbol-making process.

Bachelet's own biography and trajectory form part of her political success. Her personal and family tragedy during the dictatorship period, her exile and return, her status as a single parent, and her approachability were symbols of how attuned she was with large sectors of Chilean society. The effects of the rites of institutions can be seen in her political and strategic trajectory, marked by her appointment as Minister of Defence. Due to her personal and family history, this appointment had a double symbolism: first, as a female in a typically male dominated role, and second, as a victim who suffered family tragedy at the hands of the military dictatorship. On the other hand, in her political trajectory, the betrayal and disbelief of a significant part of the political elite contrasted with the support and regard from the citizenry, who witnessed the debacle of the *Concertación* in a fight of electoral egos. It is not difficult to understand why in spite of her immense popularity and support, the era of the *Concertación* ended with Bachelet's government. The political alienation she faced within the political elite that 'supported' her was a measure of the political alienation that large parts of Chilean society were no longer willing to accept.

Bachelet's government and the acknowledgement of female politicians in Chile as key actors in the national political development, redefined representational practices and the concept of democracy. The symbolic message was that political elites are no untouchable; that is, if women can get into politics, other sectors of society can too. This not only improves the general perception of democracy, but also makes citizens more aware of undemocratic practices, and therefore they demand more democracy. With this perspective in mind, it was not surprising that Bachelet's style of leadership, participatory and consultative made more evident the poor democratic culture of the dominant political class that not only questioned her more progressive style of leadership, but also resisted and criticized it. The fate of the Concertación was already announced by her electoral triumph in 2006, when Chilean society made clear their willingness for

change and a different type of leadership. However, in spite of the fact that Bachelet's government ended with unprecedented support and success, in January of 2010, Chilean society expressed its desire for further change. The 2010 presidential election of Piñera should thus not be read as the triumph of the right wing, but as the advancement of a society that is moving forward in their demands for democracy and alternation of the coalitions in government. First and foremost, this shows the advancement of a society that hopes to leave in the past the profound antagonisms and authoritarian culture inherited from the dictatorship period.

The deep understanding of social phenomena requires suspending our understandings of reality and escaping common sense interpretations that seduce us in our attempts to explain a phenomenon of great complexity. As the title of this thesis signals, unfolding the meanings and implications of female politicians means not defining a single truth, a single meaning or offering the last word. In fact, it asserts a plurality of multidimensional narratives, discourses and realities that interact and intersect to reveal an order. In it, practices have double meanings: the explicit and manifest, along with the hidden, concealed and implicit which are unfolded in time. The meanings and implications of female politicians in Chile are today certainly different from those I reflected on at the beginning of this project. However, the regularities and continuities make it possible to observe and appreciate the changes occurring. The relational ontology developed by Bourdieu and implemented into practical research through reflexive epistemology were central perspectives in the analysis that drove this research (as discussed in Chapters Two and Chapter Three). The temporal dimension of social phenomena within fields' dynamics of allows understanding politics as a reality that evolves under logics of their own trajectory. Therefore, to address the meanings and implications of female politicians demanded an immersion into the trajectory of Chilean politics and in particular those of women in politics. The genesis and development

of political institutions and political culture permits an understanding of the existing contradictions between how politics is and how Chilean society hoped it would be.

Bourdieuian concepts, such as habitus, doxa, field, capital, strategy and symbolic dominations, help to illuminate the underlying conflicts and contradictions of Chilean politics unfolded in this research. For instance, understanding political capital essentially as a reputational capital can explain how female politicians find strong support among electors and contribute to the improvement of the image of politics and democracy. The persistent gendered views on women and male behaviour along with perceptions of women as 'less political' and with lower levels of 'political ambition' account for this reputational capital. Phenomena like this are better understood if considerations are given to the changing spectrum of politics, at times in which the economy undergoes a process of depolitization and citizens become more critical and suspicious of politicians. On the other hand, the political field as a space of representation subordinates the needs and interests of individuals to the electoral campaigns, which are increasingly fed by the spectacle of media. Here habitus and field provide important analytical insights to the Chilean case. For Chilean society, the return to democracy after the end of the dictatorship period set a subjective horizon of expectations that did not find a correlate in the objective reality. The transition to democracy did not occur as a rupture within the existing order, but as a continuation under a legitimate rule. The deepening of the neoliberal model (instituted by Pinochet regime) during the post-authoritarian period has meant a subordination of politics to the market and to the international flows of the economy. This has led to a progressive shrinking of the scope of action of the political field and political actors, and to an increasing disaffection of Chilean society towards politics. This combined with the mediatisation of the production of collective discourses has not only debilitated the role of

politics in Chilean society, but also its prestige. This has been particularly visible in the Congress, which reduced in its capacity to control the legislative process (as a result of the 1980 Constitution) has contributed to increasing political apathy and low levels of political participation.

The above point has had important consequences. It has opened up spaces of mismatch between the political field and the habitus, which has lead to visible changes within Chilean politics. From the findings of this research, I identified two significant mismatches. The first is internal to the political field; it occurs because the market has taken over spaces that in the past were reserved for politics. Political actors (the professionals) and institutions no longer face politics as a space where the collective is defined, but as an epiphenomenon of the economy. The second mismatch occurs externally – that is, between the clients (society) and the political field – because the horizon of individual and collective expectations in which politics functioned in the past, articulating social wellbeing has been defeated by the objective reality, in which the political field and the state shrink, submitting politics to the flows of the market. Here occurs what Bourdieu defines as *hysteresis* (1977a) that is, the lag between subjective expectations and objectives structures. In Chile, this lag has generated profound levels of political disaffection and disapproval in society and a deterioration of the political capital within the political field. This state of affairs in Chile is the context that allows for articulating the meanings and implications of female politicians that transcend the current scope of politics. Furthermore, it provides narratives with collective signification, that is, gender. Narratives about gender equality allow for articulating from the political field a message that blends the social sense of politics – that still remains as a part of the collective subjective expectations – with the message of economic growth and development, which is part of the neoliberal ideology. The premises are that a country cannot be developed if gender inequality persists and country cannot be completely democratic

if women are absent from politics. Democracy and development thus go hand in hand.

The internal and external mismatch between objective and subjective structures, between habitus and field, helps to explain the introduction of a strategy – embodied in Michelle Bachelet's elections – that unintentionally redefines the meanings and implications of women in politics. First, because it breaks with the *doxic* state of politics as a space reserved only for the exercise of masculine political power. Secondly, because it provides predictability to institutional and political performance. That is, the apprehensions and questioning that Bachelet's election provoked at the beginning in ample sectors of both the coalition in office and in the opposition, gradually dissipated. This gave space to an institutional continuity that showed that it can be enhanced through policy making by the political leader in office, but it cannot be destroyed. This sense of predictably of Chilean politics is also enhanced by the sustained depolitization of the economy. From this analysis, the meanings and implications of female politicians can be understood as a step forward in the professionalization of politics. The incorporation of a more diverse repertoire of experiences, styles, ways of communicating and emphasis in the exercise of political leadership that most female politicians had brought politics has challenged the masculine design of the Chilean political field and shown its flaws. From a standpoint that sees political activity as a profession, the low levels of women in Chilean politics can be better understood if working conditions are considered. For instance, Chile has one of the longest working schedules and one of the lowest rates of productivity in the world (Merino, 2004), a diagnosis that also applies to the political field. This can help to explain women's under representation in both politics and the work force in general.

Considering the previous discussion, the 2010 presidential election in Chile is a paradigmatic example of this move towards the

'professionalization of politics'. The triumph of moderate right wing, Sebastian Piñera, a multimillionaire, can be read as the hope that his success as a businessperson translates into political success, with the result of allowing the country to succeed in its long-standing pursuit of economic development.

It is important to understand the meanings and implications of women in Chilean politics in the context of debates for further democratization within a society increasingly depoliticized and dominated by neoliberal ideologies. This provides complementary insights to the issues that mainstream literature on women in politics has studied, which are mostly structured around topics of political participation and representation. For instance, observing women's descriptive and substantive representation in Chile, led to the analysis of the complex architecture of political institutions and culture. This goes beyond women's access to political power, and reflects Chilean political institutions deeply rooted in exclusionary, conservative and authoritarian political elites. Evidently, women's access to political power collapses in the nature of the distribution of political power, but it is not necessarily determined by it, as exemplified by the case of Michelle Bachelet or other female Chilean politicians. However, the nature of the distribution of political power clearly generates asymmetric patterns of access to politics.

In the Chilean case, considering the immobility of current political structures and the difficulties political elites face for further democracy, the necessary changes to reach a more democratic and inclusive society are likely to be triggered by market forces and in the pursuit of greater economic growth and social development. The eventual structural political changes will take place due to the pressure for improvement in economic performance, which as I have argued in this thesis, became the measure of the evaluation of politics in a neoliberal economy. In this sense, I suggest that the link between democracy and economic development will be the

driving force of change in the Chilean political system. Therefore, in order to achieve further growth and economic develop, greater space for participation and representation – not only for women, but also to for whole society – will be essential demands that Chilean politics will have to meet. With this, Chilean politics would prevent further loss of political power, as well as the growing depolitization of Chilean society.

Appendix I: List of interviewees

Ana Bell Jara, Vice-president of Women ANEF, National Counsellor CUT	Nov 9, 2007
Ricardo Halabí, Ex Director INDAP and FOSIS, Educational Advisor, Ministry of Education	Nov 14, 2007
Arturo Barrios, Member Political Commission PS Sub-secretary Ministry of Culture, candidate to deputy	Nov 16, 2007
Marco Enríquez-Ominami, ex Deputy PS, ex Presidential Candidate 2009	Nov 26, 2007
Gonzalo Duarte Leiva, Deputy DC	Nov 30, 2007
Carlos Montes , Deputy PPD	Dec 2, 2007
Ángela Rifo, National Treasurer CUT, Executive Member ANEF	Dec 4, 2007
Lily Pérez San Martín, ex Deputy, ex National Secretary RN, Senator RN	Dec 4, 2007
Marcelo Trivelli, ex Vice-President DC, Ex Metropolitan Intendant	Dec 5, 2007
Karla Rubilar, Deputy RN*	Dec 11, 2007
Andrea Zondek, Ex director FONADI, Ex Director Agency for International Cooperation of Chile	Dec 17, 2007
Ximena Valcarse B, ex Deputy RN*	Dec 19, 2007
Carmen Gloria Allende, Vice-President of Women, PS	Dec 21, 2007
Carmen Lazo, Ex Depute, Member Political Commission, PS (Deceased)	Dec 26, 2007
Teresa Valdés, Researcher CEDEM	Dec 27, 2007
Alfonso Vargas Lyng, ex Major, ex Deputy RN, Sub-Secretary for the Armed Forces*	Jan 03, 2008
Francisco Chauan, Ex Deputy RN, Senator RN	Jan 07, 2008
Paulina Reinoso Rios , Ex National Counsellor DC , Health Manager, Chilean Association of Municipalities	Jan 07, 2008
Denise Pascal Allende, Deputy PS*	Jan 03, 2008

Francisco Encina, Deputy PS*	Jan 08, 2008
Ximena Vidal Lazaro, Deputy PPD*	Jan 09, 2008
Cristian Monckeberg, Deputy RN*	Jan 09, 2008
M. Antonieta Saa Diaz, Deputy PPD*	Jan 09, 2008
Clemira Pacheco, Deputy PS*	Jan 10, 2008
Alejandra Faulbaun, Vice-President PRS	Jan 14, 2008
Adriana Muñoz D'Albora, Deputy PPD*	Jan 17, 2008
Evelyn Mattei, Senator UDI*	Jan 15, 2008
Carolina Goic, Deputy DC*	Jan 15, 2008
Carolina Tohá, Deputy PPD*	Jan 16, 2008
Ivan Moreira Barros, Deputy UDI*	Jan 17, 2008
M. de los Ángeles Fernández, Director Foundation Chile 21	Jan 21, 2008
Alejandro Navarro Brain, Senator PS*	Jan 22, 2008
Pepe Auth Stewart, President PPD	Jan 24, 2008
Oscar Sepúlveda P., Editor Revista Cosas, writer	Jan 25, 2008

Note: All interviews were conducted in Santiago except as indicated
* Interview conducted in Valparaiso

Appendix II: Segmentation for Interviews Analysis

By Political orientation, sex and age

Political Orientation	Young Adults Women	Young Adult Men	Adult Women	Adult Men	Total
Right Wing	Lily Pérez Karla Rubilar Ximena Valcarse	Francisco Chauan Christian Monckeberg	Evelyn Mattei	Alfonso Vargas Ivan Moreira	8
Centre	Paulina Reinoso Carolina Goic Carolina Tohá		Andrea Zondek Teresa Valdés Ximena Vidal Alejandra Faulbaun María de los Ángeles Fernández Adriana Muñoz María Antonieta Saa	Gonzalo Duarte Ricardo Halabí Marcelo Trivelli Pepe Auth Oscar Sepulveda	16
Left		Arturo Barrios Marco Enríquez-Ominami	Ana Bell Jara Ángela Rifo Carmen Gloria Allende Carmen Lazo Denise Pascal Clemira Pacheco	Francisco Encina Alejandro Navarro Carlos Montes	11
Total	6	4	14	10	

By Political Party and sex

Political Party	Women	Men	Total
UDI (2)	Evelyn Mattei	Ivan Moreira	2
RN (6)	Lily Pérez Karla Rubilar Ximena Valcarse	Francisco Chauan Christian Monckeberg Alfonso Vargas	6
DC (5)	Paulina Reinoso Carolina Goic Andrea Zondek Teresa Valdes	Gonzalo Duarte Ricardo Halabí Marcelo Trivelli Oscar Sepulveda	8
PPD (5)	Carolina Tohá Ximena Vidal Adriana Muñoz María Antonieta Saa María de los Ángeles Fernández	Pepe Auth	6
PRS (1)	Alejandra Faulbaun		1
PS (9)	Carmen Gloria Allende Carmen Lazo Denise Pascal Clemira Pacheco	Arturo Barrios Marco Enríquez-Ominami Francisco Encina Alejandro Navarro Carlos Montes	9
PC (2)	Ana Bell Jara Ángela Rifo		2
Total	20	14	34

Appendix III: Questionnaire Guide

Pauta de entrevista para mujeres en política

- Opiniones personales

    1. ¿Personalmente que le opinión tiene que las mujeres estén en
        política?

    2. ¿Cuáles han sido las principales dificultades que has tenido que
        enfrentar en el mundo político? Preguntar por ejemplos de
        acuerdo a su trayectoria.

    3. ¿Cuáles son tus principales intereses en política? Preguntar por
        ejemplos de acuerdo a su trayectoria.

    4. ¿Cuál o cuáles crees que son las razones de la creciente
        participación de mujeres en política?

    5. ¿Cuáles crees que son los efectos o consecuencias que ha traído
        para la sociedad la presencia visible de mujeres en política?

- Liderazgo femenino en política

    6. ¿Cuál es el tipo de liderazgo que tu quieres transmitir como
        política?

- Valores sociales asociados con la participación de mujeres en política

    7. ¿Cuáles son los valores que tú asocias a la participación de las
        mujeres en política?

- Impacto social de la participación de las mujeres en política

    8. ¿Cuál consideras que ha sido el impacto de la participación de
        las mujeres en política en la sociedad chilena?

    9. ¿Cómo ves tú el futuro de las mujeres en política?

- Cambios en la participación de las mujeres en política desde el retorno
  a la democracia

    10. ¿Cómo crees que la participación de las mujeres en política ha
         cambiado desde el retorno a la democracia?

- Factores que han influido en la participación de las mujeres en política

11. ¿Cuáles consideras que han sido los principales factores que han influenciado la actual participación de mujeres en política a nivel nacional?

12. ¿Y a nivel internacional?

- Opinión acerca del desempeño de las mujeres en política

    13. ¿Cuáles es percepción del desempeño de las mujeres en política en………?

    Partidos Políticos

    Congreso

    Ministerios

    Gobiernos locales/alcaldías

    Otros

- Sectores de la sociedad que impiden o promueven la participación de las mujeres en política

    14. ¿Cuáles crees que son los sectores de la sociedad que impiden y/o promueven la participación de las mujeres en política? ¿Por qué? y ¿Cómo?

    La izquierda/la derecha

    El sistema educacional

    La familia

    Sindicatos

    La Iglesia

    Las clases sociales (baja, media, alta)

    Grupos etéreos (jóvenes/jóvenes adultos/adultos – generaciones)

    Otros

- El campo político en Chile y la participación de las mujeres en política

    15. ¿Cómo crees que la dinámica del campo político afecta la participación de las mujeres en política?

16. ¿Crees que el sistema binominal tiene algún efecto en la participación de las mujeres en políticas en términos de alianzas estratégicas y solidaridades políticas?

- Desafíos para el futuro respecto de la participación de las mujeres en política

17. ¿Cuáles crees que son los desafíos que las mujeres en política deben enfrentar?

- Acción Afirmativa

18. ¿Cuál es tu opinión sobre las acciones afirmativas como forma de incrementar la participación de las mujeres en política?

- Cuotas de genero

19. ¿Cuál es tu opinión acerca de las cuotas de género en la representación política?

- Gobierno paritario

20. ¿Cuál es tu opinión acerca de un gobierno paritario?

- Percepción de las mujeres en política

21. ¿Cómo crees tú que las mujeres en política son percibidas en la sociedad Chilena?

22. ¿Cómo crees tú que las políticas son percibidas por los políticos?

23. ¿Cómo percibes tú la participación de las mujeres en política?

Pauta de entrevista para hombres en política y otros

- Opiniones personales

1. Personalmente, ¿qué te parecen las mujeres estén en política?

2. ¿Cuáles crees tú que son las principales dificultades que las mujeres tienen que enfrentar en el mundo político?

3. ¿Cuáles son tus principales intereses en política? Preguntar por ejemplos de acuerdo a su trayectoria.

4. ¿Cuál o cuáles crees tú que son las razones de la creciente participación de mujeres en política?

5. ¿Cuales crees tú que son los efectos o consecuencias que ha traído para la sociedad la presencia visible de mujeres en política?

- Liderazgo femenino en política

    6. ¿Cuál es el tipo de liderazgo que tu consideras que transmiten las mujeres en política?

    Valores sociales asociados con la participación de mujeres en política

    7. ¿Cuáles son los valores que tú asocias a la participación de las mujeres en política?

- Impacto social de la participación de las mujeres en política

    8. ¿Cuál consideras tú que ha sido el impacto de la participación de las mujeres en política en la sociedad chilena?

    9. ¿Cómo vez tu el futuro de las mujeres en política?

- Cambios en la participación de las mujeres en política desde el retorno a la democracia

    10. ¿Cómo crees tú que la participación de las mujeres en política ha cambiado desde el retorno a la democracia?

- Factores que han influido en la participación de las mujeres en política

    11. ¿Cuales consideras tu que han sido los principales factores que han influenciado la actual participación de mujeres en política a nivel nacional?

    12. ¿Y a nivel internacional?

- Opinión acerca del desempeño de las mujeres en política

    13. ¿Cuales es tu percepción del desempeño de las mujeres en política en………?

    Partidos Políticos

    Congreso

    Ministerios

    Gobiernos locales/alcaldías

    Otros

- Sectores de la sociedad que impiden o promueven la participación de las mujeres en política
    14. ¿Cuales crees tú que son los sectores de la sociedad que impiden y/o promueven la participación de las mujeres en política? ¿Por qué? y ¿Cómo?

    La izquierda/la derecha

    El sistema educacional

    La familia

    Sindicatos

    La Iglesia

    Las clases sociales (baja, media, alta)

    Grupos etéreos (jóvenes/jóvenes adultos/adultos – generaciones)

    Otros
- El campo político en Chile y la participación de las mujeres en política
    15. ¿Cómo crees tú que la dinámica del campo político afecta la participación de las mujeres en política?
    16. ¿Crees tú que el sistema binominal tiene algún efecto en la participación de las mujeres en políticas en términos de alianzas estratégicas y solidaridades políticas?
- Desafíos para el futuro respecto de la participación de las mujeres en política
    17. ¿Cuales crees tú que son los desafíos que las mujeres en política deben enfrentar?
- Acción Afirmativa
    18. ¿Cuál es tu opinión sobre las acciones afirmativas como forma de incrementar la participación de las mujeres en política?
- Cuotas de genero
    19. ¿Cuál es tu opinión acerca de las cuotas de género en la representación política?
- Gobierno paritario

20. ¿Cuál es tu opinión acerca de un gobierno paritario?

- Percepción de las mujeres en política

21. ¿Cómo crees tú que las mujeres en política son percibidas en la sociedad Chilena?

22. ¿Cómo percibes tú la participación de las mujeres en política?

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