

# Chilean Strategic Culture

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FINDINGS REPORT

**FIU**

Applied Research Center

Latin American and Caribbean Center

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FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

## The FIU-SOUTHCOM Academic Partnership

### Strategic Cultures Assessments

Florida International University's Applied Research Center (FIU ARC), in collaboration with the United States Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) and FIU's Latin American and Caribbean Center (LACC), has recently formed the FIU-SOUTHCOM Academic Partnership. The partnership entails FIU providing the highest quality research-based knowledge to further explicative understanding of the political, strategic, and cultural dimensions of state behavior and foreign policy. This goal will be accomplished by employing a Strategic Culture approach. The initial phase of Strategic Culture assessments consists of a year-long research program that focuses on developing a standard analytical framework to identify and assess the Strategic Culture of ten Latin American countries. FIU will facilitate professional presentations of the following ten countries over the course of one year: Venezuela, Cuba, Haiti, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Bolivia, Chile, and Argentina. In addition, a findings report on the impact of Islam and Muslims within Latin America will be produced.

The overarching purpose of the project is two-fold: to generate a rich and dynamic base of knowledge pertaining to the political, social, and strategic factors that influence state behavior; and to contribute to SOUTHCOM's Socio-Cultural Dynamics (SCD) Program. Utilizing the notion of Strategic Culture, SOUTHCOM has commissioned FIU ARC to conduct country studies in order to explain how states comprehend, interpret, and implement national security policy *vis-à-vis* the international system.

SOUTHCOM defines Strategic Culture as follows: "the combination of internal and external influences and experiences—geographic, historical, cultural, economic, political and military—that shape and influence the way a country understands its relationship to the rest of the world, and how a state will behave in the international community." FIU will identify and expound upon the strategic and cultural factors that inform the rationale behind the perceptions and behavior of select states in the present political and security climate by analyzing demography, history, regional customs, traditions, belief systems, and other cultural and historical influences that have contributed to the development of a particular country's current security rationale and interpretation of national security.

To meet the stated goals, FIU ARC will host a series of professional workshops in Miami. These workshops bring subject matter experts from all over the US and Latin America together to explore and discuss a country's specific history, geography, culture, economic, political, and military climates *vis-à-vis* Strategic Culture. At the conclusion of each workshop, FIU publishes a findings report, which is presented at SOUTHCOM.

The following Chilean Strategic Culture Findings Report, authored by Dr. Felix E. Martin is the product of a working group held in Miami on March 4, 2010, which included 13 prominent academic and private sector experts in Chilean history, culture, economics, politics, and military affairs.

The views expressed in this findings report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the US Government, US Department of Defense, US Southern Command, FIU-ARC, or Florida International University.

On behalf of FIU-ARC, we wish to acknowledge and thank all of the participants for their contributions, which made the Chilean Strategic Culture workshop a tremendous success.

*Preliminary Report*

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## Executive Summary

### *Origins of Chilean Strategic Culture*

- Given unique national formative historical experiences, nation-building and state-consolidation processes, popular social ethos, national elites' socio-economic interests, physical and geographical imperatives, and the institutional memory, posture, and interests of the armed forces, a particular pattern or national style pertaining to the use of force evolves distinctively in individual countries. Consequently, joining together rational utilitarian planning in a competitive context (*i.e.*, strategy) with a distinctive national pattern or style about the use of force (*i.e.*, culture) produces the synthetic and complex notion of Strategic Culture.
- Military rule and dictatorship have been anomalies in Chile's political history. With the exception of a few minor interludes of several weeks or few months at a time of military rule, Chile remained a procedural democracy for most of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.
- Judging from the significant socio-political and economic changes registered in the country since 1990, the end of military rule is, indeed, a watershed in the historical evolution of the country as well as in its strategic culture. Hence, in order to understand the continuity and change in Chile's Strategic Culture one has to focus on Chile's historical evolution since its independence and on the process of change since the advent of democracy in 1990.
- Chile's national identity reveals both continuity and change through the different historical narratives that combine, on the one hand, the value of inherited traditions and historical events, and, on the other, openness to external influences, changes and legitimate aspirations regarding present realities and future goals, and collective projects. The effects linked to the use of force in different periods of Chile's history have influenced the formation of its national identity.
- From independence to the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Chile became a regional actor in a sub-regional system that was defined by two axis of "perpendicular tensions" between the main regional countries (Chile-Peru in the Pacific and Argentina-Brazil in the Atlantic), and later as two rival "diagonal alliances" (that is, Chile-Brazil and Argentina-Peru) that structured a continental system of balance of power, defining the modern South American security dilemmas. It originated a stable but precarious regime of *negative peace*, based on military domination and deterrence as well as on general agreements and

an increasingly sophisticated culture of alternative mechanisms of mediation and arbitration to settle disputes.

- In the realm of geo-politics, *The Book of National Defense 2010* links Chile's land surface with national defense objectives. The country's mainland encompasses an area of 755,776 km<sup>2</sup>. This great continental space presents different geographical features and a wide range of natural resources. Territory is, therefore, an essential factor in defining the national defense objectives.

#### *Keepers of Chilean Strategic Culture*

- The armed forces have been well kept and highly regarded under each successive democratic government since 1990. This has rendered the military a formidable force by regional standards. It enjoys internal institutional cohesion, social support, and political legitimacy. It is clear that the democratic transition emphasized the reopening of Chile to the world and the region.
- The strategic culture of military and civilian governing elites during the Pinochet years was characterized by an enhanced sense that the country was on its own in facing threats from its neighbors as well as from international communism and domestic subversion. The financial panic and huge drop in GDP that occurred in 1982-1983, and the ensuing public protests against the regime that were violently countered by calling out the army to suppress protest only reinforced this outlook. Chile behaved like a besieged state, with an insular, and garrison mentality.
- The simultaneous processes of regional demilitarization, democratization, economic liberalization, and economic integration created the conditions for a new regional agenda between Chile and its neighbors. Clearly, Chile's democratic leaders have benefited from the new regional strategic environment, prompted by the advent of democracy in Bolivia and Peru, and, especially, by the Argentine-Brazilian strategic rapprochement and integration process. These were promoted in 1985 by Presidents Raúl Alfonsín and José Sarney (of Argentina and Brazil, respectively), and have ultimately led to a new integrationist effort in Latin American with the creation of Mercosur in 1991.
- In Chile the ruling elites who advance and preserve Chilean strategic culture are primarily those linked to the state's governing bodies. Starting with the President of the Republic, Ministers, Congress, and, certainly, including the prominent role of the armed forces. National defense is considered "an affair of state" and, therefore, it means that it is accepted as such across governmental bodies. The strategic objectives of deterrence, international cooperation and development of cooperation are widely accepted by political elites.

### *Continuity and Change in Chilean Strategic Culture*

- Strategically speaking, the simultaneous processes of regional democratization, economic liberalization, and re-launching of regional integration laid the foundations for an additional shift in Chilean foreign and defense policies (since 1830). One of the most important historical factors in this regard was the end of the Argentine-Brazilian nuclear competition and the opening of their economic integration process in 1991.
- Critical to the change in strategic culture was the simultaneous liberalization process in the region, which created a true, albeit non-optimal, opportunity to re-launch integration efforts and to strengthen the levels of regional interdependence for the first time in the region's history since the independence movement. Democratization was crucial because it brought to political office a network of political leaders who shared an antimilitarist and integrationist perspective. These developments opened an opportunity for Chile to escape its traditional security dilemma for the first time in modern history, entering a new, successful sub-regional game of "cooperation under the security dilemma."
- At a global level, Chile's new strategic thinking signifies the abandonment of its traditional relative passivity toward disarmament and non-proliferation issues. Thus, Chile began to play an active role in supporting the post-Cold War regimes of disarmament and non-proliferation. This was partially done as a way to consolidate the shift in nuclear policies in Brazil and Argentina. At a regional level, Chile entered regional democratic fora and the sub-regional processes of integration. Between 1996 and 2010, the economic exchange between Chile and the members of Mercosur skyrocketed, demonstrating that cooperation was a powerful strategy to support the state's development and security.
- Chile's values in the national security realm are generally more in line with defensive than with offensive postures: defense is regarded as an indispensable condition to achieve human development, which means that it is perceived not as an intrinsic end in and of itself but as a means to an end; defense is also one of the conditions to obtaining national security; diplomacy and international cooperation also secure the national interest through the principle of preventive security; and national security goals and objectives are to be achieved by organic functions of the state as defined by the country's legal constitutional framework.
- Respect for the integrity and rights of individuals and humanity is as much an element of national security considerations as the preservation of any strategic forces or the capacity of the nation to defend its sovereignty against foreign threats.

- Chile's national defense forces must maintain the necessary capacity to deter any external threat or aggression that might impede the fulfillment of its national interests, including the preservation of human, economic, and ecological developments.
- Despite the important regional accomplishments in the economic, political, and security spheres, there has been a series of negative setbacks recently. Although regional integration and economic interdependence has grown, as exemplified by the launching of Mercosur in 1991, there has been increasing difficulty to institutionally consolidate democratic processes and regional institutions. Consequently, regional integration has confronted increasing difficulties, causing a level of regional polarization and a marked deterioration of the security environment at several levels.
- The advances between Chile and Peru have been also uneven. Despite some important and promising efforts, there is still a long road to a genuine and sustainable strategic change in bilateral relations. Chilean-Peruvian bilateral relations reached important advances from 1990 to 1999. Both countries agreed to overcome the "pending issues" of the Treaty of 1929, and initiated a strategic dialogue on continental ballistic missiles, similar to the Chilean-Argentine agreement. Notwithstanding these advances in Chilean-Peruvian bilateral relations, in recent years Peru has insisted on revising the bilateral maritime border with Chile, which, according to Chile, was settled several decades ago.
- Also, Chilean-Bolivian relations have maintained their traditional structural feature of conflict and confrontation, given Bolivia's insistent claim to have access to the Pacific Ocean. In 2009, however, there was a significant improvement in relations as Presidents Evo Morales and Michelle Bachelet (of Bolivia and Chile, respectively) agreed to work out a solution to Bolivia's access to the Pacific. It remains to be seen how the administration of Sebastian Piñera handles this delicate historical conflict.
- In sum, two hundred years after independence, Chile appears to be undergoing a dual transition in its strategic culture. First, it is moving away from a traditional security dilemma posture of relative power competition to a cooperative approach of regional association and integration. Second, Chile is engaged in a process to globalize its strategic interests. The post-1990 generation of leaders and decision-makers has understood that Chile's immediate wellbeing, stability, security, and peace depend largely on stable and secure global conditions. Further, they have understood that this condition is a common good depending on contributions from the entire international community. Hence, Chile has abandoned its isolationist stance, based on a traditional garrison-state mentality, and has moved actively towards international involvement in multilateral security missions.

## Introduction

In the immediate aftermath of a devastating earthquake, Chile completed another peaceful and democratic governmental transition since the return to democracy in 1990. In the midst of tremors and aftershocks, the reins of government passed from one democratically elected president to another. During the transition, the images of national leaders and foreign dignitaries looking up to the ceiling of the ornate chamber, with swinging chandeliers overhead threatening their personal safety, embodies the various challenges to Chile's democracy over the last four decades. The unsettling imagery and the successful conclusion of the ceremony symbolized the resolve of the Chilean people. Undoubtedly, the subtext summed up a powerful message: Neither the forces of nature, nor two decades of a brutal military dictatorship, could shatter the democratic process in Chile. The ceremony and the elections were certainly evocative of the willpower of a very proud, strong, resilient and democratic people.

Four times since 1990 the government has changed hands in Chile. This time the presidential sash passed from a socialist, part of the *Concertación* coalition that has governed in Chile since 1990, to a member of the conservative Coalition for Change, yet the military institution, despite its protagonist role during the dictatorship, appears to have survived intact (and in a manner only seen in Chile). For every other regional neighbor who experienced the oppressive effect of the military boot, the prestige, respect, legitimacy, and strength of the military institution has diminished somewhat, as in the case in Brazil, or significantly, as in the case in Argentina. Yet, Chile's armed forces appear to remain socially accepted, are strong by regional standards, and viewed as a legitimate force in the new democracy.

The evident institutional resilience and socio-political legitimacy of the military in Chile beg the following questions: What is the significance of the armed forces in the country's history? How ingrained are the armed forces in Chilean society and culture? What is the ultimate role of the military in defining, advancing, projecting, and protecting Chile's national interests? Is Chile's Strategic Culture essentially offensive or defensive? If it has oscillated between extreme offensive and defensive postures, what internal and external factors caused the fluctuations? What is the present state of Chile's strategic use of force? Are there any discernable patterns of continuity or change in the culture that purportedly influenced the strategic behavior of Chile? And what does the present suggest about the possible future use of force by the Chilean state? With these questions in mind, this Findings Report will examine the use of force in Chile's internal and external political and power projections.

The Report elucidates the use of force in Chile's external relations and internal affairs. It starts from the assumption that countries interact in a highly competitive environment where other state-actors, with their respective utility functions, rationally plan for ways to advance and

protect their national interests. This is the essence of national strategy.<sup>1</sup> Given, however, unique national formative historical experiences, nation-building and state-consolidation processes, popular social ethos, national elites' socio-economic interests, physical and geographical imperatives, and the institutional memory, posture, and interests of the armed forces, a particular pattern or national style pertaining to the use of force evolves distinctively in individual countries. Consequently, joining together rational utilitarian planning in a competitive context (*i.e.*, strategy) with a distinctive national pattern or style about the use of force (*i.e.*, culture) produces the synthetic and complex notion of Strategic Culture.

In the course of this General Findings Report the author will cull more specific analyses on various aspects of Chile's Strategic Culture garnered from the Chilean Strategic Culture workshop. Accordingly, the first section of the Report will examine the foundational historical elements of Chile's Strategic Culture. The second section will examine the role of social elites and societal elements in the formation and evolution of Chile's Strategic Culture. The third section will examine the impact of geopolitics. The fourth section will discuss economic factors or geo-economics. The fifth section will discuss the evolution of the military and perceptions of security. The report will close with a brief conclusion about major findings in the workshop held in Miami, Florida on March 4, 2010 as well as from additional specific reports commissioned to supplement those derived from the seminar.

## **Historical Foundations of Chile's Strategic Culture**

Two sets of conclusions regarding the historical evolution of Chile and its strategic culture emerged from the workshop participants' findings reports and the subsequently commissioned studies by several country experts. While there is general agreement among the various studies regarding the determinant role of the formative and evolutionary historical experiences of Chile on its strategic culture,<sup>2</sup> there is a cluster of country experts who identify quite clearly a marked change in Chile's Strategic Culture since its return to democratic government in 1990.<sup>3</sup> As Joseph Tulchin pointedly explains,

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<sup>1</sup> See the definition of strategy advanced in Félix E. Martín and Marvin L. Astrada, "Argentine Strategic Culture General Findings Report," Florida International University, Applied Research Center, Miami, FL, April 13, 2010, pp. 2 – 3.

<sup>2</sup> Arturo Contreras, "La Cultura Estratégica Chilena: Criterios y Fundamentos Históricos," Florida International University, Applied Research Center, April 15, 2010; John Griffiths-Spielman, "Cultura Estratégica Chilena: Criterios y Fundamentos Históricos, Militares, y Educacionales," Florida International University, Applied Research Center, April 15, 2010; and Javier Urbina Paredes, "Cultura Estratégica en Chile: Una Perspectiva Militar," Florida International University, Applied Research Center, April 15, 2010.

<sup>3</sup> Joseph Tulchin, "The Strategic Culture of Chile," Florida International University, Applied Research Center, April 15, 2010; Deborah Norden, "The Armed Forces and Strategic Culture in Chile," Applied Research Center, April 15, 2010; Marcos Robledo, "The Chilean Strategic Culture: Evolution, Actors, Institutions, and Dilemmas," Florida International University, Applied Research Center, April 15, 2010; and Mladen Yopo Herrera and Jaime Baeza Freer, "Cultura Estratégica de Chile: Un Anclaje Híbrido que Tiene Identidad Propia," Florida International University, Applied Research Center, April 15, 2010.

The principal significance of the Chilean case in the multi-country study of Strategic Culture that FIU/ARC has undertaken over the past year is that strategic culture can change. Chile may be the only case studied in which significant change has occurred. A nation is not necessarily the prisoner of its history, its political culture, or its geography [...] the change has occurred over the past twenty years and has been propelled and facilitated by a combination of an historic consensus among members of the country's leadership during the transition to democracy with exogenous factors to which that leadership was particularly sensitive which appeared to hold out the promise of significant advantage to be gained by the changes they proposed.

In the course of the twenty years since the end of the Pinochet dictatorship, that combination of factors led to a series of policy decisions by a succession of democratically elected governments [that] gradually has changed Chilean strategic doctrine. Given that the concept of strategic culture insists on the dimension of time, we must admit that it is still too soon to state with confidence that there is a new strategic culture in Chile. However, it is my view that the net result of the many decisions taken over the past twenty years is a new national consensus [that], if it lasts, can be called a new strategic culture.<sup>4</sup>

Military rule and dictatorship have been anomalies in Chile's political history. With the exception of a few minor interludes of several weeks or few months at a time of military rule, Chile remained a procedural democracy for most of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. In fact, since 1932 the only major glitch in the democratic process of this country was the military dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet from 1973 – 1989. Based on the analyses of several country experts in this study, it appears that the sixteen-year period of military dictatorship was not only quite traumatic but was also very sobering and formative, causing a maturing process in the social psyche of the Chilean people. Judging from the significant socio-political and economic changes registered in the country since 1990, the end of military rule is, indeed, a watershed in the historical evolution of the country as well as in its strategic culture. Hence, in order to understand the continuity and change in Chile's Strategic Culture one has to focus on Chile's historical evolution since its independence and on the process of change since the advent of democracy in 1990.

Contreras and Robledo have organized the historical evolution of Chile, and its concomitant influence on the country's strategic culture, into several different periods;<sup>5</sup> however, for the sake of clarity and brevity, this General Findings Report breaks down the history of Chile and its relation to its strategic culture into five basic periods: One period that predates independence, and four periods since the end of 1810. The purpose here is to highlight important elements in each of these periods that directly or indirectly contributed to the development of

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<sup>4</sup> Joseph Tulchin, "The Strategic Culture of Chile," Florida International University, Applied Research Center, April 15, 2010, pp. 2- 3.

<sup>5</sup> Contreras, "La Cultura Estratégica Chilena: Criterios y Fundamentos Históricos," p. 2; and Robledo, "The Chilean Strategic Culture: Evolution, Actors, Institutions, and Dilemmas," p. 2.

Chile's sense of national identity, social ethos, state-formation, territorial expansion and consolidation, and the evolution of the armed forces and their relation to the people and the state. In short, the objective is to identify foundational historical elements in the formation and evolution of the Strategic Culture of Chile since its independence from Spain to the present.

A basic assumption in this ten-country study project is that “culture” provides the context for strategy and, in turn, national strategy integrates and projects elements of the country's general culture and identity, evolved from historical experiences, geo-political and geo-economic imperatives, socio-cultural and ideational ethos, security issues and military influence.<sup>6</sup> From this vantage point, one can argue that, in its request to fulfill its mission, the armed forces engage in two primary duties: First, the armed forces are traditionally used in Chile for the protection of the people, the national territory, and sovereignty. Second, the armed forces are used as the purveyor or custodian of the values, principles, and norms upon which the national defense and identity are predicated on. In this sense, based on their principal and specific functions, the military institution is expected to meet external security conditions, necessary for the life of a politically organized nation, as well as contribute to the nation's development and the attendant preservation and enhancement of the national cultural heritage.<sup>7</sup>

In January 2010, the Chilean government approved the *National Defense Book 2010*. It is the third version and this time not only presents the national defense policy, but also addresses broader issues related to the problems and challenges of defense and homeland security. In this sense we can affirm that this document provides elements that constitute the present strategic culture of Chile.<sup>8</sup>

### *History and the Origin of Chile's Strategic Culture*

Undoubtedly, in the case of Chile, one of the key factors providing the foundational element of its strategic culture is the collective or shared narrative of the inception and evolution of its national history. In fact, the history of Chile or its timeline is often presented in a way where interstate conflicts and wars are the historic hallmarks of its national evolution. Accordingly, the narrative starts off in 1543, with the war of Arauco, supported by the Spanish conquerors against the Araucanian Indians, followed by the War of Independence (1813-1826), the first war against the Confederacy of Peru and Bolivia (1837-1839), the war against Spain (1865-1866), the War of the Pacific, again, against Peru and Bolivia (1879-1883), and the multiple militarized border disputes with Argentina that never led to all-out war. Particularly, the 1900 and 1978 militarized disputes, ultimately, were resolved through mediation and negotiation. The history of Chile is indeed epic, because it highlights the triumphant result of military

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<sup>6</sup> Colin Gray, *Modern Strategy, Strategic Culture as Context* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 129 – 151.

<sup>7</sup> Urbina Paredes, “Cultura Estratégica en Chile: Una Perspectiva Militar.”

<sup>8</sup> Ministerio de Defensa Nacional, *Libro de la Defensa Nacional de Chile 2010*. en <http://www.defensa.cl/contenidos/libro-de-la-defensa-nacional-de-chile-2010>.

campaigns and efforts by the people at every opportunity to achieve victory. This common view of the past is what begins to shape, since 1839, subsequent to the victory in the Battle of Yungay and during the war against the Peru-Bolivia Confederation, the national identity of Chile. This is important to understand to grasp other national features such as the degree of homogeneity, national unity, and the absence of regional relevance to the formation of the Chilean state.<sup>9</sup>

Chile's national identity reveals both continuity and change through the different historical narratives that combine, on the one hand, the value of inherited traditions and historical events, and, on the other, openness to external influences, changes and legitimate aspirations regarding present realities and future goals, and collective projects. The effects linked to the use of force in different periods of Chile's history have influenced the formation of its national identity. Political scientists, historians, sociologists, anthropologists, and, in general, scholars who study Chilean society agree that the interstate conflicts and wars, beyond the human tragedy involved, explains some of the features that contributed to the formation of Chile as a unique, politically organized national unity.<sup>10</sup> Accordingly, one of the most publicized elements contributing to the formation of the Chilean "character" is the crossbreeding between wild and aboriginal warriors, who fought a long struggle, and a type of Spanish conquistador, who knowingly came to Chile to face a formidable enemy. Hence, it is the origin of the assertion that Chile is comprised of a people with an aptitude or predisposition for war.<sup>11</sup>

### *The Colonial Period (1543-1810)*

In fact, several Chilean as well as international scholars identified the prevalence of a "military race"<sup>12</sup> in Chile. As mentioned above, this argument maintains that Chile's strong militaristic tradition and martial national character were partially influenced by the pre-independence struggle, dating back to the first battles against the Arauca native people in 1543. According to one report, the heavy influence of a warrior character in Chilean society was corroborated in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by the number of regional wars, revolutions, and state-and territorial-consolidation campaigns which, ultimately, influenced directly the political and institutional evolution of the country. From its early inception, the territorial consolidation of Chile in formerly colonial spaces was characterized by the military hallmark in which the presence of the army is both a permanent dimension of identity as well as an embodiment of the institutional struggle for establishing a (Chilean) national identity. In this sense the most significant sociological development during colonial times was the emergence of a "new race" as the result of the Spanish-Mapuche war that lasted close to 348 years. Also, as a direct by-product

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<sup>9</sup> Urbina Paredes, "Cultura Estratégica en Chile: Una Perspectiva Militar."

<sup>10</sup> Ministerio de Defensa Nacional, *Libro de la Defensa Nacional de Chile 2010*, p.69.

<sup>11</sup> Urbina Paredes, "Cultura Estratégica en Chile: Una Perspectiva Militar."

<sup>12</sup> Ildaricio Tellez, *Una Raza Militar*, (Santiago, Chile: Sud Americana Press, 1944); and Nicolás Palacios, *Raza Chilena* (1922) (Curicó: Editorial Colchagua, 1988); and William Sutter, *The Andean Tragedy* (ABC Press. 2007) as cited in Contreras, "La Cultura Estratégica Chilena: Criterios y Fundamentos Históricos," p. 2; and Robledo, "The Chilean Strategic Culture: Evolution, Actors, Institutions, and Dilemmas," p. 2.

of this war, the characters of both native and European warriors were fused to produce the Creole military character. Such a sociological fusion eventually characterized Chilean society, the bases of the newly sovereign nation, and the early traits of its strategic culture.

During the pre-independence period, the political development of Chile was closely linked to the military presence in the government. Also, the army was engaged in the administrative, economic, and social evolution of Chile. This involvement led to several concrete accomplishments in the political and administrative organization of the colonial space:

- Establishment of the open forum as the community's representative body for dealing with administrative, political, economic, and social tasks.
- Political and administrative division of the kingdom's possession into two administrative entities (Santiago and Concepción) to address political, economic, judicial and military issues.
- The foundation of important cities within the future national territory, that is: Santiago, La Serena, Concepción, La Imperial, Valdivia, Villarrica, Los Confines, Osorno, Cañete, Castro, Chillán, San Felipe, Los Ángeles, Cauquenes, Talca, San Fernando, Melipilla, Rancagua, Curicó, Copiapó, Quirihue, Coelemu, La Florida, Casablanca, Petorca, La Ligua, Talcahuano, San José de Maipú, Linares, and Parra.
- Construction of a chain of military forts around the future boundaries of the Chilean state. These forts would eventually be instrumental in the process of internal territorial consolidation of the new sovereign state.

### *From Independence to the 1830's Civil War*

The second period begins subsequent to the War of Independence in 1810 and ends with the 1830's Civil War. This period was characterized by international cooperation among neighboring states as the result of the international alliance developed among the Latin American founding fathers, by the prevalent revolutionary ideology of the time, and by the necessity to achieve independence from Spain.<sup>13</sup>

Chile's strategic agenda changed suddenly after the country's independence. The strategic objective of the Chilean people changed from the pacification of the Mapuche people to the war against the Spanish Empire. This was followed by an initial period of cooperation among neighboring leaders and newly created republics in the Southern Cone. Cooperation was necessary to consolidate liberation and independence from Spain. Accordingly, an alliance was forged among members of the Mason Lodges in London and Cadiz before independence. Under the leadership of the Venezuelan Francisco de Miranda, the Lautarina Lodge gathered the most important regional leaders of the independence movement in South America: Simón Bolívar

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<sup>13</sup> Robledo, *op. cit.*, pp. 3 - 4.

from Venezuela; José de San Martín from Argentina; and Bernardo O'Higgins from Chile, among many others from several newly found republics.

Despite their different political projects, San Martín, who led the fight for Argentina's independence, formed an alliance with O'Higgins from Chile and successfully defeated Spain in Chile in 1817. Subsequently, they organized a Chilean-Argentine expedition that ultimately liberated Peru from Spain. Coordinating with Bolívar, who was leading the independence campaign in Venezuela, Colombia, and Ecuador, the South American armies finally pierced the Spanish Imperial army in the battle of Ayacucho in 1824. This was the deciding battle that ousted Spain from South America, consolidating, in this manner, the independence movement that begun earlier in Ecuador and México in 1809.

The initial era of cooperation among South Americans had, therefore, enormous strategic consequences for the region: First, it promoted a strong network of national leaders who were strongly linked to the republican ideological trends of their era; second, national leaders also shared an outlook about the insertion of their region into the international arena; and third, they developed an effective approach to coordinate their actions at a national and regional level. Evidently, these were important political achievements that have eluded Latin American leaders for most of Latin America's independent history. In sum, the immediate post-independence period ushered in a very clear, distinctive strategic culture of regional cooperation in Chile and its regional neighbors. It is conceivable, perhaps, that this level of interstate cooperation was precipitated by the fact that the newly independent republics faced a common, strong, extra-regional adversary. In the face of a common and formidable rival, weaker states, according to balance of power theory, will naturally join forces together in a military alliance to balance the power of the strong rival and guarantee their security and survival. This experience demonstrated the importance of regional military cooperation against extra-continental powers and, possibly, against internal political threats as was demonstrated a century and a half later by the formulation, development, and implementation of the Condor Plan among military dictatorships in the Southern Cone.

#### *State Formation and Consolidation, 1830-1990*

The state-formation and consolidation period begins roughly after the end of the 1830 civil war and lasts approximately until the return to democracy in 1990—one hundred and sixty years of struggles and challenges that culminated with the reestablishment of democracy in Chile. The civil war was sparked by the political crisis that evolved from internal divisions and jealousy in the politico-military alliance responsible for ousting Spain from the region. Once Spain departed the scene, new regional competition and animosity ensued among neighboring states vying for territorial expansion and consolidation. In Chile, it endured from 1830 until 1990. This is a time when it is difficult to distinguish different strategies, yet it is possible to identify Chile as a country with a clear, defensive, deterrent posture or as a besieged fortress.

Once independence and territorial consolidation were accomplished in the late 1820s, Chile engaged progressively in regional competition with its neighbors. Clearly, the years of pragmatic cooperation with its regional neighbors began to fade away. In sum, Chilean Strategic Culture shifted from cooperation to competition. This was effectuated by a number of factors. First, political differences among the leaders of the independence movement arose early, weakening the personal ties among the *caudillos*. Also, almost all of the region's states entered long processes of internal stability during which the generation of *Padres de la Patria* (Founding Fathers) was challenged by local elites, causing the emergence of a new domestic order. Incidentally, this was case in Chile, where Bernardo O'Higgins, Chile's founding father and military and political leader, became an outsider *vis-à-vis* the Chilean Creole elite. He had to ultimately seek political asylum in Peru in 1823. By the mid-1820s the country had entered a prolonged period of political instability and civil war between liberal federalists and conservative centralists that lasted until 1830.<sup>14</sup>

The end of the Chilean civil war in 1830 ushered in a period of political stability and institutional building known as the *República Conservadora* (Conservative Republic). This period lasted well into the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. A number of factors and variables evolved during this period that influenced the consolidation of Chile's mainstream strategic culture. It is, therefore, important at this point to examine these variables and how they affected the main elements of Chile's new strategic culture, one that would last well into the transition to democracy in 1990.

The state-building process that emerged from the *República Conservadora* redefined Chile's balance of power with its regional neighbors. Several undefined territorial areas became the focus of Chile's expansion and territorial consolidation. The three main foci of Chile's territorial consolidation during this period were, first, the War against the Peruvian-Bolivian Confederation (1836-1839), followed by the War of the Pacific, also against Peru and Bolivia (1879-1883), and, third, the emergence of Argentina as a regional power and its ensuing rivalry with Chile. The latter rivalry led to a naval arms race and a bilateral crisis resolved only through crisis management with the *Pactos de Mayo* in 1902. By this time Chile had reached its almost definitive, modern political geography, even though geo-politics would remain a matter of continuous heated and dangerous disputes with its neighbors for years to come. It is this geography that sets Chile's most fundamental strategic agenda that, ultimately, has dominated its strategic thinking.

Throughout most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the logic of interstate rivalry was deeply ingrained in the national strategic culture of Chile. This thinking was institutionalized in a network of bilateral treaties with Argentina, Bolivia, and Peru. Further, this dynamic was reinforced by a number of regional events like, for example, the rise of Argentina as a regional power and its concomitant competition against its two closest neighbors, that is, Chile and Brazil. Intra-regional

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<sup>14</sup> This section relies on the report by Marcos Robledo, *op. cit.*, pp. 4-6.

competition influenced Chile to perceive itself as a besieged state by Argentina, Bolivia, and Peru. National self-perception played a major role in defining Chile's strategic thinking and culture throughout the rest of the 20th century.

Chile was also one of the most stable and prosperous republics in the region in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Even for a short period of time, between the War of the Pacific and the rise of Argentina as a regional power, it became the most influential state of the South American Pacific Rim, with a clear foreign policy agenda. Prior to independence and during the decades that followed it Chile became a close partner of the United Kingdom. Britain was seen not only as the common enemy of Spain, but was also seen by the Chileans as the new world economic and military power. The Chileans saw a close association with Great Britain as effective and advantageous. First, it would help Chile in its regional balance of power and, second, it would contain the emerging and spreading influence of the United States.<sup>15</sup>

In sum, from independence to the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Chile became a regional actor in a sub-regional system that was defined by two axis of "perpendicular tensions" between the main regional countries (Chile-Peru in the Pacific and Argentina-Brazil in the Atlantic), and later as two rival "diagonal alliances" (that is, Chile-Brazil and Argentina-Peru) that structured a continental system of balance of power, defining the modern Southern American security dilemmas.<sup>16</sup> It originated a stable but precarious regime of *negative peace*, based on military domination and deterrence as well as on general agreements and an increasingly sophisticated culture of alternative mechanisms of mediation and arbitration to settle disputes.

The rise of Germany as a European power at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and its political, economic and ideational influence played an important role in South America, where German influence rivaled that of the United Kingdom. For example, the Prussian Army played an important role in the processes of military modernization in Chile and Argentina. It introduced the notion of geopolitical thinking, which helped to consolidate the ideational foundations for a strategic relationship of rivalry (for land, natural resources and communications) among the actors of the regional system. Concurrently during this period, the Chilean military rose as an institutional professional bureaucracy that would play a decisive role in the development of the country's strategic culture.

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<sup>15</sup> Robledo, *op. cit.* p. 7.

<sup>16</sup> Robert N. Burr, *By Reason or Force: Chile and the Balancing of Power in South America, 1830-1905* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1967). The security dilemma (or spiral model) is a term used in international relations and refers to a situation that uncertainty, change, and mistrust can combine to create conflict, even when neither side really desires it. In other words, security for one state reduces the security of the other. John H. Herz coined the term in his 1951 book, *Political Realism and Political Idealism*. At the same time British historian Herbert Butterfield described the same situation in his *History and Human Conditions*, but referred to it as the "absolute predicament and irreducible dilemma." For a discussion of this concept, also see Robert Jervis, "Cooperation Under the Security Dilemma," *World Politics*, Vol. 30, NO. 2 (January 1978), pp. 167-174; and *Perception and Misperception in International Politics* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1978), pp. 58 - 113.

The rivalry in the Southern Cone changed little during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In fact, the prevailing dynamic reinforced the strategic culture of rivalry and conflict, leading to a gradual increase in tension. This spiral would ultimately lead these countries to the brink of war several times during the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

One of the most important incentives to maintain the logic of competence and enmity during the 20<sup>th</sup> century was the transition from 19<sup>th</sup> century liberalism, which endured in the region until the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, to the import-substitution industrialization (ISI) model of development, adopted in Argentina, Chile, Brazil and several other countries as a regional Keynesian response to the 1929 regional and global crisis. Beyond its many virtues in terms of national industrialization and state empowerment, the ISI model was essentially protectionist, and thus introduced few incentives to develop alternative inter-state relationships. The implication for the Strategic Culture of Chile was the perpetuation of a separate fate, even within the economic sphere, for each of the regional countries. In the case of Chile, this reinforced the geopolitical dictum that posited that the country's development should be conceived not only as an inward-looking perspective, but also as a bilateral process of national integration to the capitalist centers, establishing close relations and partnerships with its neighbors.

The above discussion does not imply that this was, indeed, the only strategic culture in the region. On the contrary, after World War II, the region experienced the rise of alternative regional efforts to develop new and more cooperative strategies of inter-state relations such as the launching of the first regional integration process. For instance, several institutions were created during the 1960's in the region in order to promote integration, namely the Latin American and Caribbean Free Trade Association (later the Latin American Association of Integration, ALADI), and the Andean Pact, with Chile and Colombia being the most important promoters. However, prevailing economic policies (the protectionist ISI model) and political conditions (several pending bilateral issues between the countries) led to the failure of the first integration effort in Latin America.

The final phase of this longitudinal evolution of inter-state rivalry and culture of conflict, particularly, during the decades of the 1960's and the 1970's, came when the region experienced a protracted period of democratic crisis. It is at this juncture that many countries turned to military-authoritarian regimes. In the context of the Cold War and during the apex of the culture of national security, the militarization of politics in Latin America had a crucial impact on the regional strategic environment. Under military rule in the 1970's and 1980's, the Southern Cone countries experienced one of the most serious strategic moments in their history. This was manifested in several regional rivalries: One of the most important conflicts was the Brazilian-Argentinean geopolitical rivalry over the Río de la Plata Basin (which included the development of nuclear capabilities); second, the Argentinean-Chilean dispute over the unresolved bilateral border; and, third, Chilean tensions with Peru and Bolivia, especially around the centennial of the War of the Pacific in 1979. For Chile, the consequences of this period were serious. The

dispute over the Beagle Channel led Chile and Argentina to the brink of war in 1978.<sup>17</sup> In the north, Chile broke diplomatic relations with Bolivia for the first time since the War of the Pacific ended in 1883. Tension also mounted with Peru during this time. In sum, for the first time since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Chile faced simultaneous crises with its three neighboring countries. This three-pronged crisis began to subside after the Malvinas War in April 1982. The fiasco of this war not only led to the democratization of Argentina and the total collapse and disrepute of the Argentine military, but also to the elimination of the Argentine-Chilean enmity with the signing of the Argentine-Chilean Treaty of Peace and Friendship in 1984, aided by the Vatican's mediation.<sup>18</sup>

The culmination of this historical period began with the process of re-democratization in 1990. It is still unfolding, yet one is able to identify important changes in the strategic culture of the country. During the latter part of this period, however, one can identify elements of historical continuity in Chile's strategic culture, for example, the persistence of a defensive deterrent posture. But the most salient and interesting elements regarding strategic culture during this time are the policy changes. It is evident that, since the return to democracy, the strategic posture of the armed forces has evolved towards a mixed, more complex, and sophisticated strategic approach. This is predicated on a new foreign and defense policy approach that emphasizes strategic diplomacy in the form of regional integration objectives, global cooperation, and the use of international law rather than force as means to enhance the country's position in a changing international environment. In short, Chile appears to have abandoned its traditional insular, garrison-mentality of yesteryear and appears to be moving steadily towards an internationalist stance in world politics. Furthermore, democratic consolidation and rapid economic modernization have displaced the formulation and implementation of the national strategy from a purely diplomatic-military elite to a more open and inclusive national debate regarding public policy choices. The process now includes the active participation and influence of political parties, public opinion, and an increasingly complex and more influential democratic institutional network.

#### *Return to Democracy, 1990-2010*

The transition from bureaucratic-authoritarian rule to democracy is a watershed in the history of Chile. At the domestic level it signified the recovery of liberal democratic rights, institutions, and practices. With respect to Chile's relations with its regional neighbors and the rest of the world, particularly regarding the use of force as a tool of its external projection of power, it is a significant departure from its garrison-state historical tradition. Granted, that the processes of political and economic liberalization continue to unfold since the return of democracy, yet it can be observed that Chile has sought a more internationalist foreign policy, particularly with respect to regional neighbors. Chile seems to have abandoned completely

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<sup>17</sup> There were also previous and important bilateral crisis, like the 1958 Snipe incident, and the Laguna del Desierto crisis in 1965.

<sup>18</sup> The analysis presented here relies on the report prepared by Robledo, *op. cit.*

regional isolationism and belligerence as the primary means of effectuating Chilean national and security interests.

The armed forces have been well kept and highly regarded under each successive democratic government since 1990. This has rendered the military a formidable force by regional standards. It enjoys internal institutional cohesion, social support, and political legitimacy. Is this the result of domestic level factors only or external variables? The answer appears to be a combination of both sets of variables. It is clear that the democratic transition emphasized the reopening of Chile to the world and the region. Nonetheless, Chile has learned, particularly since 1984, that Argentina is no longer its enemy and, more importantly, Argentina must have realized by now, given the decrepit state of its armed forces, that Chile does not harbor any expansionistic designs along their common boundaries or at the southern-most border area. Chile did not take advantage of Argentina in 1982, when the latter was preoccupied with the Malvinas War, nor has it taken advantage of the evident inferior military strength of Argentina since 1984. Also, Chile has tried to negotiate with its more historically belligerent neighbors to the north, *viz.*, Bolivia and Peru. In sum, there seems to be a marked reduction in tension along Chile's contested boundaries and a greater disposition to negotiate and accommodate, but short of abandoning the armed forces as a tool of statecraft.

Democratization ushered in Chile's full reinsertion into the international community. *Concertación*, the political coalition that led the country up until March 11 2010 adopted a different model of development which combined a deep commitment to the processes of economic liberalization, particularly international openness, and an emphasis on proper economic regulations, social equity, and a different ideational agenda in foreign and defense policy.<sup>19</sup>

The economic model is an export-oriented approach. It underscores an aggressive open regionalism and an aggressive search for new international markets to sustain long-term economic growth. The new foreign policy adopted a strategy to fully engage the international community and actively participate in multilateral fora. This is in sharp contrast with the economic and political strategies of the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when the stress was on an inward-looking industrialization model and political isolationism. Since 1990 Chile opted for a fully globalized model of development. In the last 20 years, the new model has had a successful and profound impact on the country. Economic growth averaged more than 5%, the per capita income has almost tripled, and in 2010 more than 50% of growth is based on exports to the widest global network of regulated trade agreements in the world. The poverty rate fell from almost 40% in 1990 to 13.7% in 2006, and the country became the regional leader in the most important development indicators, such as the U.N. Human Development Index, and the WEF competitiveness index. Chile's economic accomplishments are exemplary by regional standards.

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<sup>19</sup> Robledo, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

The change in its development model has had deep international effects. It has transformed the international posture of the country. Chile has become a regional actor with global and regional interests in politics and security, and to a certain extent, it has become a broker between the region and the rest of the world. From a strategic perspective, Chile followed a gradual transition from an exclusive and traditional territorial focus to a more internationalist scope. The latter perspective is based on the assumption that Chile's security and political stability rest on both its immediate, regional context as well as on the existence of international stability and peace. Chile has come to view international security and peace as common goods that require the active participation and contribution of all member states. Hence, this is the basis of the pronounced nature of Chile's protagonist role in multilateral peace building and peacekeeping, as well as humanitarian missions.

The simultaneous processes of regional demilitarization, democratization, economic liberalization, and economic integration created the conditions for a new regional agenda between Chile and its neighbors. Clearly, Chile's democratic leaders have benefited from the new regional strategic environment, prompted by the advent of democracy in Bolivia and Peru, and, especially, by the Argentine-Brazilian strategic rapprochement and integration process. These were promoted in 1985 by Presidents Raúl Alfonsín and José Sarney (of Argentina and Brazil, respectively), and have ultimately led to a new integrationist effort in Latin American with the creation of Mercosur in 1991.

Strategically speaking, the simultaneous processes of regional democratization, economic liberalization, and re-launching of regional integration laid the foundations for an additional shift in Chilean foreign and defense policies (since 1830). One of the most important historical factors in this regard was the end of the Argentine-Brazilian nuclear competition and the opening of their economic integration process in 1991. Also critical was the simultaneous liberalization process in the region, which created a true, albeit non-optimal, opportunity to re-launch integration efforts and to strengthen the levels of regional interdependence for the first time in the region's history since the independence movement. Finally, democratization was crucial because it brought to political office a network of political leaders who shared an antimilitarist and integrationist perspective. These developments opened an opportunity for Chile to escape its traditional security dilemma for the first time in modern history, entering a new, successful sub-regional game of "cooperation under the security dilemma."<sup>20</sup>

At a global level, Chile's new strategic thinking signifies the abandonment of its traditional relative passivity toward disarmament and non-proliferation issues. Thus, Chile began to play an active role in supporting the post-Cold War regimes of disarmament and non-proliferation. This was partially done as a way to consolidate the shift in nuclear policies in Brazil and Argentina. At a regional level, Chile entered regional democratic fora and the sub-

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<sup>20</sup> For a discussion of cooperation under the security dilemma, see Robert Jervis, "Cooperation under the Security Dilemma," pp. 186 - 214.

regional processes of integration. Between 1996 and 2010, the economic exchange between Chile and the members of Mercosur skyrocketed, demonstrating that cooperation was a powerful strategy to support the state's development and security.

Since 1990 Chile has become an active promoter of a new generation of cooperative security regimes. Bilaterally, the combination of the new political, economic, and security initiatives transformed Chile's relations with Argentina. During the years 1990-1992, both countries were able to peacefully resolve 22 of 24 pending border disputes. The remaining boundary disputes were resolved in 1994 and 1998, respectively. Also, Argentina and Chile developed an increasingly dense network of first and second-generation confidence-building measures, and followed a mutual, but non-negotiated, abrogation of their mutual threat perception from conflict to cooperation. This was a change made explicit in their respective national defense white papers. More recently, Chile and Argentina have advanced from classic forms of cooperation under the security dilemma, toward more advanced security associations such as the creation of a joint peace operations force in 2009.

Despite the important regional accomplishments in the economic, political, and security spheres, there has been a series of negative setbacks recently. Although regional integration and economic interdependence has grown, as exemplified by the launching of Mercosur in 1991, there has been increasing difficulty to institutionally consolidate democratic processes and regional institutions. Consequently, regional integration has confronted increasing difficulties, causing a level of regional polarization and a marked deterioration of the security environment at several levels. Bilaterally, in the Chilean-Argentinean case, and despite the positive bilateral trend in the security field, political relations experienced significant difficulties after the election of President Néstor Kirchner in 2003. During his tenure in office, Argentina experienced a shift in its domestic and foreign policies, including the decision to unilaterally and dramatically diminish the gas supply to Chile. This caused Chile an energy crisis only a couple of years after the beginning of the bilateral energy integration process.

The advances between Chile and Peru have been also uneven. Despite some important and promising efforts, there is still a long road to a genuine and sustainable strategic change in bilateral relations. Chilean-Peruvian bilateral relations reached important advances from 1990 to 1999. Both countries agreed to overcome the "pending issues" of the Treaty of 1929, and initiated a strategic dialogue on continental ballistic missiles, similar to the Chilean-Argentine agreement. Notwithstanding these advances in Chilean-Peruvian bilateral relations, in recent years Peru has insisted on revising the bilateral maritime border with Chile, which, according to Chile, was settled several decades ago.

Also, Chilean-Bolivian relations have maintained their traditional structural feature of conflict and confrontation, given Bolivia's insistent claim to have access to the Pacific Ocean. In 2009, however, there was a significant improvement in relations as Presidents Evo Morales and Michelle Bachelet (of Bolivia and Chile, respectively) agreed to work out a solution to Bolivia's

access to the Pacific. It remains to be seen how the administration of Sebastian Piñera handles this delicate historical conflict.

In sum, two hundred years after independence, Chile appears to be undergoing a dual transition in its strategic culture. First, it is moving away from a traditional security dilemma posture of relative power competition to a cooperative approach of regional association and integration. Second, Chile is engaged in a process to globalize its strategic interests. The post-1990 generation of leaders and decision-makers has understood that Chile's immediate wellbeing, stability, security, and peace depend largely on stable and secure global conditions. Further, they have understood that this condition is a common good depending on contributions from the entire international community. Hence, Chile has abandoned its isolationist stance, based on a traditional garrison-state mentality, and has moved actively towards international involvement in multilateral security missions.

### **Chilean Strategic Culture: Social, Political, and Cultural Variables**

Compared to the rest of South America, there was remarkable elite cohesion in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Under the leadership of Diego Portales, Chile achieved a level of state capacity and public order superior to its neighbors. This created the foundation for a realist approach to foreign policy, and an appreciation of power and the conditions in which it might be used to protect national interests. By the end of the century, when mining and agricultural exports had stimulated an economic boom, Chilean elites began to think that their relative stability and state capacity warranted a more aggressive approach to their neighbors to the north, that is, Peru and Bolivia.

The result of this more aggressive approach led to a war of conquest in which Chile took from both Peru and Bolivia huge chunks of territory that contained valuable mineral resources, nitrate and, today, copper. Chile's strategy during the war and its subsequent settlement relied heavily on the aggressive use of force in defense of national security interests. It carefully implemented a foreign policy whose centerpiece was a regional balance of power. Chile's objective was to send an unambiguous message to its two rivals that its territorial conquest would stand and that it would be allowed to legitimately retain the territory.<sup>21</sup>

For more than a century, the strategic culture of Chile, forged in the fires of war and conflict, would hold. It is an approach based on a realist approach to world affairs, and takes as its principal objective the preservation of the territorial gains of the War of the Pacific. Chile would maintain its military strength, and would take as a principal threat an attack from the north by either one or by both of the losers in the war. All of Chile's diplomacy was directed at fending off attempts by Peru and Bolivia to regain all or parts of the territory ceded to Chile at the end of the war. Chile would not become involved in conflicts outside of this sub-region and Chile

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<sup>21</sup> For a detailed account of the war and the strategic culture that emerges, see Robert N. Burr, *By Reason or Force*.

would avoid any action or gesture in international organizations that might undermine or question the legitimacy of its conquests.

To guarantee the strength of the armed forces, a portion of the income (royalties) from the sale of the nation's most important export, that is, copper, would be left in the hands of the military, so that military elites could maintain their level of strength for years to come. On the nation's eastern flank, Chile maintained a high level of military preparedness and used its relative stability to penetrate into Argentine Patagonia to extend its influence and prevent any threat to its security (territorial integrity) from the east. The strength of the military, therefore, became part of the nation's strategic culture as it was portrayed as an indispensable element in protecting the nation's security interests from hostile neighbors.<sup>22</sup>

### **Elite Worldviews in the Present**

The strategic culture of Chile that long dominated elite thinking emerged from a series of geographic imperatives, and historical, economic, social and political realities influenced by the interplay of domestic and international factors. Chile's geographic isolation during the colonial period, with Spanish settlement essentially reduced to a small area encompassing the Central Valley and separated from other parts of the empire by enormous distances, deserts, mountains, and sea expanse, allowed emerging Chilean society to develop along independent lines and created an exceptionally strong national identity. Chilean culture was and remains an essentially Central Valley culture, formed during the colonial period by a relatively small group of Creole elites and a larger *mestizo* mass, with very reduced indigenous influence given the isolation of the Araucanian/Mapuche peoples beyond the "frontier" of the south. It was not until the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, with the influx of Basque immigrants and the expansion of maritime trade, that Chile began to emerge from its position as one of the most isolated and insignificant parts of the Spanish empire in the Americas.

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Chile's elite class coalesced along economic and political lines, avoiding to a considerable degree the profound divisions that led to chronic instability and military rule in many other parts of Latin America. The cohesiveness of Chilean society, in terms of both elite and mass, provided a strong basis upon which to wage two wars against Chile's northern neighbors, that is, Peru and Bolivia. In both cases, a key security goal of Chile was to prevent the formation of a Peru-Bolivia confederation or alliance that would limit Chile's burgeoning economic or geo-political interests. As explained above, the War of the Pacific (1879 - 1883) resulted in the acquisition of territories from both countries that greatly extended Chile's northern border but also provided the export commodity (that is, nitrates) that drove Chile's economic development for the next forty years.

Accordingly, the War of the Pacific was to have a lasting effect on Chile's strategic thinking and that of its neighbors as well. More than the strength of its army, Chile's victory was

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<sup>22</sup> This section borrows from Tulchin, *op. cit.*

owed to its winning control of the seas and following the war it was naval captain Arturo Prat who emerged as the iconic emblem of Chilean patriotism. With Chile's economy—since the late 18<sup>th</sup> century—dependent on the export of commodities to Europe and the United States (for example, hides, wheat, silver, nitrates and copper), control of sea-lanes became a cornerstone of security planning, as well as the ability to move land forces over large territory. Both the army and navy gained enormous prestige from victory in the War of the Pacific, while public sentiment in Bolivia—rendered landlocked by Chile's victory—and in Peru—whose capital, Lima, was occupied by Chilean forces—was left deeply embittered. Periodic border disputes with Chile's third neighbor, Argentina, were resolved before they led to war, although tensions periodically rose to high levels that threatened to become militarized engagements.

Well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Chilean Strategic Culture remained focused on the protection of national borders, control of sea-lanes, and, most importantly, the imposition of domestic control. Chile's armed forces, both army and navy, were frequently used for domestic security purposes in breaking strikes, controlling social disorder, or dissolving protests that could not be handled by the country's ineffective municipal police forces, often leading to a very large loss of life. Ironically, in what was considered among the most stable and democratic countries in Latin America, the armed forces found themselves serving a domestic security function, popular with most elite groups but increasingly called into question by the country's growing leftist political movements among the middle and working classes.

Civil-military relations deteriorated substantially during the 1960s. This was an important factor in terms of overall strategic outlook and quite crucial to Chile's social cohesion. There was growing alienation between the military and civilian elites, especially on the left, but also throughout society. Military service was seen as less prestigious and the ranks of the military themselves began to present divisions reflecting the fast-growing polarization of civilian politics. Exacerbated by the Cold War mentality of the time, civil-military relations reached a further low point with the election of Salvador Allende in 1970 and continued to worsen during the course of his government (1970 - 1973) and the military coup that brought Pinochet to power afterwards.

In the wake of the human rights violations perpetrated by the Pinochet regime, Chile became increasingly isolated from both Europe and the United States, affecting its ability to acquire weapons and update the training and professionalization of its armed forces. This became a national security factor in 1978, when a dispute with Argentina over islands in the Beagle Channel in the far south brought the two countries to the brink of war. As discussed above, the Beagle Channel episode proved to be the last and most dramatic manifestation of Chile's traditional security strategy, by which the country prepared to wage war in geographic areas far from its population centers where the delivery and supply of military and naval forces would have been difficult at best.

The strategic culture of military and civilian governing elites during the Pinochet years was characterized by an enhanced sense that the country was on its own in facing threats from its

neighbors as well as from international communism and domestic subversion. The financial panic and huge drop in GDP that occurred in 1982-1983, and the ensuing public protests against the regime that were violently countered by calling out the army to suppress protest only reinforced this outlook. Chile behaved like a besieged state, with an insular, and garrison mentality.

Several factors began to take effect that would open the way to the evolution of a different strategic outlook in Chile. Economic recovery in 1984, followed by sustained growth in subsequent years, revived the prestige of the liberal, export-oriented economic model and removed some domestic pressure from the government. Also in 1984, the Pinochet regime negotiated and signed a Treaty of Peace and Friendship with the newly constituted democratic regime in Argentina, easing the threat of future international tension. Finally, Chile itself embarked on a transition to democracy following Pinochet's defeat in the 1988 plebiscite and the defeat of his candidate in the 1989 presidential election.

The inauguration of a democratic government in early 1990 put in motion a gradual process of removing the many authoritarian components in Pinochet's constitution of 1980, especially those perpetuating military influence over politics. As Pinochet himself was eased out of his command of the armed forces and civilian rule was consolidated, Chile's strategic outlook began to shift. With the end of the Cold War, and the elimination of the threat of domestic subversion by the "international communist conspiracy," Chile's foreign relations improved overall. In the case of Argentina, relations had greatly improved, and Chile began to transcend its geographical isolation and participate more fully in global affairs.<sup>23</sup>

## **Prospects: Repertoire of Strategic Cultural Values**

What are the major values that influenced the Strategic Culture of Chile?<sup>24</sup> A fundamental source to begin answering this question is, as mentioned in the introduction to this Report, the three versions of *The Book of the National Defense of Chile* (2002, 2007, and 2010).<sup>25</sup> No other document delineates better the key strategic values and traditional orientations of Chile. *The Book*, originally commissioned by President Ricardo Lagos, and reissued at the end of the Presidency of Michelle Bachelet in January 2010, serves as an encyclopedic compendium to the defense establishment, national elites, and the armed forces. *The Book* clearly defines the basic principles that guide the country's foreign relations and defense of its geo-strategic interests around issues related to national territorial integrity and the preservation of human life.

Chile's strategic cultural values can be summarized as follows:

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<sup>23</sup> This section draws on the report prepared by Peter DeShazo, "Isolation to Globalization: The Evolution of Strategic Culture in Chile," Florida International University, Applied Research Center, April 15, 2010, pp. 2- 5.

<sup>24</sup> This section draws on the findings report prepared by Enrique S. Pumar, "Chile's Strategic Culture. Structural Sources of Values and Policies," Florida International University, Applied Research Center, April 15, 2010, pp. 2- 6.

<sup>25</sup> See: <[http://merln.ndu.edu/whitepapers/Chile\\_English2002.pdf](http://merln.ndu.edu/whitepapers/Chile_English2002.pdf)>.

1. Chile's values in the national security realm are generally more in line with defensive than with offensive postures. In other words, the goals of national defense are to preserve the sovereignty, integrity and social harmony of the nation. There is no allusion to or discussion of preemptive strike capabilities and much less of striking any foreign targets for security purposes.
2. Defense is regarded as an indispensable condition to achieve human development, which means that it is perceived not as an intrinsic end in and of itself but as a means to an end.
3. Defense is also one of the conditions, but not the only one, that contributes to obtaining national security. Diplomacy and international cooperation also secure the national interest through the principle of "preventive security."
4. National security goals and objectives are to be achieved by organic functions of the state as defined by the country's legal constitutional framework.
5. Respect for the integrity and rights of individuals and humanity is as much an element of national security considerations as the preservation of any strategic forces or the capacity of the nation to defend its sovereignty against foreign threats.
6. Chile's national defense forces must maintain the necessary capacity to deter any external threat or aggression that might impede the fulfillment of its national interests, including the preservation of human, economic, and ecological developments.

At a normative level, the most immediate practical implications of this value-system are, first, that it provides a cohesive interpretative framework for the formulation of security policies and for assessing the country's contemporary challenges and threats. With this in mind, the purveyors of Chile's strategic culture define their security in terms of "human security." This view of security implies a profound commitment to promote policies consistent with "liberal institutionalism" in world politics. Accordingly, the country supports its foreign and defense policy goals and objectives through its "internationalism," particularly its participation in and its support for international organizations and regimes that promote reciprocal states' obligations as dictated by international law.

A second implication is in order: The notion of security transcends other traditional conceptions, such as those that give primacy to the preservation of the state or that neglect taking into account the political character of the state. Instead, it favors the incorporation of the concerns and obligations of nations towards the preservation of its citizens' rights and aspirations by minimizing the internal effects of international tensions. By definition, thus, this implies a third consequence. The provision of security implies a multidimensional approach, not simply the use of force.

A few examples will suffice to illustrate these points. Chile's defense establishment calls for the participation of the armed forces in various international peacekeeping and civic operations around the world. This is due, precisely, to the fact that one of Chile's goals is to secure an internal and external environment conducive to the fulfillment of human potentials, as well as democratic mechanisms and arrangements. In addition, Chile has been an active signatory of practically every major international and regional accord in modern history,

including those that regulate territorial disputes and border configuration with its own neighbors. Finally, Chile's respect for self-determination and non-intervention, as an inalienable right, has characterized the prudent approach to foreign policy that separates the country from other more "populist" and abrasive styles throughout the region, for example, Venezuela's President Hugo Chávez.

Thus, this worldview justifies what some may deem as paradoxical positions. That is, simultaneously maintaining strong diplomatic relations with two adversaries in the Western Hemisphere: Cuba and the United States. It is worth noting, however, that this posture transcends domestic political and ideological divides. It provides an enviable continuity in the country's foreign and defense relations. Thus, it can be interpreted as another sign of how deeply ingrained in the state's structure are the values governing the Chilean Strategic Culture. This means, accordingly, that Chile's foreign policy norms and principles are not guided by individual ambitions, personalities, predispositions, or ideological dogmas, but, rather, a single Strategic Culture consensually advocated by its purveyors.

## **Geo-politics and Strategic Culture**

Geographically, Chile is perceived as an insular territory, given its physical features.<sup>26</sup> It is located in the extreme southwest of South America, bordered by the Andes to the east and the Pacific Ocean to the west. Deserts in the northern and southern ends of its borders bound Chile. In fact, many argue that Chile had borders before its birth as an independent and sovereign state. These borders correspond to natural phenomena that have isolated this portion of America from the rest of the continent. Such features have helped shape some of the characteristics of Chilean national identity.

*The Book of National Defense 2010* links Chile's land surface with national defense objectives.<sup>27</sup> The country's mainland encompasses an area of 755,776 km<sup>2</sup>. This great continental space presents different geographical features and a wide range of natural resources. Territory is, therefore, an essential factor in defining the national defense objectives. From this perspective one can identify three areas of strategic importance:

a. The northern zone, with large sparsely populated areas and predominantly desert climate, containing most of the country's large and small mining, constitutes the primary economic activity in the national export strategy. It contributes a high percentage of the country's GDP. This area has an industrial structure of specialized transportation and its importance lies in the ability to satisfy Chile's international mineral commitments.

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<sup>26</sup> This section draws on the findings report prepared by Urbina Paredes, "Cultura Estratégica en Chile, Una Perspectiva Militar," pp. 3 - 6.

<sup>27</sup> Ministerio de Defensa Nacional (2010): *Libro de la Defensa Nacional de Chile 2010*. en <http://www.defensa.cl/contenidos/libro-de-la-defensa-nacional-de-chile-2010>, p. 35.

b. The central valley and south hold more than 85% of Chile's population. It is the center of agricultural products, livestock, and possesses significant forest industry production. This area represents the industrial and administrative heart of the country, with a capacity to serve as a platform for provision services.

c. The southern zone is characterized by its geographic fragmentation. This condition is somewhat ameliorated by extensive road networks developed by the government and the army. Its economic potential is based on freshwater resources, on its proximity to the inter-oceanic passages, and on its geographical projection into the Antarctic continent.

Each of these areas represents for Chile a fundamental natural safeguard for its national territorial integrity in the event of crisis and war. Clearly, Chile's territory is defined and limited mostly by natural boundaries that are the product of existing treaties, agreed to freely and legitimately, and arbitral awards. Taking into consideration its territory in the South American mainland as well as its insular possessions, it has an area of 756,096 km<sup>2</sup>. Out its total 6,630 km of land borders, 180 km are shared with Peru and Bolivia, and 850 km to 5,600 km with Argentina. These figures do not include the Chilean Antarctic Territory, or maritime borders with Peru and Argentina. As the result of the War of the Pacific (1879 - 1883), Chile won the territories of the three northern regions Arica and Parinacota, Tarapacá, and Antofagasta. The extensive borders with three neighboring countries have caused its defense and foreign policies to be status-quo-oriented. Chile does not harbor any revisionist or expansionistic territorial designs at the moment. It has no territorial claims beyond its present boundaries and is respectful of international law governing these boundaries. Hence, its defense policy is focused on maintaining a military capacity to generally deter aggression and to protect its territory and sovereignty.

The island portion of the national territory includes several islands in the Pacific Ocean, the closest being the Juan Fernández archipelago 360 nautical miles (667 km) from the mainland and the islands San Félix and San Ambrosio, 500 nautical miles (926 km) from the mainland. The Salas y Gómez Islands are farthest from the mainland, approximately 1,870 nautical miles (3463 km) from continental Chile, and Easter Island is 2,000 nautical miles (3,700 km).

The Chilean Antarctic Territory is another important element of its geopolitics.<sup>28</sup> This is south of the Drake Passage and forms a triangle projecting to the South Pole between meridians 53° and 90° west longitude, with an approximate area of 1,250,000 km<sup>2</sup>. In 1940, Chile asserted, by Supreme Decree 1747, the limits of its territory in "the part that extends into the polar region called the American Antarctic." The decree stipulates that "the Chilean Antarctic Territory or the Chilean Antarctic, all lands, islands, islets, reefs, glaciers and others known, in the existing

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<sup>28</sup> Javier Urbina Paredes, "El sistema del Tratado Antártico la posición de Chile como país puente" *UNISCI Discussion papers Universidad Complutense*, N° 21 (Octubre 2009), ISSN 1696-2206. p.139.

respective territorial waters within the limits of the cap formed by the meridians 53° and 90° longitude west of Greenwich” comprise Chile’s territory.<sup>29</sup>

In Chile, these factors, particularly its geographic territory, has a close relationship with its national defense policy: First, because their protection is one of the purposes of defense, and second, because its shape and its particular geographical features determine the strategic solutions of its defense. If we focus on the factors of strategic value, one can surmise that Chile is characterized by serious and complex geographical challenges for its national defense. The geographic setting is one of the most significant strategic driving forces of its Strategic Culture.

According to the *Book of National Defense of Chile 2010*,<sup>30</sup> the characteristics of the geographic factors make it imperative to count permanently on the presence of military means in the end zones of the country. The strategic importance of these zones requires that the ground forces be organized in a functional structure, counting on an optimal operational level that is projectable, flexible, and powerful. On the other hand, it is necessary to emphasize maritime and air transport as well as logistical support for the territorial connection. In this sense the process of coastal maritime and trans-oceanic communications are an essential importance in the country’s survival in case of conflict and war. The railway lines and roads that extend longitudinally through the country give more flexibility to land transport, but the geographical features of the national territory condition the national road network.

These above-discussed conditions, together with the climatic and particular features of the different areas of the country, as well as the extensive sea and air spaces require specialized training and force structure to monitor and protect these regions of the national territory. Each unit requires personnel, equipment and adequate training according to the particular features presented by the geographical setting in each area.

In most cases, the relevant forces and the accomplishment of their military missions are a valuable contribution to national development, especially in those sparsely populated islands considered isolated areas. All these conditions must be considered to define the structure, organization, deployment, equipment, instruction and training of the various branches of Chile’s armed forces in order for them to effectively fulfill core missions.<sup>31</sup>

## **Geo-Economics and Strategic Culture**

Although Chile had one of Latin America’s highest per capita incomes in 1973, it is a country whose economic performance since at least 1900 had been one of the poorest in the world. Estimates are that real GDP during this period averaged a meager 1%.<sup>32</sup> This lack of

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<sup>29</sup> Establishes Chilean territorial boundaries in Antarctica: D/S N° 1747, de RR.EE. November 6, 1940.

<sup>30</sup> Ministerio de Defensa Nacional, *op. cit.*, p.56.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 57.

<sup>32</sup> The section on geo-economics draws on the report prepared by Carlos Seiglie, Chilean Strategic Culture: The Influence of the Economy,” Florida International University, Applied Research Center, April 15, 2010.

growth of the real income of the average Chilean was made worse by the fact that inflation was a consistent thorn in the side of the Chilean people. These economic conditions were prevalent even though Chile had one of the strongest democracies in Latin America. In 1973, a military coup uprooted a democratically elected government and imposed profound free market reforms and macroeconomic stabilization policies that ultimately quelled the country's history of inflation and led to a path of sustainable economic growth. Many other provocative reforms were also instituted during this time.

From the ashes of the military dictatorship emerged a vibrant democracy and an economy that generates a living standard that is the envy of the continent. The economic aspect of Chile's strategic culture was transformed during this period of military rule by the opening up of the country's economy to the world. Prior to this departure, the economic projection of the country was inward looking and nationalistic. The economic policies and measures introduced during the Pinochet dictatorship were further strengthened and advanced by four successive democratic governments from the *Concertación* political coalition. Thus, any analysis of economic events in Chile must always address the importance of the military in the lives and psyche of its citizens.

During Pinochet's early years, Chile went from a fairly closed and isolated economy with heavy government involvement into one which became open to trade and capital flows with the rest of the world and had minimal government intervention with the workings of the market. This occurred while a macroeconomic stabilization plan was being implemented to reduce inflation from 600%. Some of the policies implemented included the liberalization of trade through tariff reductions, opening of the capital account, prices were decontrolled including interest rates, fiscal reforms were imposed including a value added tax, and the social security system was overhauled to become one of the more novel ones currently in the world. Since part of the historic and contemporary Chilean strategic culture is partly an outgrowth of economic conditions, it is important for us to briefly review a history of the Chilean economy.

### *A Brief History of the Chilean Economy*

Ballestors and Davis estimated that Gross Domestic Product per capita grew at only a rate of 1% per year from 1908 to 1957.<sup>33</sup> Even though real GDP grew at a rate of 3.9% per year from 1950 to 1972, real GDP per capita grew at only 1.7% per year. Its economic performance was the poorest of Latin America's large and medium size countries. For example, Argentina grew at 4.1%, Colombia at 5.2%, Peru at 5.7%, Venezuela at 6.2%, Mexico at 6.5% and Brazil at 7% during this same period (see Edwards and Cox, 1991). Yet, by 1960 it still had one of the highest per capita incomes in Latin America given its initial conditions at the time of independence. As in most of the countries in Latin America, Chile embarked on a program of industrialization

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<sup>33</sup> Mario A. Ballesteros and Tom E. Davis, "The Growth of Output and Employment in Basic Sectors of the Chilean Economy, 1908 – 1957," *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, Vol. XI, No. 2 (January 1963).

based on import substitution during the 1940s and 1950s. This required high import tariffs to protect infant industries and as a result protectionism became a permanent feature of Chile's economy. During the early years under the guidance of the *Corporación de Fomento de la Producción* (CORFU), heavy industries were created. In order for these industries to survive, heavy government protection was required that led to very high inefficiency in the economy. Corbo and Meller show that intervention led to very capital-intensive techniques in production. This resulted in a reduction in employment growth. Import substitution was accompanied by an overvalued currency that hurt the development of non-traditional export sectors. In particular, the agricultural sector was hurt by a high real exchange rate. During this period of time, the agricultural sector's share of national output lagged behind that of mining (copper) and manufacturing. Even though manufacturing grew by 7% during the period between 1937 and 1950, import substitution policy lost steam and from 1950 to 1960 industrial production fell by 3.5%.

Inflation, which had always been a problem since at least the 1880s, became serious during this time. The average rate of inflation was 36% during the decade of the 1950s reaching 84% in 1955. The cause of this inflation was easy monetary policy and lax fiscal policy. During the 1950s and the 1960s there were three major stabilization programs that were put into effect. In spite of Ibanez and Alessandri's efforts, inflation during the next two decades averaged 31%. In 1970, during the last year of the Frei administration inflation was running at 35%. By this time, politicians across the political spectrum agreed that Chile had a long-term crisis yet the unequal distribution of income and unemployment created by prior policies posed a constraint. This is not to deny that during the 1960s and especially during Frei's administration, efforts to reform the economy had been attempted. For example, there was an effort at agrarian reform and some liberalization of trade and exchange rate policies based on mini-devaluations. Still, tight government regulations and high barriers to trade plagued the economy.

During the election of 1970 all three presidential candidates recognized that the Chilean economy was in crisis. When the government of *Unidad Popular* took over, the underlying assumption was that there was an underutilization of capital. This government also inherited large international reserves. Therefore, the government's conclusion was that an increase in government spending could increase GDP, without generating any increase in inflation. The Allende government also enacted populist policies such as across-the-board wage increases while also increasing the money supply. As a result, the fiscal deficit jumped from 3% of GDP in 1970 to 11% of GDP by 1971. The rate of growth of the money supply was running at 100% per year by the end of 1971. Inflation in 1971 was running at 22%, though the economy saw real GDP expanding at a fast rate of 7.7% and real wages at 29%. Unemployment fell during this year from 6% to 4%. In addition, the government began to intervene more heavily in the economy by expropriating manufacturing firms. Given this environment, workers began to intimidate the owners of firms still privately owned by organizing labor strikes and eventually

having workers take over these firms. This led to disruption of production not only directly with the change in management, but also from the uncertainty remaining for other firms who remained in private hands. The nationalization of firms resulted in a reduction in their output as a result of their inefficiencies and, consequently, they began to lose money. These losses had to be subsidized by the government. In addition, land expropriation during this period led to the creation of large state-owned farms and a decline in agricultural output.

The increases in the rate of growth of the money supply and government spending led to a crisis in the external sector that, by 1973, had resulted in the international reserves of the Central Bank falling to less than 2 months of imports. In an attempt to control inflation, price controls were implemented that led to the emergence of black markets. The loss of reserves led to tight exchange controls and multiple exchange rates being implemented with the government forced to devalue in 1972, which eventually led to a strike by the opposition parties in October of 1972. By 1973, the economy was in danger of experiencing hyperinflation. The economy was gripped with high unemployment, distortionary price controls that led to rampant black market activity, the real wages of workers were falling rapidly, the trade sector was in crisis, and the government's finances and private investment was in ruins. All this especially affected the middle class. In this crisis situation the military staged a coup.

### *The 1973-1990 Period and Beyond*

Confronted with popular discontent due to the mismanagement of the economy, the military dictatorship initially did not have a long-term goal. Only after the first couple of years did it begin to implement the free market views of the "Chicago boys." Initially, from September of 1973 to April of 1975, the dictatorship began to correct the distortions created during the Allende years. Inflation was only brought down slightly through tight monetary policy and the elimination of deficits. The military reformed international trade and the financial sector, and privatized banks and public enterprises, and the "grupos" or big conglomerates then emerged. Yet, real GDP fell by 12.9% in 1975, as oil prices rose and the world price of copper fell. Inflation, though, was brought down from 343% in 1975 to 84% in 1977.

Even though the "Chilean miracle" of 8.5% GDP growth occurred from 1977 to 1980, the period from 1974-1983 only saw an annual rise of GDP of only 1.7%. The 1978 period saw the economy being further opened and management of the exchange rates replaced control of the money supply. This was the period that Chile initiated the "tablita" in 1978, which led to pre-announced devaluations of the peso. Some other of its neighbors, including Uruguay and Argentina, imitated Chile's success. Inflation was brought down to 9% by 1981, yet unemployment was still high at 10% even though this period was marked by rapid growth. Some other reforms that were implemented included the indexation of wages, relaxation of capital

controls, profound reform of the social security system, and the decentralization of the educational system.

By 1981, a world recession led to a rise in real interest rates and the real exchange rate also rose, leading to a decline in Chilean exports. The bubble had burst; GDP fell by 14.3% and unemployment rose to 23.7%. During this period, there was a major devaluation of 100%. In addition, a financial crisis ensued. These conditions forced the military regime to ask the IMF for financial assistance. The period between 1983-1985 saw the nationalization of the financial sector to avoid a banking crisis. In addition, it saw a restructuring of the *grupos* (manufacturing) with still not much improvement in the economy. (Note that during this period the U.S. was also suffering from its worst recession since the Depression).

It was finally during the 1985-1990 period that using active macroeconomic policies, including a de-valuation of the peso at the rate of inflation and a further consolidation of free-market reforms and debt management to restructure the foreign debt, that Chile began again to flourish. The real devaluations spurred the export sector and made Chilean products very competitive on the world market. Therefore, by the time of the plebiscite that ended the military's rule, the economy had recovered and was on an upward path that has continued until this day.

It is instructive to compare the growth of Chile's economy with that of Mexico after the 1981 recession since both countries suffered from financial crisis and major recessions. Chile enacted the policy of letting the inefficient and unproductive firms, including banks and other financial institutions perish, leading to a more efficient transfer of capital to the more productive elements of the economy. Mexico, on the other hand, did not make the adjustments and only after the crisis of 1995 did it begin to privatize the banking system. Finally, the Chilean economy has performed well relative to its neighbors and Spain since 1950. In 1970 the Chilean economy began to lag relative to its neighbors. Yet once the free-market policies were implemented and began to take hold, Chile began to grow in 1976 relative to the group. The setback of the early 1980's has been followed by a period of growth that has led to its living standards increasing beyond its neighbors'. In fact, even relative to Spain, for example, after 2004 Chile's real income increased more rapidly and at this pace can converge to Spain's in about 10 years.

In conclusion, it is the achievements of these economic reforms imposed under the military that have earned the armed forces the respect and support of Chileans. The economic success may also be responsible for the level of social support for the military institution and its prominent role in the society. This is a stark contrast to the perceptions of the military in Argentina and, to lesser extent, in Brazil, where during its time in power it did nothing to improve these countries' economy.

## Strategic Culture: The Military and Security

In Chile, as in other new democracies, democratization implies a change in how leaders define and approach threats. With democratization, the political leadership changed from military to civilian, implying that civilians would replace military leaders in setting the parameters for defense and security policy. Democratic consolidation implies a deepening of that process, in which democratic beliefs and practices become more entrenched, and non-democratic alternatives become less likely; this would likewise suggest a diminishing military voice in defining strategic culture, as the military option loses popularity. In countries in which military rule lost legitimacy, one would also expect some shift in general attitudes toward defense and the role of the military. In Chile, however, the military's relatively strong political position at the time of the 1990 transition meant that civilian governments have tread carefully with respect to continued influence of the military after the transition.<sup>34</sup>

### *Evolution of "Strategic Culture" in Chile*

Evaluating "strategic culture" in Chile requires considering two "cultures"—the military's institutional culture and the culture of the broader society. Military institutions regularly have their own internal "cultures," as a consequence of their function, training, and history, as well as more elusive "mythologies" about the armed forces' role in society. Within the broader society, relevant aspects include not only perceptions of the country's position and role within society, but also attitudes toward the military and the appropriate functions of the military. The beliefs of both political leaders and the public about security concerns and military roles all evolve over time, as a consequence of such factors as historical experiences and interactions with external actors. For example, the end of the Cold War and the regional trend toward democratization in the 1980s led to declining legitimacy for military rule in the region, as well as an overall strengthening of international cooperation, whether to prevent the recurrence of military rule, to prevent international conflict (confidence building measures) or to help maintain peace in conflict ridden societies. However, with respect to strategic culture, cultural evolution is also a consequence of interactions between the two sub-cultures discussed above, military and civilian, in that each can and has influenced the other.

In the case of Chile, the relatively recent transition from military rule, combined with the overall economic success of the military regime—at least in terms of growth—has meant a much slower transition from the political-military balance of the military era to the more civilian dominant model one might expect in a democratic regime. The military remains a very strong political actor in Chile, retaining considerable autonomy and influence. In this respect, civilian control would appear to remain limited, perhaps largely because civilians have been very cautious about imposing it. The military does not appear to *threaten* the political system at this

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<sup>34</sup> This section draws on the findings report prepared by Deborah Norden, "The Armed Forces and Strategic Culture in Chile."

point, though largely because the conditions do not support that: international and regional organizations have actively sought to dissuade military rule; the political system remains stable; and civilian governments have not challenged the military government's overall economic model, even during the nearly two decades of rule by the center-left *Concertación* coalition. Military roles have shifted during this period, but less as a consequence of civilian orders than due to the military's search for renewed legitimacy, especially as public sympathies with Pinochet have declined over time. In this respect, civilian culture has impacted military culture, despite relatively limited interaction. However, the strong social emphasis on *order* would suggest that military culture has also shaped civilian culture.

### *The Military's Historical Role in Chile*

As discussed, Chile's strategic culture has been defined at least partially by military culture. Peter Wilson defines culture "as the values, norms, and assumptions that guide human action," facilitating choice by "predisposing people to interpret situations in a limited number of ways." *Military* culture refers to the particular culture within a military institution, which "imparts a collective coherence that is lacking in other attitudes to violence ..."<sup>35</sup> The particular nature of the Chilean military has strengthened that coherence, thereby intensifying the ability of the institution to exert influence in society. Like the Argentine armed forces, the Chilean military has been relatively isolated from civilian society, functioning much as a total institution. Military officers often distrust civilians, perceiving themselves as morally superior.<sup>36</sup> The military also tends to perceive itself—and to be perceived by the public—as highly professional, disciplined and obedient.<sup>37</sup>

Through most of its modern history, these characteristics allowed Chile to approximate Huntington's model of "objective civilian control," in which professionalism serves as the basis for a division of labor between policy-making political leaders and a military that is both competent and relatively autonomous.<sup>38</sup> During the 1960s and 1970s, however, this relationship began to shift. The tensions of the Cold War gave rise to the proliferation of national security doctrines throughout Latin America that emphasized the connections between a wide variety of social, economic and security issues. Of even greater consequence, the doctrines imbued the military with primary responsibility for both defending against and *preventing* the rise of communism. With these principles in place, the election of Socialist president Salvador Allende in 1970 launched the military into government, usurping any significant civilian role in defining Chile's security concerns.

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<sup>35</sup> Peter Wilson, "Defining Military Culture," *The Journal of Military History* 72 (January), 2008: 14.

<sup>36</sup> Alain Rouquie, *The Military and the State in Latin America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987).

<sup>37</sup> Augusto Varas, Claudio Fuentes, and Felipe Agüero, *Instituciones Cautivas: Opiniones pública y nueva legitimidad social de las Fuerzas Armadas* (Santiago, Chile: FLACSO, 2008).

<sup>38</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations*, (Cambridge, Harvard University Press: 1957).

The fact that Chile's military regime was, in many respects, relatively successful—at least in comparison to that of Argentina—meant that the armed forces retained their ability to shape Chile's strategic culture, even after the transition to democracy. The relative success of Pinochet's Chile rested primarily on two factors: first, overall economic growth and stability (despite increased inequality, which meant mixed evaluations); and second, sustained military cohesion, in that leadership remained stable throughout the 16 years of military rule, and few intra-institutional divisions emerged. While Chile's repression was just as intense as Argentina's (per capita deaths from repression were essentially parallel), the above factors—combined with a weaker tradition of street protest<sup>39</sup> and stronger traditions of following established rules meant that the public response to the military regime was much more mixed. Thus, even though Pinochet lost the 1988 plebiscite designed to confirm and prolong his rule, he and the military as a whole retained considerable public support.

### *New Democracy: Cautious Change*

Chile's transition to democracy thus differed considerably from the precipitous post-Malvinas collapse of military rule in Argentina. Chile's military was able to control the transition to democracy, strongly defending its prerogatives, including immunity for Pinochet and his family. As a consequence, the military budget remained protected, with guaranteed income from national copper exports, and the armed forces continued to hold a "tutelary role," with "controlling participation in the very powerful National Security Council, which designated senators and members of the Constitutional Tribunal."<sup>40</sup> Some of these provisions were removed following a 1989 referendum, but the budgetary protections still continue intact. The military leadership also continued to exercise leadership in the Defense Ministry, which remained primarily staffed by military officers and, until February 2010 legislation reforming the Defense Ministry, remained organized around the military branches. Civilian leaders also accepted the military's self amnesty law for the first years of the regime, only initiating trials for human rights offenses relatively late, under the auspices of international law.

Civilian acceptance of military prerogatives and, concomitantly, ongoing military leadership in defining strategic priorities had three primary sources: fear, some continuing legitimacy of the military's role, and a convergence with respect to certain policy priorities. With respect to the first of these, according to Varas, *et. al*, in 1991, 46.1% of Chileans surveyed still considered a coup to be a real possibility.<sup>41</sup> At the same time, though, nearly 25% of those surveyed would have preferred that the military had stayed in power, including 72% of those

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<sup>39</sup> As an example, Chile has tended to incorporate new sectors into democratic politics through the political party system, while Argentina has shown a stronger tendency toward populist mobilization.

<sup>40</sup> Claudia Heiss and Patricio Navia. "You Win Some, You Lose Some: Constitutional Reforms in Chile's Transition to Democracy." *Latin American Politics and Society*, Vol.49, No. 3, 2007, pp. 163-190.

<sup>41</sup> Varas, *et. al*, *op. cit.* p. 41.

who identified themselves as being on the right.<sup>42</sup> Finally, both civilian acceptance of prolonged military prerogatives and, on the other hand, military acceptance of civilian rule has also rested on an important degree of consensus about such critical priorities as social order (neither the public nor the combined security forces have much tolerance of disruptive protests) and the continuation of a market economy.

### *Military and Strategic Culture in Contemporary Chile*

Nevertheless, the military's roles and political position have gradually shifted in Chile. Unlike in Argentina, the government did not seek to strictly circumscribe the military's roles in a quest to establish civilian control. Rather, changing military roles primarily reflect two influences: First, the government's embracement of globalization, especially as foreign trade has become a growing part of the Chilean economy; and, second, the military's own search for increased legitimacy and prestige, especially as, over time, the association with the Pinochet regime became increasingly detrimental to the military's image. Exhibiting laudable professionalism in the execution of international missions, demonstrating support for the Chilean people's development needs, and providing relief and protection in times of crisis all help rebuild the military's prestige domestically.

What, then, are the Chilean military's primary missions? The recently published Chilean *White Book on National Defense* delineates three "arenas" for the armed forces: that is, national, international, and development cooperation. The national arena highlights national defense, always identified as the primary function of the armed forces. The international focus emphasizes participation in international peacekeeping, a function that has naturally increased with Chile's international integration. Chile has particularly taken a leading role in Haitian peacekeeping, alternating command with Brazil.<sup>43</sup> Finally, the third area—development cooperation—integrates a variety of missions, including contributing to "social, economic and environmental sustainability," as well as disaster relief—a high priority in earthquake and flood-prone Chile. Maintaining domestic security is certainly not emphasized as a primary military mission, but unlike in Argentina, it is not prohibited, either. The constitution does, however, require that the president declare a state of exception (that is, for war, catastrophes or other emergencies) in order to mobilize the armed forces for internal security purposes (Chile, Constitution, 2005). The military did not actually return to this role during the democratic period until the day after the devastating February 2010 earthquake, at which point many enthusiastically welcomed and encouraged the military's presence in the affected areas.

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<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.* Pp. 42 - 43.

<sup>43</sup> Marybeth Ulrich, "The Role of Military Education in Building Democratic Armies in Democratizing Latin America," Paper prepared for presentation at the International Studies Association Annual Convention, 14-18 February 2009, New York, New York.

In 2002, then-Minister of Defense Michelle Bachelet noted that, while the Chilean armed forces retained a disproportionately high level of prerogatives during the post-authoritarian years, they nonetheless did not threaten the government. Bachelet attributes this to the importance of Presidentialism in the “culture and doctrine” of the armed forces which, she claims, has led to a “clear attitude of subordination by the military institutions to presidential authority.”<sup>44</sup> The military does retain considerable autonomy in defining its roles, as well as in budgetary decisions, and remains very influential in shaping foreign policy. However, there appears to be an increasing amount of cooperation between military leaders and civilian defense experts in shaping defense and military policy.

Beyond their implications for democratic consolidation, the definition of the military’s roles and relationship to the government also reveals some important elements of the broader Strategic Culture of Chile. Strongly influenced by military culture and the prolonged period of military rule, Chileans continue to place a high value on public order, even tolerating the possibility of a recurrent military role in establishing domestic security—if necessary. At the same time, however, Chile’s leadership has defined the country as a cooperative member of the international system. Thus, while defense continues to be underscored as the military’s primary responsibility, the government places almost as much emphasis on international cooperation, guiding the military towards confidence-building measures and international peacekeeping, rather than isolation.

## **Conclusion**

In the final analysis one has to return to a basic question that drives this General Findings Report: How has Chile used its armed forces? The short answer is that the military has been used predominantly to maintain a general or defuse deterrent posture, with occasional brief instance of specific deterrence as tension and crises have mounted over the years in theaters of operation like, for example, the Beagle Channel dispute in 1978 and other occasions in the northern boundary with Bolivia and Peru. The armed forces have also been used for internal political control, as in the case of the overthrow of President Allende and the subsequent sixteen-year period of military rule.

It is important to underscore that historically Chile’s armed forces have faced considerable and different threats from those faced by other neighboring countries that are part of this ten-country project. Once Chile solidified its boundaries in the north as the result of the War of the Pacific and was able to maintain a level of general deterrence against Argentina to the west and southwest, the armed forces did not train for or procure assets for an offensive strategy. Rather, Chile’s armed forces were focused on a defensive, deterrent strategy.

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<sup>44</sup> Michelle Jeria Bachelet, “Los estudios comparados y la relación civil-militar: Reflexiones tras una década de consolidación democrática en Chile,” (Santiago, Chile: *FASOC*, Vol. 17, No. 4, (October - December 2002), p. 32.

Based on a defensive strategy, the training of the Chilean armed forces has been for conventional warfare and, to a lesser extent, for internal national security. It is important to point out that, unlike other regional neighbors, Chile, given its harsh geography and socio-political consideration, did not face any guerrilla threats and, thus, preparation for anti-subversive war was minimal in the Chilean armed forces. In this sense, the military strategic culture and professional training has been essentially focused on classical warfare. Therefore, the study of Clausewitz remains in effect, along with the strategic thinking of other classics such as: Sun Tsu, Machiavelli, Frederick the Great, Napoleon, Jomini, Moltke, Graig, Liddell Hart, A. A. Beaufré Mahan, and others more contemporary.

The War Academies provide an important part of the formation of the Chilean Officers Staff. Academic training of military officers, particularly in the army, is very demanding and prestigious. Staff officer's studies in the War Academy, one of the oldest in the continent, founded in 1886, were three full years, and some were even required to study in the master's or doctoral programs. The technological training has become more advanced, especially in the navy and air force. In the navy all officers are engineers in various specialties and their studies are widely recognized in society.

Even in a world where the nature of threats has changed dramatically over the last two decades, the Chilean armed forces continue to focus on a conventional strategy. For example, the Declaration on Security in the Americas, adopted at the third plenary session, held on October 28 2003, identified the "new threats" faced by the entire continent, without prejudice to the existence of traditional threats.<sup>45</sup> Terrorism, transnational organized crime, the world illicit drug problem, corruption, money laundering, illicit trafficking of weapons and the connections between them, the extreme poverty and social exclusion of broad sectors of the population, which also affect stability and democracy: extreme poverty erodes social cohesion and undermines the security of states, natural disasters and human-induced, HIV/AIDS and other diseases, other health risks and environmental degradation, human trafficking, the cyber security attacks, the possibility of damage that may result in the case of an accident or incident during the maritime transport of hazardous materials, including oil and radioactive materials and toxic wastes and the possibility of access, possession and use of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery by terrorists. Yet, Chile's military strategy remained essentially one of general, defensive conventional deterrence against, particularly, the northern neighbors since the rivalry with Argentina ended in the mid-1990s.

In Chile, the security situation has allowed for most of the threats discussed above to be tackled by police forces rather than the military. The armed forces in Chile are adamantly opposed to be transformed into a police role or allowing the armed forces to become a police force. These threats are considered outside the mission of the armed forces. These are serious

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<sup>45</sup> Organización de Estados Americanos: *Declaración sobre Seguridad en las Américas. Aprobada el 28 de Octubre 2003* en <http://www.cicad.oas.org/Old/Ejemplos/SMS2009/DeclaracionSeguridadAmericas2003.pdf>

threats to human security. Problems such as narco-terrorism, urban gangs, illegal migration, arms trafficking, crime, among others, which are issues that confront the armed forces of other countries on the continent, are not part of Chile's traditional training and focus.<sup>46</sup>

In closing, who are the main protectors of the country's Strategic Culture? In Chile the ruling elites who advance and preserve the strategic culture are primarily those linked to state's governing bodies. Starting with the President of the Republic, Ministers, Congress, and, certainly, including the prominent role of the armed forces. National defense is considered "an affair of state" and, therefore, it means that it is accepted as such across governmental bodies. The strategic objectives of deterrence, international cooperation and development of cooperation are widely accepted by political elites. This highlights the existence of defense committees in the Senate and the House of Representatives who are increasingly interested in the defense issues, especially as they relate to the budgets of the armed forces and the operational readiness of military force. Also, in terms of public opinion, it was evident during the second half of 2009 an important and interesting debate through the media on issues of defense during the processing and approval of the new law of the Ministry of Defense highlighted the degree of acceptance by mainstream society of the armed forces' active role in procuring Chile's security interests in the region and on the world stage. On April 14, 2010 the IPSOS survey was published, which revealed that the armed forces and police were institutions with the highest approval rating and trust by the national citizenship. The approval rating stood at 75.8% for the police and the armed forces as the most trusted institutions in Chile.<sup>47</sup> This legitimizes the existing strategic culture and public confidence on the military in fulfilling its mission. This is also reflected in the survey conducted by TNS TIME, in December 2009, in which 95% of Chileans believed that the armed forces are very important to the country and 90% thought that the armed forces were prepared for carrying out their professional missions.

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<sup>46</sup> Griffiths-Spielman, "Cultura Estratégica Chilena: Criterios y Fundamentos Históricos, Militares, y Educativos;" and Urbina Paredes, "Cultura Estratégica en Chile: Una Perspectiva Militar."

<sup>47</sup> IPSOS: National survey, released on April 14 2010. The study, consisting of one thousand telephone surveys implemented between 16 and 30 March, also examines the climate of opinion in the country, the level of knowledge of the ministers, and government actions to overcome the earthquake and tsunami of 27 February 2010.

# About the Author

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