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Personalistic Authoritarian Successor Parties in Latin America

James Loxton and Steven Levitsky

When Peruvian autocrat Alberto Fujimori fled into exile in Japan in 2000, few observers expected that he or his followers had a political future. Leaked videotapes revealed to the world that Fujimori's government had not only been authoritarian but had also engaged in scandalous levels of corruption and abuse of power (Conaghan 2005). Moreover, Fujimori had been a notoriously personalistic ruler, creating and quickly discarding multiple political parties during his decade in power. The *Fujimorista* movement fragmented and was widely expected to disappear. Seventeen years later, however, *Fujimorismo* was the largest party in Peru. While Alberto Fujimori languished in prison (he was extradited to Peru in 2007, and was tried and found guilty of corruption and human rights abuses), his daughter, Keiko, rebuilt the *Fujimorista* organization, renaming it Popular Force. Keiko Fujimori nearly won the presidency in 2011 and 2016, and Popular Force captured an absolute majority of seats in Congress in 2016.

Fujimorismo is a case of an important, but understudied, type of authoritarian successor party: *personalistic authoritarian successor parties*. While most research on authoritarian successor parties focuses on former ruling parties of institutionalized regimes (see, for example, chapters by Cheng and Huang, Grzymala-Busse, Riedl, LeBas, Flores-Macías, and Slater and Wong, this volume), recent research has shown that authoritarian successor parties may also emerge from very different sorts of dictatorship (Loxton 2014a, 2015). Some, such as the Liberal Front Party (PFL)/Democrats (DEM) in Brazil, are born under military regimes (Power, Chapter 7, this volume). Others, such as *Fujimorismo*, have a more surprising origin still: they emerge from *personalistic dictatorships*, in which power is concentrated in the hands of an individual autocrat. After the transition to democracy, these parties tend to remain inextricably tied to the founding leader, typically running him at the top of the ticket.

Personalistic authoritarian successor parties are surprisingly widespread in Latin America. Indeed, they became prominent actors in a *majority* of Latin American countries – ten out of nineteen countries – between 1945 and 2010

(see Table 3.1). In total, twelve such parties have reached prominence (Panama and Peru each produced two). In five cases, the former autocrat himself was elected back into office (Juan Perón, Getúlio Vargas, José María Velasco Ibarra, Joaquín Balaguer, and Hugo Banzer),[1] and three other parties won the presidency with a different candidate.[2] A few of these parties even managed to "de-personalize" and endure long after the death of their founding leaders: Peronism remains Argentina's largest party more than four decades after Perón's death in 1974; the Democratic Revolutionary Party (PRD) in Panama survived the death of Omar Torrijos in 1981 and remains one of the country's main parties; and the Brazilian Labor Party (PTB) performed well in three election cycles after Vargas' death in 1954. More speculatively, *Fujimorismo* appears likely to outlive Alberto Fujimori, and the United Socialist Party of Venezuela (PSUV), the party of the late Hugo Chávez, would almost certainly survive a democratic transition in Venezuela.

The electoral success of personalistic authoritarian successor parties – and, in a few cases, their long-term survival – is puzzling, for two reasons. First, parties with obvious links to the authoritarian past are generally not expected to perform well under democracy. According to one influential argument, authoritarian successor parties must "break symbolically with the past" in order to thrive under democracy (Grzymala-Busse 2002: 79). However, for parties that are founded and usually led by former dictators, it is difficult to make such a break. Indeed, many of them publicly emphasize their authoritarian roots. Second, personalistic leadership is widely viewed as antithetical to the emergence of durable political organizations. As parties characterized by both personalism and undeniable links to the authoritarian past, then, personalistic authoritarian successor parties should be doubly damned.

In this chapter, we examine the phenomenon of personalistic authoritarian successor parties in Latin America and consider why they often perform well at the ballot box, and in a few cases, "de-personalize." We make two main arguments. First, we argue that such parties' personalism and obvious roots in dictatorship do *not* present major obstacles to a strong electoral performance. Parties may deal with their authoritarian past through a strategy of *scapegoating* or by simply *embracing the past*, and personalism can actually be an asset (at least initially), both as a means of attracting votes and as a source of organizational cohesion. Second, we argue that while personalistic authoritarian successor parties may not face major obstacles in terms of

[1] Another case of a dictator being elected back into office is Carlos Ibáñez del Campo, the former Chilean dictator (1927–1931) who democratically returned to the presidency in 1952 (Grugel 1992). However, because Ibáñez did not form his own party, we do not include it here. For more on former dictators elected back into office, see Conclusion (Loxton, this volume).

[2] These are José Antonio Remón Cantera's National Patriotic Coalition (CPN) and Omar Torrijos' Democratic Revolutionary Party (PRD) in Panama, and Efraín Ríos Montt's Guatemalan Republican Front (FRG).

electoral performance, they *do* face serious challenges with respect to longevity. Because so much of their electoral appeal is based on the leader, and because they tend to substitute the leader's personal authority for developed internal party structures, they often face severe crises – and even collapse – when the leader dies or retires. However, we argue that they are more likely to avoid this fate where the founding autocrat is associated with a clear program, set of policies, or constituency, and where the authoritarian regime produces deep societal polarization, as in the cases of Peronism in Argentina and the PRD in Panama.

3.1 INTRODUCING PERSONALISTIC AUTHORITARIAN SUCCESSOR PARTIES

Personalistic authoritarian successor parties are *parties that operate in democratic regimes, but that were founded and initially led by a personalistic dictator (or former dictator)*. Like all authoritarian successor parties, they combine past connections to authoritarianism with present participation in democracy (Introduction, this volume). However, they emerge from a specific kind of authoritarian regime: *personalistic dictatorship*. Barbara Geddes (1999) famously divided authoritarian regimes into three ideal types: single-party, military, and personalist. Whereas in military and single-party regimes, military officers or ruling parties exert significant influence, the distinguishing characteristic of personalist dictatorships is that power is overwhelmingly concentrated in the hands of one leader. As Geddes writes: "Personalist regimes differ from both military and single-party regimes in that access to office and the fruits of office depends much more on the discretion of an individual leader. The leader may be an officer and may have created a party to support himself, but neither the military nor the party exercises independent decision-making power insulated from the whims of the ruler" (1999: 121–122).

Personalistic *dictatorships*, unsurprisingly, tend to beget personalistic *parties*. According to Kostadinova and Levitt (2014: 492), personalistic parties are defined by two main criteria: "the presence of a dominant leader and a party 'organization' that is weakly institutionalized by design." While the leader need not be charismatic,[3] he or she must dominate the party's internal life for it to be personalistic. The leader makes virtually all important decisions, such as "determining the direction and vision of party platforms and campaigns; nominating candidates for elections; deciding on the allocation of organizational resources; and wielding authority over other politicians from his or her party, particularly members of his or her parliamentary caucus" (Kostadinova and Levitt 2014: 500). In addition to dominating the party's internal life, the leader is the party's public face, typically running at the top of the ticket. For example, Hugo Banzer was Nationalist Democratic Action's

[3] On "noncharismatic personalism," see Ansell and Fish (1999).

(ADN) presidential candidate in six consecutive elections (1979, 1980, 1985, 1989, 1993, and 1997), and Joaquín Balaguer was the Social Christian Reformist Party's (PRSC) presidential candidate *nine times* between 1966 and 2000. When former dictators are barred from running, presidential candidates are usually surrogates. Thus, Peronism's candidate in 1973, Héctor Cámpora, ran under the slogan "Cámpora to the presidency, Perón to power."[4] Likewise, the Guatemalan Republican Front's (FRG) Alfonso Portillo ran for president in 1995–1996 with the slogan "Portillo to the presidency, Ríos Montt to power."[5] When the founding leader retires or dies, the party leadership often passes to his spouse (e.g., Isabel Martínez de Perón, María Delgado de Odría) or child (e.g., María Eugenia Rojas, Zury Ríos, Keiko Fujimori).

Personalistic authoritarian successor parties have been surprisingly common in Latin America. Using Geddes, Wright, and Frantz's (2014a) Autocratic Regimes Data Set, we identified a total of twenty-four personalistic regimes that existed – and ended – in Latin America between 1945 and 2010.[6] (These cases are listed in Appendix 3.1.) In eighteen of these twenty-four regimes, autocrats or their allies created a party, either during or shortly after the fall of the regime.[7] Of these eighteen parties, fourteen survived the autocrat's fall from power and can thus be described as potential authoritarian successor parties. However, only twelve of them actually competed in democratic elections. These are listed in Table 3.1.[8] All twelve parties won at least 10 percent of the vote in one or more national elections, thereby meeting the criteria for electoral prominence employed in the Introduction (Loxton, this volume). Eight of the twelve parties were elected back into national office (PJ, PTB, FNV, CPN, PRSC, PRD, ADN, FRG), and two others came within a hair's breadth of the presidency (ANAPO, *Fujimorismo*). Four of the twelve parties survived the death of the founder (PJ, PTB, CPN, PRD), which we operationalize as winning above 10 percent in three subsequent elections, though only two have survived to the present (PJ, PRD).[9]

[4] Quoted in McGuire (1997: 163).

[5] Quoted in Larry Rohter, "Guatemala Election Becomes Vote on Former Dictator," *The New York Times*, January 7, 1996.

[6] For coding details, see Appendix 3.1.

[7] In the remaining cases, rulers either inherited a party (e.g., Alfredo Stroessner and the Colorado Party in Paraguay; Tiburcio Carías and the National Party in Honduras; and Manuel Noriega and the PRD in Panama) or governed without a party.

[8] We do not include Hugo Chávez's PSUV, since Venezuela remains under authoritarian rule. However, if, as is likely, the PSUV were to survive an eventual transition to democracy, it would qualify as a personalistic authoritarian successor party.

[9] In the case of *Fujimorismo*, the founder (Alberto Fujimori) is still alive. However, as we discuss below, the party seems poised to survive his eventual death.

TABLE 3.1 *Prominent personalistic ASPs in Latin America, 1945–2010*

Country	Party	Founder	Authoritarian regime	Elected back into office?	Survived death of founder?
Argentina	Peronism (now Justicialista Party, PJ)	Juan Perón	1946–1955[10]	Yes	Yes
Bolivia	Nationalist Democratic Action (ADN)	Hugo Banzer	1971–1978	Yes	No
Brazil[11]	Brazilian Labor Party (PTB)	Getúlio Vargas	1930–1945	Yes	Yes
Colombia	National Popular Alliance (ANAPO)	Gustavo Rojas Pinilla	1953–1957	No	No
Dominican Republic	Social Christian Reformist Party (PRSC)	Joaquín Balaguer	1966–1978 1986–1996	Yes	No
Ecuador	Velasquista National Federation (FNV)	José María Velasco Ibarra	1944–1947, 1970–1972	Yes	No
Guatemala	Guatemalan Republican Front (FRG)	Efraín Ríos Montt	1982–1983	Yes	No
Panama	National Patriotic Coalition (CPN)	José Antonio Remón Cantera	1952–1955	Yes	Yes
Panama	Democratic Revolutionary Party (PRD)	Omar Torrijos	1968–1981	Yes	Yes
Peru	Odriísta National Union (UNO)	Manuel Odría	1948–1956	No	No

(*continued*)

[10] Prior to this, Perón was also a high-level official in Argentina's 1943–1946 military regime.

[11] Vargas' dictatorship also gave rise to another political party, the Social Democratic Party (PSD). However, we do not include it in our list of cases, since it was less closely associated with Vargas than the PTB. This could be seen, for example, in the 1950 general election, when the PSD did not support Vargas' presidential candidacy, running its own candidate instead (Levine 1998: 79).

TABLE 3.1 (*continued*)

Country	Party	Founder	Authoritarian regime	Elected back into office?	Survived death of founder?
Peru	*Fujimorismo* (now Popular Force)	Alberto Fujimori	1992–2000	No	N/A
Venezuela	Nationalist Civic Crusade (CCN)	Marcos Pérez Jiménez	1948–1958	No	No

Despite their obvious personalism, it would be a mistake to view these parties as nothing more than vehicles for individual candidates.[12] Many of them were real parties, with impressive territorial organizations capable of fielding candidates in presidential, legislative, and subnational elections over multiple cycles. This organizational strength was clearest in the cases of Peronism in Argentina and the PRD in Panama, which survived the deaths of their founding leaders and became their countries' most important parties, but it was true of other cases, as well. For example, although the National Popular Alliance (ANAPO) is best known for Gustavo Rojas Pinilla's near-victory in Colombia's 1970 presidential election, it was a well-organized party: "By 1970, at least in the large urban areas, ANAPO had in some ways come to resemble a modern mass party, complete with myriad barrio-level organizations, regular dues and carnets, mass rallies, party training schools, more or less regular party media, a centralized command structure, and strict party discipline" (Dix 1978: 345). Indeed, "[f]or a time it may have been the most effectively organized political movement ever to exist in Colombia" (Dix 1978: 345). Likewise, *Fujimorismo* has displaced APRA as Peru's largest political party (Levitsky 2018; Meléndez 2012, 2014). In short, many personalistic authoritarian successor parties have become among their countries' most important political actors, and several of them have returned to power under democracy.

3.2 DOUBLY DAMNED? PERSONALISM AND AUTHORITARIAN BAGGAGE

The strong performance of so many personalistic authoritarian successor parties in Latin America is puzzling, for two reasons. First, as parties with such obvious roots in dictatorship, they had fewer options available to them for dealing with the past than other authoritarian successor parties. As discussed in

[12] On the presidential candidacies of "recycled dictators," see Kyle (2016).

the Introduction (Loxton, this volume), all authoritarian successor parties are born with a mix of *authoritarian inheritance* and *authoritarian baggage*. A crucial part of succeeding under democracy is to find a strategy that allows the party to minimize the costs of its authoritarian baggage, while maximizing the benefits of its authoritarian inheritance. The most obvious strategies are *contrition* and *obfuscation*. With contrition, the party attempts to offload its baggage by making a clean break with the past. As Grzymala-Busse (2002) has shown, this was the strategy pursued to great effect by some parties in East Central Europe, with parties changing their names, abandoning old symbols, and denouncing the abuses of the former regime. With obfuscation, the party attempts to offload its baggage by downplaying its connections to the former regime. As Power discusses in his chapter (Chapter 7, this volume), Brazil's PFL/DEM has attempted such a strategy.

For personalistic authoritarian successor parties, however, neither of these strategies is feasible. The centrality of the former dictator in the party's life and/or identity makes breaking with the past virtually impossible. It is hard to denounce or deny connections to the person at the top of the ticket or who gives the party its formal (e.g., *Odriísta* National Union, *Velasquista* National Federation) or informal name (e.g., *Peronismo, Fujimorismo*). Indeed, connections to the former dictator tend to be these parties' greatest electoral asset. However, two of the other strategies discussed in the Introduction (Loxton, this volume) *are* available to them: *scapegoating* and *embracing the past*. In the former, the party blames the unsavory aspects of the former regime on someone other than the party founder. The best example is Panama's PRD, which embraced the memory of the dictator who founded it, Omar Torrijos, while cutting all ties to the dictator who succeeded him, Manuel Noriega. In the event of a hypothetical transition to democracy in Venezuela, the PSUV would likely pursue a similar strategy, embracing the memory of its popular founder, Hugo Chávez, while blaming his successor, Nicolás Maduro, for the severe economic crisis that came to plague the regime.[13] However, not all parties have a convenient scapegoat, and thus have little choice but to embrace the past. While this would seem a very risky strategy, given that some of the regimes from which these parties emerged committed large-scale human rights abuses (e.g., Ríos Montt dictatorship in Guatemala), it has proven to be surprisingly effective in several cases, as discussed in the following section.[14]

A second reason why the success of personalistic authoritarian successor parties is surprising is that personalism is widely considered to be antithetical to party-building (Mainwaring and Scully 1995; Weyland 1996, 1999). Personalistic leaders rarely invest in party institutions that could limit their power and autonomy, and they frequently discourage the rise of talented new leaders who could potentially challenge their control of the party.[15] In fact,

[13] For more on this, see the conclusion of this chapter.
[14] For a similar argument, see Deming (2013). See also Grzymala-Busse (Chapter 4, this volume).
[15] For a similar point, see Panebianco (1988: 67, 147).

many personalistic leaders actively – and repeatedly – undermine their own parties in order to preserve their own power. Perón, for example, dissolved the Labor Party that brought him to power in 1946 and aggressively resisted efforts to build a more institutionalized Peronist party in the 1960s (McGuire 1997). Likewise, Alberto Fujimori abandoned three of his own parties (Change 90, New Majority, and Let's Go Neighbor) during his presidency (1990–2000).[16] According to Keiko Fujimori, her father "didn't believe in parties. Like a good *caudillo*, he doesn't like to cede power. And to build a party organization, you have to cede power."[17] Even in cases where party leaders do not actively sabotage their own parties, personalistic authoritarian successor parties are likely to face a crisis once the leader exits the political stage.[18] Bolivia's ADN, for example, oscillated between 20 and 35 percent of the vote in general elections between 1985 and 1997, with Banzer at the top of the party ticket. In the 2002 general election, however, which took place less than two months after Banzer's death, the party's vote share plummeted to 3.4 percent, before disappearing altogether. Most personalistic authoritarian successor parties in Latin America have suffered a similar fate.

Nevertheless, personalistic leaders may also *contribute* to party-building. In fact, some of the most successful parties in Latin American history have been led by dominant personalities – if not fully personalistic leaders – during their formative years. There are two major ways that such leaders may strengthen new parties. First, they may attract votes. As Samuels and Shugart (2010) have shown, presidential systems compel parties to nominate candidates with broad popular appeal. Without a popular leader at the top of the ticket, new parties are unlikely to be competitive in a presidential democracy. And non-competitive parties rarely endure, with voters and donors throwing their support to other parties with more realistic prospects. In Latin America, party leaders have often played a decisive role in making new parties electorally viable. This has most obviously been the case in populist movements such as Peronism, *Fujimorismo*, and *Chavismo*, but it has been the case in a variety of other kinds of parties, as well.[19]

A second way that personalistic leaders can contribute to party-building is by serving as a source of intra-party cohesion. As Van Dyck (2018) argues, party

[16] His fourth, Peru 2000, disappeared after his fall from power.

[17] Steven Levitsky's interview with Keiko Fujimori, Lima, July 25, 2013.

[18] For similar points, see Panebianco (1988: 53, 67) and Kostadinova and Levitt (2014: 500–501).

[19] Even when they were *not* fully personalistic, party leaders have often been crucial for making parties electorally viable. This has been true for some of Latin America's most established parties, such as APRA and Popular Action (AP) in Peru; the National Liberation Party (PLN) in Costa Rica; Democratic Action (AD) and COPEI in Venezuela; and the Dominican Revolutionary Party (PRD) and Dominican Liberation Party (PLD). Party leaders have also been crucial to the electoral viability of newer parties, such as the Nationalist Republican Alliance (ARENA) in El Salvador; Workers' Party (PT) in Brazil; Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) in Mexico; and Movement toward Socialism (MAS) in Bolivia.

leaders who combine broad "external appeal" with the electorate and "internal dominance" of the party may help bind new parties together during the critical formative period. Party founders with undisputed internal authority can play a key role in limiting conflict within their parties, since their word is effectively law. As Panebianco (1988: 66) puts it, such leaders can act as a kind of "cement" holding the party's different factions together.[20] Without this cement, parties can enter into crisis. In Bolivia, for example, after Banzer temporarily retired from politics after the 1993 election, ADN descended into bitter factional struggles. This led to calls for Banzer's return, since no one else had the same "capacity to reach agreement" among "the wide and varied array of people" who made up the party (Jetté, Foronda, and López 1997: 56). In many cases, the leader's electoral appeal may also help reduce the likelihood of schism, as the prospect of competing without the leader's coattails discourages other party elites from defecting.

To conclude, undeniable links to a past dictatorship and a high degree of dependence on a party leader create difficulties for personalistic authoritarian successor parties. However, these are not as insurmountable as they might seem. As we show in the sections that follow, scapegoating and embracing the past have proven to be surprisingly effective strategies for winning votes, and the effects of personalism on party-building are double-edged rather than entirely negative. While attachment to a personalistic leader may create obstacles to a party's survival in the longer term, it can also enhance its electoral appeal and internal cohesion during the critical formative period.

3.3 WINNING VOTES BY EMBRACING THE PAST

The idea that embracing the authoritarian past is a viable vote-winning strategy for a party competing in democracy is counterintuitive. In her study of authoritarian successor parties in East Central Europe, Grzymala-Busse (2002) explains why this strategy would appear to be a nonstarter. By the late 1980s, communist regimes were "widely despised by their own citizens" (Grzymala-Busse 2002: 2). Given this "popular hatred," it made sense for authoritarian successor parties to distance themselves from communist symbols, since these "had outlived whatever usefulness and legitimacy they once had" (Grzymala-Busse 2002: 3, 77–79).[21] Another example is the National Party in South Africa. As the ruling party of the undemocratic and explicitly racist Apartheid regime, it left power with exceedingly little legitimacy among the country's nonwhite majority. Given this background, Grzymala-Busse (2002: 276–277) argues that the only way that it could have succeeded

[20] Again, this is true even in cases of party leaders who were *not* fully personalistic, such as Víctor Raúl Haya de la Torre in Peru's APRA, Lula in Brazil's PT, Roberto D'Aubuisson in El Salvador's ARENA, and Jaime Guzmán in Chile's Independent Democratic Union (UDI).

[21] In her chapter (Chapter 4, this volume), Grzymala-Busse reconsiders this earlier argument.

under democracy was by thoroughly distancing itself from the past. It failed to do so and collapsed shortly after the transition to democracy.

Yet not all authoritarian regimes are as hated as the communist regimes of East Central Europe or South Africa's Apartheid regime. Indeed, a growing literature on what Dimitrov (2009) calls "popular autocrats" shows that some dictatorships enjoy substantial popular support, especially when they can claim accomplishments in areas such as the economy, national defense, and public security.[22] There is good reason to think that the regimes that gave rise to the twelve parties examined in this chapter enjoyed such support – not necessarily from majorities, but at least from large minorities. Five grew out of what Levitsky and Way (2010) call competitive authoritarian regimes (Peronism, FNV, CPN, PRSC, *Fujimorismo*). While the playing field was tilted against the opposition in these regimes, elections were somewhat competitive, and thus incumbents' victories suggested at least a degree of popular support. Even in cases where dictators came to power through military means, they were not necessarily any more illegitimate than those who preceded and followed them, with three of them (Rojas Pinilla, Banzer, Ríos Montt) coming to power after overthrowing leaders who were themselves authoritarian and three of them being replaced (Banzer, Ríos Montt, Torrijos) by new military rulers.

But even more important than how these leaders entered and exited office was what they did there. As discussed in the Introduction (Loxton, this volume), some dictatorships govern abysmally and thus produce only authoritarian baggage. Others, however, have a more mixed record in office, leaving legacies with both negative and positive dimensions. All of the parties examined in this chapter could claim achievements in areas such as social policy, public security, political stability, or national pride. In some cases, these achievements seemed even more impressive after the transition to democracy, with new democracies plagued by economic crisis, political instability, violent crime, or perceptions of corruption. Thus, while these dictatorships undoubtedly produced authoritarian *baggage*, they also produced considerable authoritarian *inheritance*. Under such circumstances, a strategy of simply embracing the past sometimes proved viable.

One of the best illustrations is Bolivia's ADN. After taking power in a coup in 1971, General Hugo Banzer unleashed a wave of "[v]iolent repression" against "Left party activists, student leaders, labor leaders, church activists, and others" (Malloy and Gamarra 1988: 74–75). This set the stage for seven years (1971–1978) of harsh dictatorship, with widespread torture, political imprisonment, and forced exile, as well as some "disappearances."[23] Yet

[22] For more on this, see Conclusion (Loxton, this volume).

[23] See Andres Schipani, "Hidden Cells Reveal Bolivia's Dark Past," *BBC News*, March 5, 2009.

while Banzer was clearly responsible for large-scale human rights violations, he could also claim significant accomplishments. One was political stability. In the year before he took power, Bolivia had experienced "an almost comic series of coups and countercoups," and in the four years after he was overthrown, "there were seven military and two weak civilian governments" (Gamarra and Malloy 1995: 406, 409). Banzer's seven years of rule were, by comparison, an island of relative calm.[24] Second, he presided over an economic boom. Due to a spike in the value of the country's exports and the availability of cheap international credit, Bolivia enjoyed rapid economic growth, which "created popular support for the regime despite its antidemocratic activities" (Klein 2011: 231). Again, the contrast with the period after Banzer was overthrown was stark. When democracy finally took hold in 1982, the country suffered a devastating economic crisis, in which "growth rates were negative, real salaries dramatically deteriorated, and inflation reached 8,000 percent by 1985" (Conaghan, Malloy, and Abugattas 1990: 17). This meant that when Banzer later drew a distinction between, in his words, the "seven years of prosperity [*vacas gordas*]" of his regime and the "seven of leanness [*vacas flacas*]" that followed,[25] there was some truth to it.

Banzer's dominance of ADN and perennial place at the top of the party ticket meant that there was no escape from the past;[26] more to the point, his record as dictator meant there was no *need* to escape from it. In order to capitalize on this past, ADN adopted the Banzer dictatorship's slogan of "Order, Peace, and Work,"[27] and explained that its goal was "to consolidate the seven years of progress" begun during his first period as president.[28] The party made one of its campaign slogans *Banzer vuelve* ("Banzer will return") and ran a series of before-and-after advertisements that explicitly appealed to nostalgia for the Banzer years. One from 1980, for example, shows two images of bread rolls, one smaller than the other, and reads: "Compare. Before, just three years ago, when Banzer governed, this bread cost $b0.50. Now, if you can even find it, this smaller and worse bread costs twice as much. Whose fault is this? Do you want to eat good and cheap bread again? Have faith, because Banzer will return."[29]

[24] Indeed, Banzer's seven years in office made him the "longest-serving president since 1871" (Whitehead 1986: 55).

[25] Quoted in Sivak (2001: 247).

[26] From the beginning, ADN was thoroughly personalistic. According to one study, "the party was managed like a business by its owner," and "[a]ny dissent was motive for expulsion or exclusion" (Peñaranda Bojanic 2004: 61).

[27] See Dunkerley (1984: 203) and "Se fundó ADN; La Jefaturiza Hugo Banzer Suárez; Propugna Orden, Paz y Trabajo," *El Diario*, March 25, 1979.

[28] See *Presencia*, March 24, 1979.

[29] See *El Diario*, June 15, 1980. ADN ran similar advertisements about housing, public works, employment, poverty, and shortages of foodstuffs. See issues of *El Diario* from June 22–26, 1979, and May 30-June 20, 1980.

With respect to the repression that occurred under his watch, Banzer showed little remorse, asserting, "We acted with authoritarianism, I admit it. But that was part of a historical moment ... I can't go around on my knees all day apologizing."[30] Besides, he explained, "[t]hose who disappeared were neither little angels nor saints."[31] While such comments no doubt repelled many Bolivians, for others, the slogan *Banzer vuelve* must have sounded like "the rough equivalent of 'Happy days are here again'" (Conaghan, Malloy, and Abugattas 1990: 11). The strategy of embracing the past worked: ADN was one of Bolivia's three main parties for two decades. Between 1985 and 1997, it oscillated between 20 and 35 percent of the vote, and Banzer was democratically voted back into the presidency in 1997.[32] Indeed, ADN held the presidency or was part of a coalition government for all but four years during the 1985–2002 period.

An even more startling example of a personalistic authoritarian successor party winning votes by embracing the past is Efraín Ríos Montt's FRG in Guatemala. Ríos Montt is arguably the worst human rights violator in Latin American history. After taking power through a coup in March 1982, his government unleashed a "scorched earth" campaign of mass slaughter against suspected guerrillas and their supporters.[33] Estimates of the number of people killed during his year and a half as dictator range from 25,000 to 87,000.[34] Most were civilians of various Mayan ethnicities, leading some to describe these events as "the Mayan holocaust" (Garrard-Burnett 2010: 7).[35]

This genocidal killing spree, however, did not turn the entire population against Ríos Montt. In fact, to many Guatemalans he became a "popular hero" (Garrard-Burnett 2010: 9). One reason is that, as the country's first evangelical Protestant president, he won the support of much of Guatemala's large evangelical population (Garrard-Burnett 2010). Another was that he undertook "a well-publicized program against dishonest public officials," preaching about the evils of corruption and urging citizens "to report dishonest government employees" (Handy 1984: 267).[36] Much of Ríos Montt's popularity, however, seems to have stemmed from his effectiveness in violently establishing "law and order." Brutal as it

[30] Quoted in "El ex dictador Hugo Banzer, virtual ganador en las elecciones de Bolivia," *El País*, June 2, 1997.
[31] Quoted in Sivak (2001: 40).
[32] Banzer won pluralities in the 1985 and 1997 presidential elections. However, because of the peculiarities of Bolivia's electoral system at the time, he was not elected president in 1985.
[33] For a detailed description of this campaign, see Schirmer (1998).
[34] See Schirmer (1998: 44, 56) and Garrard-Burnett (2010: 6–7).
[35] See also Elisabeth Malkin, "Former Leader of Guatemala Is Guilty of Genocide Against Mayan Group," *The New York Times*, May 10, 2013.
[36] See also Stoll (1990/1991).

was, his regime largely succeeded in decimating the guerrillas, and violence, while "more deadly," was also "more methodical and less chaotic" (Garrard-Burnett 2010: 87) than under previous dictators. This meant that many Guatemalans came to regard Ríos Montt's eighteen months in power as a kind of "*pax riosmonttista*" and credited him "with restoring order and authority" (Garrard-Burnett 2010: 81). In August 1983, he was overthrown in a coup, and in 1985, Guatemala made a rocky transition to competitive elections. High crime rates and persistent corruption, however, made many look back on the Ríos Montt dictatorship with nostalgia. As one focus group participant recalled to the sociologist Angelina Snodgrass Godoy, "[I]n the regime of Ríos Montt, everything was in order. Order. And I liked that." Another agreed, recalling that in those days, "It was a death for a death."[37] Such recollections may help explain Azpuru's (2003) finding that one of the strongest statistical predictors of support for the FRG was fear of crime.

Ríos Montt's record as dictator gave the FRG – created in 1989 – a ready-made electoral appeal. From the beginning, the party was "virtually synonymous with the figure of Ríos Montt," who "'owned' and ruled the FRG as his personal fiefdom" (Sánchez 2008: 138). The FRG embraced Ríos Montt's past: he was referred to as *El General* (Sánchez 2008: 138), and he appeared in his army uniform in campaign advertisements (Stoll 1990/1991: 6–7). The party's emblem was a blue-and-white hand with three raised fingers, the same one that Ríos Montt had used as dictator to symbolize a three-part pledge ("I don't steal, I don't lie, I don't abuse"). During his dictatorship, the hand had been "ubiquitous": in urban areas, "it appeared in all public offices and in full-page ads in the national newspapers," and in rural areas, "it appeared painted on rock, whitewashed on mountainsides … [and] on signs posted by the army in newly 'pacified' villages" (Garrard-Burnett 2010: 61). Later, the hand became similarly ubiquitous in FRG literature, advertisements, and campaign events.

The FRG also made rhetorical appeals to the past. Citing the problems of corruption and crime, Ríos Montt explained in a 1990 interview: "We eliminated the garbage once and we can do it again."[38] Similarly, in a 1995 interview, he defended his dictatorship, asserting, "I was honest with my country, indifferent to outside pressures … I found a government that was destroyed, a state that was destroyed, a state that had been looted, a state without law. I put it in order."[39]

[37] Quoted in Godoy (2006: 64). See also Tim Weiner, "A Former Ruler's Candidacy Revives Fears in Guatemala," *The New York Times*, November 9, 2003.

[38] Quoted in Trudeau (1993: 145).

[39] Quoted in Tracy Wilkinson, "World Report Profile: Efrain Rios Montt: To the Dismay of Human Rights Activists, the Former Dictator is Now President of Guatemala's Congress, a Position Seen as a Springboard to the Nation's Highest Post," *Los Angeles Times*, February 14, 1995.

This message appealed to many Guatemalans. Although Ríos Montt was constitutionally barred from running for president in 1990, polls indicated that he was by far the most popular candidate, with about one-third of those surveyed backing him (Trudeau 1993: 145). In the second round of the 1999 presidential election, the FRG candidate, Alfonso Portillo, won with a whopping 68.3 percent of the vote.

If Bolivia's ADN and Guatemala's FRG are examples of parties that won votes by *embracing the past*, Panama's PRD is an example of the power of *scapegoating*. The PRD was founded in 1979 by Omar Torrijos, who took power in a coup in 1968 and ruled until his death in a plane crash in 1981. As discussed below, Torrijos could claim significant achievements, notably two treaties with the United States ceding control of the Panama Canal. Under democracy, the PRD enthusiastically embraced Torrijos' memory, featuring him prominently in its literature and regularly commemorating the anniversary of his death (García Díez 2001: 577). The party chose his son, Martín Torrijos, as its presidential candidate in 1999 and 2004 (he won the second time). Martín's campaign theme song was called "Omar lives" (García Díez 2001: 581), and he described his father on the stump as "my hero."[40] The PRD has continued to celebrate even the overtly authoritarian elements of its past. To this day, the party's logo is an "O" with the number "11" written inside it – a reference to October 11, 1968, the date of the coup that brought Torrijos to power (García Díez 2001: 580).[41]

Yet the PRD's ability to capitalize on memories of Torrijos was complicated by the legacy of Torrijos' successor, Manuel Noriega, who took power in 1983 and continued to use the PRD as his own authoritarian ruling party. Given the corruption and brutality of Noriega's rule – and the fact that his action provoked a military invasion by the United States in late 1989 – the PRD has, since the transition to democracy, tried to cut all links to him. In the 1994 election, for example, PRD presidential candidate Ernesto Pérez Balladares called Noriega a "traitor and a disgrace to the country,"[42] who was the worst leader in Panamanian history.[43] He described the Noriega period as an "aberration" and insisted that the post-1989 PRD had "nothing to do with

[40] Quoted in Carol J. Williams, "Panama Voters Back Dictator's Son as President," *Los Angeles Times*, May 3, 2004.

[41] Similarly, on October 12, 2014, the PRD posted on Facebook about an event held a day earlier at the party's headquarters – in the Omar Torrijos Room – to celebrate the anniversary of the coup, which, as the general secretary explained, is a "very special day for us." Quoted in Secretaría de Prensa PRD, "PRD recordó el 11 de octubre de 1968" [Facebook status update]. Available from: www.facebook.com/secretariadeprensaprd11/posts/521675364602800 [Accessed July 12, 2016].

[42] Quoted in Howard W. French, "Panama Journal; Democracy at Work, Under Shadow of Dictators," *The New York Times*, February 21, 1994.

[43] Howard W. French, "Businessman Appears to Oust 'Old Guard' In Panama Election," *The New York Times*, May 9, 1994.

Noriega."[44] The PRD's strong electoral performance suggests that this strategy of scapegoating worked. Since the transition to democracy, it has won the largest share of the vote in every legislative election (with the exception of 2014, when it came in second), and it has won the presidency twice: in 1994 (the first democratic election after the US invasion), with the election of Pérez Balladares, and in 2004, with the election of Martín Torrijos.

In Peru, *Fujimorismo* also attempted a variant of the scapegoating strategy. After winning a democratic election in 1990, President Alberto Fujimori carried out a "self-coup" in 1992 and subsequently established a competitive authoritarian regime (Conaghan 2005). Although Fujimori's government was responsible for large-scale corruption and human rights violations, his success in ending hyperinflation and defeating the Shining Path guerrillas generated substantial popular support.[45] The regime collapsed in 2000 after the release of a series of videos detailing massive corruption by his intelligence chief, Vladimiro Montesinos. Fujimori fled the country in disgrace, and later was extradited, convicted, and imprisoned on charges of corruption and human rights violations. Nevertheless, he retained considerable popular support. In a 2006 survey, for example, 48 percent of respondents expressed a positive view of his presidency.[46] In a May 2011 survey, 30 percent of respondents ranked Fujimori as Peru's best president over the last fifty years.[47] And in a 2013 survey, 42 percent of Peruvians described Fujimori's performance as "good" or "very good."[48] This popular support allowed *Fujimorismo* to win votes by "hewing to the past" (Deming 2013). Through 2011, the party continued to be led by prominent members of the Fujimori regime, and Fujimori's daughter, Keiko, was its presidential candidate in 2011 and 2016. During the 2011 campaign, Keiko described her father as "the best president in Peruvian history" and promised to pardon him if elected.[49]

However, like the PRD in Panama, *Fujimorismo* was forced to wrestle with the fact that the Fujimori regime ended in disgrace. It attempted to do this through a scapegoat, Vladimiro Montesinos, whom the party accused of carrying out the regime's worst abuses without Fujimori's knowledge (Urrutia 2011a: 113). Thus, for *Fujimoristas*, "Montesinos did not form part of *Fujimorismo*, but rather was an autonomous entity that had created his own

[44] Quoted in Tracy Wilkinson, "Perez Vows New Image for Panama Party," *Los Angeles Times*, 2 September 1994, and "Noriega Party Claims Victory in Panama Race," *Los Angeles Times*, May 9, 1994.

[45] When Fujimori was sworn in for an illegal third term in August 2000, his approval rating stood at 45 percent (Carrión 2006: 126).

[46] Ipsos Apoyo survey, January 2006. [47] Ipsos Apoyo survey, May 9, 2011.

[48] GfK survey, June 18–19, 2013.

[49] See Mariano Castillo, "Peruvian Candidate Rallies in Shadow of Former Strongman," *CNN*, April 13, 2011. Available from: www.cnn.com/2011/WORLD/americas/04/12/peru.keiko.fujimori/ [Accessed on March 29, 2015]. Moreover, Keiko's 2011 campaign was reportedly directed by her father, with campaign headquarters located just 20 meters from his prison cell. See "Campaña de Keiko Fujimori se dirige desde la Diroes," *La República*, May 18, 2011.

current – '*Montesinismo*' – which was not recognized as belonging to the [*Fujimorista*] legacy" (Urrutia 2011a: 113). The strategy was fairly successful. Under Keiko Fujimori's leadership, *Fujimorismo* reemerged as one of Peru's leading parties (Levitsky 2018; Urrutia 2011a). In 2006, it won 13 percent of the legislative vote, and in 2011, it won 23 percent of the legislative vote and Keiko Fujimori nearly captured the presidency. In 2016, Keiko adopted a strategy of mild contrition, embracing the findings of Peru's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (which implicated her father's government in human rights violations), declaring that she would not have closed Congress as her father had done, and abandoning her pledge to pardon him.[50] She finished first in the first round of the 2016 presidential election, losing the runoff by a mere 0.2 percent, and *Fujimorismo* won an absolute majority in Congress.

3.4 THE CHALLENGE OF DE-PERSONALIZATION

Although personalistic leadership can be an asset to parties during their formative phase, it creates serious obstacles to party longevity. As Table 3.1 shows, there are only four cases of personalistic authoritarian successor parties surviving their founders' deaths, and only two of those have survived to the present day. In seven cases, the party did not survive the death of the leader, and in one case (*Fujimorismo*), the party leader has not yet died. It is no coincidence that relatively few personalistic authoritarian successor parties have endured in the long term. The very contributions that the personalistic leader makes in the short-to-medium term – attracting votes and serving as a source of cohesion – can become liabilities once the leader exits the political stage, for two reasons. First, if the party's electoral performance is dependent on the leader's popularity, the party risks electoral collapse once that leader is no longer at the top of the ticket. Where voters are attached to a particular leader rather than a party brand or program, it can prove difficult to transfer loyalties from the leader to the party when the leader departs (Kostadinova and Levitt 2014: 500–501; also Panebianco 1988: 53, 67, 147). With the disruption of the personalistic linkage, the party's electoral base is suddenly up for grabs, and the result is often dramatic electoral decline.

Second, personalistic parties tend to lack organizational lives of their own. The intra-party power asymmetries generated by the leader's personal capacity to deliver votes endows him with vast discretionary authority (Samuels and Shugart 2010). Party leaders often use that

[50] See "Keiko estima garantizar por escrito que no indultará a su padre," *El Comercio*, January 24, 2016, and "Keiko: 'Yo de ninguna manera hubiera cerrado el Congreso,'" *El Comercio*, January 31, 2016.

authority to prevent the creation of party institutions that could constrain them and block the ascent of talented politicians who could challenge them. Personalistic party organizations thus tend to possess weak internal structures dominated by loyalist hacks who lack both independent voter bases and intra-party authority. This is a recipe for crisis following the departure of the leader.

In order to survive in the longer term, personalistic authoritarian successor parties must overcome two major challenges. First, they must *solve the problem of leadership succession*. Because they are prone to collapse in the wake of their founders' death or retirement from politics, finding a viable successor (and ultimately, an institutional mechanism for leadership succession) is critical to their survival. This may be achieved through the far-sighted behavior of the party founder, who uses his authority to promote the rise of a new generation of leaders and then steps aside.[51] Such enlightened leadership is rare, however. Indeed, none of the founders of the twelve parties examined in this chapter made comparable efforts to groom a new generation of leaders.

A more common strategy is hereditary succession. Because personalistic parties tend to lack a strong pool of electorally viable successors (founding leaders' tendency to block the ascent of potential rivals weeds out such politicians) and because succession tends to be fraught with internal conflict, party elites often view a hereditary successor as the best means of preserving the party's electoral base and maintaining unity. As Brownlee (2007b: 597) writes in reference to autocratic regime succession, a hereditary successor "offers a focal point for reducing uncertainty, achieving consensus, and forestalling a power vacuum."[52] Five of the twelve parties examined in this chapter attempted some form of hereditary succession. Perón made his wife, Isabel, his vice-presidential running mate (and thus his successor) in 1973; Odría's wife, María, was the Odriísta National Union's (UNO) candidate for mayor of Lima in 1963, and might have succeeded him as presidential candidate had it not been for the 1968 military coup; ANAPO ran Rojas Pinilla's daughter, María Eugenia, as its presidential candidate in 1974; the FRG attempted to

[51] In Ghana, for example, the National Democratic Congress (NDC), which was founded and dominated by dictator Jerry John Rawlings, stepped aside (albeit grudgingly) and supported the rise of new leaders such as John Atta Mills when his final presidential term expired in 2000 (Boafo-Arthur 2003: 228). More recently, Hugo Chávez in Venezuela anointed Nicolás Maduro as his successor shortly before dying of cancer in 2013 (Corrales 2013). Although Chávez's selection of Maduro was motivated by terminal illness, not far-sighted design, and although Maduro was not a skilled leader, the move helped the PSUV avoid a potentially costly leadership crisis.

[52] Hereditary succession is also a common feature of democratic politics, as seen by dynasties such as the Kennedys and Bushes in the United States, the Trudeaus in Canada, and the Nehru/Gandhis in India.

run Ríos Montt's daughter, Zury, as its presidential candidate in 2011;[53] and *Fujimorismo* ran Fujimori's daughter, Keiko, as its presidential candidate in 2011 and 2016.

The case of *Fujimorismo* suggests that in some cases, hereditary succession may provide a generational bridge that helps the party to prepare for a future without the founding leader. Keiko Fujimori, who took over the *Fujimorista* leadership after her father's imprisonment in 2007, was young and politically skilled. Her strong performance as a congressional candidate in 2006 and presidential candidate in 2011 and 2016 rejuvenated the party. *Fujimorismo* expanded its partisan base and began to recruit viable candidates for local and regional office, which gave it an opportunity to institutionalize that few observers had anticipated a decade earlier (Levitsky and Zavaleta 2016: 437–437).

Few hereditary successors, however, prove as effective as Keiko Fujimori. Many lack the political skill or broad appeal of the founding leader; indeed, some of them prove highly incompetent (e.g., Isabel Perón). Moreover, because it reinforces personalistic patterns of authority, hereditary succession may have the effect of simply postponing – or even preempting – the kinds of hard decisions necessary to avoid eventual party collapse. María Eugenia Rojas and Zury Ríos did nothing to forestall the collapse of ANAPO and the FRG, respectively, and although Peronism ultimately survived Perón's death, it did so *in spite of* rather than because of Isabel Perón's incompetent leadership. Two other parties that survived the death of their founders – the PRD in Panama and the PTB in Brazil – did not attempt a hereditary succession.[54] Because the founders of these parties (Torrijos and Vargas, respectively) suffered untimely and unexpected deaths, neither had developed clear plans for succession.

A second – and even more important – element of de-personalization is the development of *durable partisan identities*. To succeed over time, parties need partisans, or individuals who feel an attachment to the party and thus consistently turn out to vote for it. As Lupu (2016) argues, critical to the formation of partisans is the development of a strong party brand. Brands can be rooted in ideology, such as position on the left–right spectrum, or in sociocultural appeals, with parties claiming to represent particular group

[53] In 2011, the FRG selected Zury Ríos, who had been an FRG congresswoman for fifteen years, as its presidential candidate. However, she later withdrew from the race. See "Zury Ríos oficializa su retiro como candidata presidencial del FRG," *Prensa Libre*, May 14, 2011.

[54] Although Omar Torrijos' son, Martín, was the PRD's presidential candidate in 1999 and 2004 (he won the second time), this was not a case of hereditary succession. When his father died in 1981, Martín was only eighteen years old. He spent most of the subsequent Noriega period in the United States and did not become involved in PRD politics until he returned to Panama in the early 1990s. Between the time of Omar Torrijos' death and Martín's rise, the PRD had two major – non-hereditary – leaders: Manuel Noriega (dictator from 1983 to 1989) and Ernesto Pérez Balladares (president from 1994 to 1999).

identities (Ostiguy 2009a, 2009b). Personalism tends to inhibit brand development, with voters identifying with the party *leader* rather than with the *party* as such. Thus, for personalistic authoritarian successor parties to survive in the longer term, personal attachments to the founding leader must be transformed into collective identities. In other words, support for an individual must be converted into support for a brand: support for Perón must become support for Peron*ismo*; support for Torrijos must become support for Torrij*ismo*; support for Fujimori must become support for Fujimor*ismo*. Parties that fail to develop such collective identities almost invariably collapse when the leader exits the political stage (e.g., ANAPO, FNV, ADN, PRSC).

Two conditions appear to facilitate the transition from personalistic linkage to party brand. First, autocrats who are associated with a *clear program, set of policies, or constituency* are more likely to leave an enduring partisan legacy. Where authoritarian regimes are associated with major policy changes or achievements that can be linked to a broader programmatic agenda, or where they are viewed as responsible for the incorporation of previously marginal groups, parties will have an easier time transforming their leaders' legacies into a broader program or appeal. This was the case with Perón, who expanded the welfare state and incorporated the working class into national politics, and with Torrijos, who won control of the Panama Canal and carried out a range of social policies designed to improve the lot of the popular sectors. The resulting authoritarian successor parties came to be identified not only with the qualities or performance of a single leader, but rather with a set of policy changes that would ultimately anchor one side of an enduring political cleavage.

A second condition that facilitates the transition from personal attachments to collective partisan identities is *polarization*. As LeBas (2011) and Levitsky, Loxton, and Van Dyck (2016) have argued, intense polarization can help crystallize collective identities. Polarization and (often violent) conflict may foster collective identities, or "groupness," by strengthening "us–them" distinctions and generating perceptions of a "linked fate" among activists (LeBas 2011: 44, 46). Thus, intense conflict between an autocrat's supporters and opponents – particularly when it involves mass mobilization and violence – can generate an enduring political cleavage and new partisan identities. This is most obviously the case with populist autocrats such as Perón in Argentina, Torrijos in Panama, Fujimori in Peru, and Chávez in Venezuela, all of whom mobilized the poor with explicitly anti-elite appeals and consequently polarized societies between populist and anti-populist forces. Amid such polarization, populist autocrats – and, crucially, the parties that emerge from their regimes – come to represent broader political movements. When such movements engage in large-scale mobilization in defense of their leader, and when members of the movement are persecuted after the leader's exit from power (e.g., Peronism), partisan identities tend to harden, making it even more likely that a strong party brand will emerge and endure beyond the founding leader.

To conclude, while personalistic authoritarian successor parties face serious obstacles to longevity, these obstacles are not insurmountable. In some cases, these parties can "de-personalize." While most personalistic authoritarian successor parties die with their leaders, a few have managed to survive in the long term. In the two case studies that follow, we examine the two most striking examples of personalistic authoritarian successor party survival: Peronism in Argentina and the PRD in Panama. In both cases, the parties became associated with clear brands, polarization contributed to the hardening of collective partisan identities, and the parties managed to survive for decades as their countries' most important political actors.

3.5 PERONISM IN ARGENTINA

Peronism is the most successful case of a personalistic authoritarian successor party that de-personalized and survived over the long term. In its origins, Peronism was both authoritarian and personalistic. Juan Perón first ascended to power as part of a 1943 military coup, and it was as labor secretary in the resulting dictatorship that he launched his initial populist appeal (Collier and Collier 1991: 337–338). Although Perón was democratically elected president in 1946, he quickly established a competitive authoritarian regime. The Supreme Court was purged and packed with loyalists (Helmke 2005: 64), many opposition politicians were imprisoned or forced into exile, and leading opposition newspapers were either expropriated or bullied into self-censorship (Page 1983: 209–229). Perón's reelection in 1951 was marred by intimidation and fraud (Page 1983: 252–253; Rock 1985: 305). The regime was also thoroughly personalistic (McGuire 1997: 54–66). The party that brought Perón to the presidency, the Labor Party, was dissolved shortly after he took office and replaced by the Peronist Party, a "monolithic entity controlled strictly by Perón" (McGuire 1997: 61–62). The new party's leaders were handpicked by Perón and his inner circle, and its statutes forbade local branches from displaying any photographs other than those of Perón and his wife, Evita (Ciria 1983: 169).

Despite this personalism, Perón's redistributive social policies and effective populist appeals linked Peronism to a broader programmatic agenda and a well-defined working- and lower-class constituency (James 1988; Torre 1990). The Perón government extended worker and union rights, expanded social welfare policies, and employed highly inclusionary and socially egalitarian rhetoric (Collier and Collier 1991: 337–343; Torre 1990). As a result, the working class "made unprecedented gains in wealth, power and social status" (McGuire 1997: 76). Real wages increased by nearly 60 percent between 1946 and 1949, social security coverage more than tripled between 1946 and 1951, and the number of workers covered by health insurance increased markedly (Collier and Collier 1991: 341; McGuire 1997: 53). These material gains, together with a dramatic expansion of unionization

and a discourse that championed workers' rights and attacked established social hierarchies, helped to crystallize strong Peronist identities among the working and lower classes (James 1988).

Perón's overthrow in a military coup in 1955 posed a major challenge. The Peronist Party, which had been thoroughly dependent on Perón, disintegrated after his downfall and exile, throwing Peronism into disarray (James 1988: 43–54; McGuire 1997: 78). Because the Peronist Party leadership had been packed with loyalist hacks, the movement was effectively left leaderless (McGuire 1997: 78).

Yet Peronism survived Perón's eighteen-year exile, due, in part, to the strength of Peronist identities among the working and lower classes. Though forged during Perón's first presidency, these identities were reinforced by the intense polarization that emerged in the aftermath of his overthrow. The military's repressive efforts to eradicate the Peronist "cancer" triggered the 1956–1957 "Resistance," during which clandestine Peronist mobilization strengthened the movement's organization, subculture, and identities (James 1988: 72–100). Peronism also benefited from its strong ties to the labor movement. The unions, which remained overwhelmingly Peronist, provided a refuge and organizational base while Perón was in exile and his party banned, helping to ensure Peronism's survival on the ground (James 1988: 43–87; McGuire 1997: 82–84).

Peronism took root despite Perón's disruptive efforts to control it from exile. The emergence of a new generation of Peronist union and provincial leaders in the 1960s led to efforts to build a "Peronism without Perón," with the aim of reentering the electoral arena (McGuire 1997: 80–150). Although Perón ultimately defeated these efforts, he could only do so by encouraging the activities of other independent Peronist organizations – including leftist groups such as the Montonero guerrillas – to counterbalance them (McGuire 1997: 161). The result was a new generation of Peronist cadres, many of whom developed considerable political experience and skill.

In 1973, Perón returned to Argentina and was elected president once again, with his new wife, Isabel, as his vice president. Perón's death in 1974, however, posed another major test for Peronism. The presidency passed to Isabel, who proved to be incompetent, and in 1976, her crisis-ridden government was toppled by yet another military coup (Di Tella 1983). Banned and repressed during the 1976–1983 military dictatorship, Peronism again fell into disarray. But once again, the movement could fall back on the unions as a source of organization and leadership (Levitsky 2003: 92–94). As Isabel Perón settled into retirement in Spain, union leaders established themselves as Perón's true successors, leading the Peronist Justicialista Party (PJ) into the 1983 democratic transition.

The PJ has been extraordinarily successful since 1983, winning the presidency five times under three different leaders – Carlos Menem, Néstor Kirchner, and Cristina Fernández de Kirchner. Never once during this period

did the party fall below 30 percent of the national vote. This enduring success is attributable, in part, to the PJ's successful de-personalization: during the 1980s and 1990s, the party developed a powerful territorial organization and new mechanisms of leadership selection – most notably, primary elections – to replace the old charismatic patterns of authority (Levitsky 2003). But the PJ's success was also rooted in the persistence of a powerful Peronist identity and party brand (Ostiguy 2009b), which was reinforced over the years by various waves of repression. Although the PJ remained amorphous on the traditional left–right dimension, its continued celebration of Perón and Evita and widespread use of slogans and symbols from the Perón era reinforced partisan identities. Party offices down to the neighborhood level unfailingly display images of Perón and Evita, and Peronists continue to celebrate October 17 ("Loyalty Day"), which marks the mass protests in 1945 that liberated Perón from jail (after falling out with his former military allies) and launched his first presidential candidacy. Indeed, more than four decades after Perón's death, even as the PJ has clearly taken on a life of its own, it is still widely known as "Peronism."

3.6 THE PRD IN PANAMA

A second case of successful de-personalization is Panama's Democratic Revolutionary Party (PRD). The PRD emerged from the personalistic dictatorship of Omar Torrijos, the head of the National Guard (the country's military) and dictator from 1968 until 1981. After participating in a coup in October 1968, Torrijos neutralized his main rivals in the National Guard and established de facto "one-man rule" (Ropp 1982: ix). He maintained absolute control over the military and made all important political and policy decisions (Harding 2001: 72–87; Ropp 1982: 43, 75). Between 1972 and 1978, Torrijos held the constitutional title of Maximum Leader of the Panamanian Revolution, which gave him "dictatorial powers" and allowed him "to administer the state at whim" (Harding 2001: 94).

In 1978, Torrijos announced plans for political liberalization. In anticipation of a return to multiparty elections, he created the PRD, which he hoped would evolve into a national version of Mexico's Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI).[55] Unlike the PRI, however, the PRD was highly personalistic. Described as "Omar's party" (Ford González 2009: 10), it revolved "around the ideas and personality of General Omar Torrijos Herrera" (García Díez 2001: 574). Its first general secretary was Torrijos' cousin (Ropp 1982: 81), and "Torrijos frequently found himself in the position of having to intervene in the functioning of the party to suppress conflict and rebellion" (Harding 2001: 151). To this day, the PRD's main "mechanism of cohesion" is rooted in "the cult of the founding leader" (García Díez 2001: 584). Given the PRD's

[55] See García Díez (2001: 574–575) and Harding (2001: 144–149).

personalistic nature, some observers doubted whether it would survive Torrijos' death in a plane crash in 1981.[56]

Yet the PRD did not disappear. Initially, it survived because Torrijos' successors – notably, Manuel Noriega, Panama's dictator from 1983 until 1989 – decided to continue to use it as the country's "official" party. The PRD was "intimately linked" to the National Guard from its inception, and these links became even closer after Torrijos' death (García Díez 2001: 577–578). As one PRD leader stated matter-of-factly, "[The PRD] is the party of the National Guard."[57] These ties to the state help explain Pérez's (2000: 131) later finding that the PRD was the only party in Panama with a significant organization, including "deep roots within the public bureaucracy" and "organizational structures at the neighborhood and individual union levels."

However, the PRD's ties to the military also became a liability in the post-Torrijos era. Noriega's rule was notorious for its brutality, corruption, links to drug trafficking, and erratic foreign policy, particularly with regard to the United States (Guevara Mann 1996: 158–188). Although Noriega tried to present himself as the inheritor of Torrijos' legacy, he was far less popular than his predecessor.[58] In the 1989 presidential race, quick counts indicated that Noriega's puppet candidate had lost by a 3-to-1 margin, prompting the regime to annul the election (Scranton 1995: 70). Panama–US relations deteriorated to such a degree that the United States launched a military invasion in December 1989, toppling Noriega and installing a democratic regime.[59] Given that military defeat is often fatal for authoritarian regimes (O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986: 17–18), this might have been expected to leave the PRD with a crippling amount of authoritarian baggage.

Yet the PRD immediately rebounded, returning to power in 1994 and remaining Panama's most important party under democracy. Much of the PRD's success was rooted in collective memories of Torrijos' policies and achievements. A clear case of "military populism" (Guevara Mann 1996: 114–131) and "inclusionary" military rule (Pérez 2011: 49), Torrijos' regime adopted an anti-oligarchic discourse and sought "to incorporate the lower classes into the political processes [*sic*] as had never before been possible" (Harding 2001: 64).[60] To this end, Torrijos wrote a new socialist-oriented constitution, initiated a sweeping land reform program, oversaw a fivefold increase in union membership, and brought about significant gains in health and education (Harding 2001: 64, 94–97, 135).

[56] See, for example, Alan Riding, "Panama's Military Tries to Pick Up Torrijos Reins," *The New York Times*, August 26, 1981, and "Panama Military Close to Direct Rule," *The New York Times*, August 5, 1982.

[57] Quoted in Harding (2001: 158).

[58] See Stephen Kinzer, "Torrijos's Legacy Lingers in Panama," *The New York Times*, August 2, 1987, and "Resucitando al General," *El País*, August 5, 1987.

[59] On the US invasion and subsequent transition, see Harding (2001: 155–179).

[60] See also Ropp (1982: 55–62, 66–71).

Torrijos also adopted a markedly nationalist profile, particularly with respect to the biggest issue in Panamanian political life: the status of the Panama Canal.[61] The 1903 Panama Canal Treaty had granted the US control of the canal and surrounding area "in perpetuity,"[62] depriving Panama of control of the engine of its economy and offending national pride. Torrijos made gaining control of the canal the centerpiece of his agenda. In 1977, Panama and the United States signed two treaties ceding control of the canal to Panama in 1999. The treaties proved "wildly popular in Panama" and were approved by two-thirds of the electorate in a plebiscite in October 1977 (Maurer and Yu 2011: 327, 265). By securing control of the canal, Torrijos resolved the country's thorniest political issue, and, in the eyes of many Panamanians, secured his place in the pantheon of national heroes.

Torrijos' achievements facilitated the creation of a political identity – *Torrijismo* – that became bigger than the man himself. At its core, *Torrijismo* stood for "the recuperation of sovereignty, popular participation, and social justice" (García Díez 2001: 578). As Torrijos' party, the PRD was the natural inheritor of this *Torrijista* brand, becoming the "party of the defense of sovereignty and nationalism" (Ford González 2009: 21). Thus, once it shed its ties to Noriega (as discussed above in the section on scapegoating), the PRD could present itself, in the words of its victorious 1994 presidential candidate, as the country's "populist alternative."[63]

The PRD's survival was also facilitated by polarization. Although it distanced itself from Noriega after the 1989–1990 invasion, it was nevertheless attacked for its ties to his rule (Harding 2001: 187). Hundreds of former regime officials were investigated, charged, and imprisoned during the early 1990s – a process that many PRD leaders saw as a politically inspired witch hunt.[64] After winning the presidency in 1994, Pérez Balladares pardoned hundreds of former officials on the basis that "they were victims of political persecution" – a move that was strongly opposed by non-*Torrijista* parties.[65] He also awarded back pay to former members of the Dignity Battalions, "groups of thugs that had served [as] Noriega's paramilitary enforcers during the last years of his regime" (Harding 2001: 190). This polarization, while not as intense as the Peronism/anti-Peronism divide, reinforced "us–them" distinctions and may have helped the party to remain cohesive under democracy.

In sum, like Peronism in Argentina, Panama's PRD is a case of a personalistic authoritarian successor party that successfully de-personalized. Founded by a personalistic dictator, Omar Torrijos, the PRD became associated with the

[61] See Harding (2001: 94–136). [62] See Harding (2001: 27–28).

[63] Ernesto Pérez Balladares, quoted in Scranton (1995: 76). See also Harding (2001: 188) and Pérez (2000: 139–140).

[64] The creation of a truth commission in 2000 by President Mireya Moscoso, a longtime rival, was particularly polarizing (Pérez 2011: 121).

[65] See Larry Rohter, "Some Familiar Faces Return to Power in Panama," *The New York Times*, February 9, 1995, and "Panama Amnesty Plan for Abuses Draws Fire," *The New York Times*, May 14, 1996.

popular brand of *Torrijismo*, and, as of this writing in 2018 – thirty-seven years after the death of its founder – it remains one of Panama's major parties.

3.7 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, we have examined the surprisingly strong electoral performance – and, in a few cases, long-term survival – of personalistic authoritarian successor parties in Latin America. Unlike most of the parties examined in this volume, these do not emerge from party-based authoritarian regimes, but rather from personalistic regimes in which power is overwhelmingly concentrated in the hands of an individual. Such regimes would appear exceptionally unlikely to produce viable parties. Yet personalistic authoritarian successor parties have been prominent actors in a majority of Latin American countries since World War II, been voted back into office on multiple occasions, and in a few cases even managed to survive their founders' deaths.

The chapter has advanced three main arguments. First, it argued that authoritarian successor parties can sometimes achieve electoral success without making a clean break with the past. Provided that they have sufficiently strong records to run on, they may win large numbers of votes through the strategy of scapegoating (e.g., PRD in Panama) or by simply embracing the past (e.g., ADN in Bolivia, FRG in Guatemala). Second, it argued that the effects of personalism on party-building are double-edged rather than entirely negative. While personalistic parties often face a severe crisis after the leader's death or retirement, such leaders can also be a source of votes and internal party cohesion – crucial elements of party-building, especially during the formative phase. Finally, it argued that although longevity is the great weakness of personalistic authoritarian successor parties, under certain conditions they can "de-personalize." Such an outcome is most likely to occur where personalistic leaders are associated with a clear program, set of policies, or constituency, and where their rule triggers intense polarization, as in the cases of Peronism in Argentina and the PRD in Panama.

These two cases may not be the last, however. One strong candidate for long-term success is *Fujimorismo* in Peru. Both of the conditions that we have identified as favoring the emergence of durable partisan identities are at least partially present in this case. First, Fujimori's success in defeating the Shining Path guerrillas in the 1990s has enabled *Fujimorismo* to brand itself as Peru's "law and order" party. This brand proved especially useful during the 2000s, when rising crime rates put security issues at the top of the public agenda.[66]

[66] Surveys found that a solid majority of Peruvians approved of Alberto Fujimori's *mano dura* (iron fist) policies of the 1990s, crediting them with having ended terrorism and restoring order. See "Informe Especial Sobre el Fujimorismo," GfK Perú, March 2017, p. 24. Available from: www.gfk.com/fileadmin/user_upload/country_one_pager/PE/documents/GfK_Opinio__n_Marzo_2017__Fujimorismo3.pdf.

In 2016, for example, *Fujiumorismo* performed especially well along the northern coast, where crime rates and perceptions of insecurity were among the highest in the country.[67] Second, *Fujimorismo* generated significant polarization and conflict. Fujimori's fall from power ushered in what *Fujimoristas* describe as an "era of persecution," during which they were treated as pariahs.[68] More than 200 *Fujimorista* former officials were prosecuted for corruption and/or human rights violations (Urrutia 2011a: 102), and in 2002, three leading *Fujimorista* legislators, including former President of Congress Martha Chávez, were expelled from Congress. Finally, although Fujimori's trial and conviction in 2007 were viewed as legitimate by the international community, *Fujimoristas* saw this as political persecution.[69] This reinforced *Fujimorista* identities and strengthened the party's internal cohesion (Navarro 2011; Urrutia 2011a, 2011b).[70] As of 2018, *Fujimorismo* is, by far, the biggest party in Peru. And although it continues to be dominated by Keiko Fujimori, the party appears to be developing a brand and organization capable of transcending her and her father's political careers.

A second possible candidate is Venezuela's PSUV. Although Venezuela is currently an authoritarian regime, in a hypothetical democratic future, the PSUV is likely to emerge as a strong authoritarian successor party – despite the death of its founding leader, Hugo Chávez, in 2013. While the disastrous performance of the government of Nicolás Maduro has clearly cost the party support, the baggage this has generated could be offset by scapegoating Maduro, much as Panama's PRD scapegoated Noriega.[71] And the PSUV, even more than *Fujimorismo*, seems to possess the two main ingredients for the creation of durable partisan identities. First, like Peronism, it is associated with popular redistributive policies and has developed a strong brand, particularly among the poor. Second, again like Peronism, the *Chavista* regime has generated intense – and at times violent – polarization and conflict. Our theory suggests, therefore, that the PSUV would stand a good chance of remaining a durable electoral force if Venezuela were to democratize.

To conclude, if this volume demonstrates that authoritarian officials can remain influential after a transition to democracy through authoritarian successor parties, this chapter has shown this to be true in even the least likely of cases: personalistic dictatorships. Neither conspicuous links to the authoritarian past nor personalistic leadership have prevented parties born

[67] For crime rates by region, see Instituto de Defensa Legal (2015). [68] See Urrutia (2011a).

[69] Steven Levitsky's interviews with Jorge Morelli, Lima, June 18, 2011; Martha Moyano, Lima, May 6, 2011; and Santiago Fujimori, Lima, March 24, 2011. See also Navarro (2011: 53–54) and Urrutia (2011a).

[70] As one *Fujimorista* put it, "There is no better glue for a political movement than a feeling of injustice . . . We were like Christians in Rome" (Steven Levitsky's interview with Jorge Morelli, Lima, June 18, 2011).

[71] See James Loxton and Javier Corrales, "Venezuelans Are Still Demonstrating. What Happens Next for the Dictatorship of Nicolás Maduro?" Monkey Cage, *Washington Post* blog, April 20, 2017.

from such regimes from becoming major electoral players in Latin America. It appears that under some circumstances, personalism and obvious dictatorial roots can contribute to, rather than inhibit, party success.

APPENDIX 3.1

Personalistic Regimes and Personalistic ASPs in Latin America, 1945–2010[a]

Country	Regime	Party created?	Initial survival?[b]	Electoral prominence under democracy?[c]
Argentina	Juan Perón (1946–1955)	Yes: Peronism/ Justicialista Party	Yes	Yes
Bolivia	René Barrientos (1965–1969)	Yes: Popular Christian Movement (MPC)	Yes	No
Bolivia	Hugo Banzer (1971–1978)	Yes: Nationalist Democratic Action (ADN)	Yes	Yes
Brazil	Getúlio Vargas (1930–1945)	Yes: Brazilian Labor Party (PTB)	Yes	Yes
Colombia	Gustavo Rojas Pinilla (1953–1957)	Yes: National Popular Alliance (ANAPO)	Yes	Yes
Cuba	Fulgencio Batista (1952–1959)	Yes: Progressive Action Party (PAP)	No	-
Dominican Republic	Rafael Trujillo (1930–1961)	Yes: Dominican Party	No	-
Dominican Republic	Joaquín Balaguer (1966–1978)	Yes: Social Christian Reformist Party (PRSC)	Yes	Yes
Ecuador	José María Velasco Ibarra (1944–1947; 1970–1972)	Yes: Velasquista National Federation (FNV)	Yes	Yes
El Salvador	Salvador Castaneda Castro (1945–1948)	No (Inherited)	-	-
Guatemala	Carlos Castillo Armas (1954–1957)	Yes: National Democratic Movement (MDN)	Yes	No
Guatemala	Miguel Ydígoras Fuentes (1958–1963)	No (inherited)	-	-

(*continued*)

(*continued*)

Country	Regime	Party created?	Initial survival?[b]	Electoral prominence under democracy?[c]
Guatemala	Efraín Ríos Montt (1982–1983)	Yes: Guatemalan Republican Front (FRG)	Yes	Yes
Honduras	Tiburcio Carías (1933–1949)	No (inherited)	-	-
Honduras	Julio Lozano (1954–1956)	Yes: National Union Party	No	-
Nicaragua	Anastasio/Luis/ Anastasio Somoza (1937–1979)	Yes: Nationalist Liberal Party (PLN)	No	-
Panama	José Antonio Remón Cantera (1952–1955)	Yes: National Patriotic Coalition (CPN)	Yes	Yes
Panama	Omar Torrijos (1968–1981)	Yes: Democratic Revolutionary Party (PRD)	Yes	Yes
Panama	Manuel Noriega (1983–1989)	No (inherited)	-	-
Paraguay	Higinio Morínigo (1940–1948)	No	-	-
Paraguay	Alfredo Stroessner (1955–1989)	No (inherited)	-	-
Peru	Manuel Odría (1948–1956)	Yes: Odriísta National Union (UNO)	Yes	Yes
Peru	Alberto Fujimori (1992–2000)	Yes: *Fujimorismo*/ Popular Force	Yes	Yes
Venezuela	Marcos Pérez Jiménez (1948–1958)	Yes: Nationalist Civic Crusade (CCN)	Yes	Yes

[a] This list includes all regimes classified as personalist or hybrid-personalist by Geddes, Wright, and Frantz (2014a), except for Chile (1973–1989), which we classify as a military regime because Pinochet's power was checked by other heads of the armed forces; Costa Rica (1949), which was a transitional regime; and Panama (1949–1951), because President Arnulfo Arias did not control the security forces. We also exclude the cases of Cuba under Fidel Castro and Venezuela under Hugo Chávez because those regimes have not ended. We add the cases of Getúlio Vargas in Brazil, which ended in 1945, and Guatemala under Efraín Ríos Montt (1982–1983), which Geddes, Wright, and Franz (2014a) classify as a military regime. Finally, whereas Geddes, Wright, and Franz (2014a) treat Honduras (1933–1956) as a single regime, we break it into separate regimes, since the country was governed by two distinct personalistic regimes during this period.

[b] Parties are scored as cases of "initial survival" if they continued to exist after the end of the personalistic regime and we find evidence of their intent to compete in democratic elections in the future. However, they need not actually compete in democratic elections to be scored in this way (e.g., if a new, long-lasting authoritarian regime immediately takes hold and the party does not survive until eventual democratization).

[c] Following Introduction (Loxton, this volume), we operationalize electoral prominence as winning at least 10 percent of the vote in one or more national elections after the transition to democracy.