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RECRUITMENT
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This research report analyzes the evolution of the bond between a charismatic leader and his mass following. Its empirical focus is the case of Juan Perón and the Peronist movement in Argentina. After discussing stages in the evolution of charisma, we review our earlier findings showing that by 1965 there was clear separation between those Peronists devoted to the movement and those Peronists devoted to the man. We note distinctive features in the social and attitudinal profiles of each and then turn to our principal concern, the recruitment of new blood into each Peronist camp. Personalist youth turn out to be much like their older counterparts, but organizationalist youth demonstrate social and attitudinal features that set them dramatically apart from the personalists and apart from the older organizationalists as well. We discuss the implications of this ever widening rift.

Many fascinating and important phenomena in political life, though in principle available for empirical study, in practice present intractable problems to the would-be systematic investigator. As a result they are left in a condition of scientific limbo sometimes described as theory-rich but data-poor. Political charisma is one such phenomenon. The difficulties its study presents to the empiricist are formidable and doubly so if the charisma in question involves mass publics rather than small groups. How can one collect crucial attitudinal data in such an intensely emotional setting? How can one systematically observe the evolving bond between leader and mass? In this light it is not surprising that empirical work on political charisma is so very meager. This research note comes from a larger study that will provide data-based—though necessarily still preliminary—answers to some impor-

tant questions about that phenomenon. The study has as its empirical focus Argentina's Peronists and their leader, Juan Domingo Perón.

In an earlier report, we laid out our theoretical perspectives, data sources, analytic methods, and three key findings: (1) two variants of Peronism had emerged after Juan Perón's initial period of power, one faithful to the man, the other more devoted to the movement; (2) these two wings of Peronism had different social and attitudinal bases; and (3) to a significant extent the social base of a wing predicted its attitudinal base (Madsen and Snow 1983).

In this note we take up recruitment. Where does each of the two variants of Peronism find its new blood? What factors drew new members into each of the two wings? Casting these questions into stark relief is the fact that by the time of Perón's return to power in 1973, the two

wings of Peronism were in full-scale combat. Indeed, the airport fighting between them at the time of Perón's intendedly triumphant return to Argentina has been popularly labeled the Ezeiza Massacre (Page 1983, 579). What had happened?

Some Background

Juan Perón was a little known member of the military circle that seized the Argentine government in 1943. This coup came after a period of economic crisis marked by major decline in the all-important agricultural sector, by massive migration to crowded and job-short urban centers, and by poverty and despair among urban workers. Perón became secretary of labor in the new government and for two years, with wide publicity and great drama, used his powers to transform the lives of workers and their families. Not surprisingly, he acquired a passionate following. Threatened by Perón's ascendancy, the army arrested him in October 1945, an act that brought tens of thousands of his supporters marching in massive columns from the outlying slums and industrial suburbs to the center of Buenos Aires. They demanded and obtained his release.

For the next decade, as master of Argentina, Perón led the government. He also transformed the structural bases of Argentine politics, creating and nurturing Peronist party and trade union apparatuses and bringing many previously unrepresented elements (including women) into those organizations. In 1955, growing disputes with the Church (from which he was excommunicated) and with the armed forces, coupled with economic reversals, led to a coup that forced Perón into exile.

Even while in exile, Perón continued to be the major factor in Argentine politics. Leaders of Peronist organizations streamed back and forth across the Atlantic, seeking guidance and bringing back

policies and taped speeches for the faithful. Although the Peronist party had been declared illegal, Peronist trade unions continued to function. Eventually, in the congressional elections of 1962 and 1965, Peronist candidates were allowed, but they could not be identified as such on the ballot. The results of both these elections showed Peronism still to be the nation's largest party, and both led to military coups. In 1973 the Peronists were allowed to run a candidate for the presidency, as long as that candidate was not Perón himself. A stand-in named Héctor Cámpora ran with the slogan "Cámpora to the government, Perón to power." He won, and three months later resigned, necessitating new elections. This time Perón was nominated, and he won with 63% of the vote. He returned to Buenos Aires on 23 June 1973 to the sound of gunfire. His followers were killing one another.

There can be no surprise in a discovery that in the 30 years Perón held center stage in Argentine political life, his bond with his followers had changed. After all, the Peronists, from an inchoate though passionate agglomeration had become a structured movement. Perón himself, in government and even more in exile, had to rely on lieutenants and agents—intermediaries who carried their version of his Word to the faithful and who put their version of his policies into effect. Argentina's economy, though having ups and downs, had left behind the dismal conditions under which Perón's charismatic leadership began. And, of course, the very personnel of Peronism had changed as old followers dropped out or died and new ones were recruited.

Edward Shils (1958) has argued that a charismatic bond inevitably evolves from a direct, concentrated, and emotionally intense form at its birth to an indirect, dispersed, and less passionate one as it ages. If this is true in general, what would the particulars be in the Peronist case? What sorts of followers would still have a direct

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and emotional tie to Perón as a man? What sorts would be more attached to Peronism as a movement?

In seeking to answer those questions, we were fortunate to obtain data from a national survey taken almost exactly midway between Perón's expulsion from Argentina and his triumphant return. (The methods of the survey are described in Kirkpatrick 1971.) In such a serendipitously timed—though, it turned out, still far from ideal—set of observations, we had a unique resource within which to examine the status of Peronism twenty years after its inception.

The survey data made it clear that the Argentine public was making a distinction between Perón and Peronism. Those items dealing explicitly with Perón himself exhibited one pattern and those dealing with the movement quite another. Factor analysis (with an orthogonal rotation) was ultimately used to construct measures of personalist and of organizational tendencies. And then 100 respondents were drawn from the uppermost location on each factor, yielding two pure groups for further analysis. Our pure personalists were unwaveringly committed to Perón but typically rather lukewarm to the movement. Our pure organizationalists were strongly committed to the movement but on average somewhat negative in their feelings for the man. But remember that in both cases these attachments were (by definition) affective and symbolic; they do not involve formal membership of any kind.

The socioeconomic status (SES) differences between personalists and organizationalists are striking. The former were far more likely to be residents of small towns or recent migrants to cities. Most interesting, they were, in SES terms, very much worse off than were the organizationalists.

Temperamentally, the personalists were more convinced of the value of strong leaders, more acquiescent to

authority, and more confused about politics and government. This profile surely holds no surprise for students of authoritarian politics. And recall, this is a profile that correlates highly with the socioeconomic profile—that is, the latter substantially predicts the former in a statistical sense. These results leave the strong impression that in our personalists we have people much like those who in the 1940s found their savior in Juan Perón. Moreover, they seem most unready to give up their attachment to their leader. The forces behind the dispersion of Peronist charisma would seem most unlikely to flourish here.

The organizationalists were not only better off in SES terms but were also distinctive attitudinally; notable was their more conventionally "leftist" response to worker and communist symbols.

Recruitment Contrasts

The contribution of this note is to add consideration of recruitment processes to our analysis of the evolution of charisma. What sorts of youth were coming into each wing of Peronism? Was the social and psychological makeup of the recruits like that of their older counterparts, suggesting a stable gap between the two groups, or was that makeup different?

We assumed that the conditions leading large numbers of people to seek a personal savior in political life would be much the same, whether they were young or old—or, for that matter, whether they were 1965 seekers or 1945 seekers. We were more uncertain about the organizational young. No a priori reason led us to expect them to differ greatly from their older counterparts, one way or the other.

Before turning to the evidence, we must insert an important caveat. The data speaking to our recruitment questions are much less firm than we would have liked. Using an age division point of 30 years, we have one-fifth of our 100 cases in each

youth component. Thus, we are here examining 20 cases of personalist youth and about the same number of organizational youth. While these figures do not seem unrealistic in terms of population parameters, they do illustrate the problem with using general population samples in analyses of subgroups. The evidence presented below must be considered in that light. Our own view is that the persuasiveness sacrificed by the data in purely statistical terms is substantially recovered by two other tests of data adequacy: strong empirical patterns and a clear fit with other sources of evidence (see di Tella 1983, chap. 2; Gillespie 1982; Guimaraes 1982; Page 1983, chap. 47; and Smith 1982).

Socioeconomic Differences

In our youth groups we have individuals who were no more than 10 years old and in some cases yet unborn when Perón's initial bond with his following was formed in 1945. They were between 8

and 20 when he went into exile. How does their socioeconomic makeup compare with that of their older counterparts?

The personalist young and old were, as expected, much the same. It is true that the young were a bit poorer and a bit better educated, but the only striking difference had to do with recent migration, which was much higher for the young than for the old (who were themselves well above the population average).

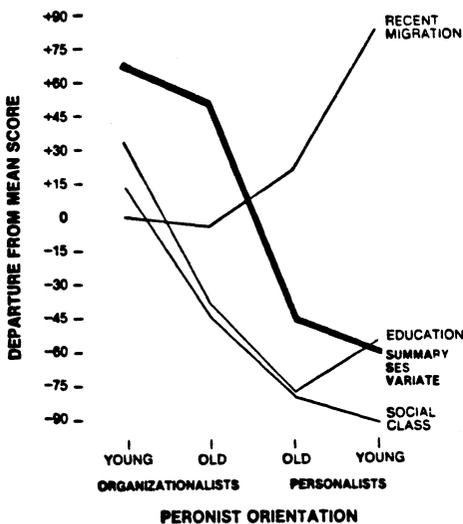
With respect to the organizationalists, in most of the social and economic conditions of young and old, we found a reasonably close match. But there was one astonishing exception: the young were of much higher social status, scoring even above the average for the Argentine population as a whole, while their older counterparts scored well below average! In class terms, then, these young organizationalists were very different indeed.

In Figure 1 we present the key findings. Given in bold relief is the line of position for each group on a summary socioeconomic measure (standardized across the 200 Peronist cases to produce a mean of zero and a standard deviation of one). This measure, called a *canonical variate* in technical language, was derived from an earlier discriminant function analysis in which weights were assigned to social and economic variables on the basis of their capacity to discriminate between personalist and organizationalist Peronists (full details are given in Madsen and Snow 1983). Note that in this weighting process, age was not involved.

On this summary measure, we can see in Figure 1 that the two youth groups are even farther apart than are their older counterparts—a finding that portends not stability or convergence but rather a growing gap between the two wings of Peronism. In their social foundations they apparently will have less and less in common.

The particulars of this growing gap are also to be found in Figure 1. The three factors most powerful in differentiating the

Figure 1. Age Cohorts in Charismatic Dispersion: Socioeconomic Factors



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newer recruits from the older members are recency of migration, social class, and education. (In the figure, each of the three has been standardized across the entire sample, which permits group scores to be compared with population averages, as well as with each other.)

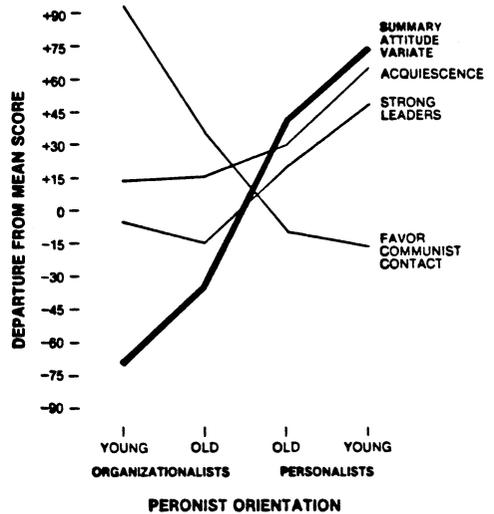
Psychological Differences

The temperamental differences between young and old personalists can be quickly summarized. The young felt slightly less able to understand politics (in spite of greater education); they were much less likely to promise support to political candidates from the working class; they were much more supportive of a strong leader in politics; and they scored much higher on a measure of acquiescence to authority. If personalists in general found happiness with a *leader*, these young personalists must have found rapture!

A comparison of young and old organizationalists on the attitudinal items revealed one remarkable difference: the young gave solid support to a policy of friendly Argentine relations with Cuba and with unspecified "communist countries." As noted earlier, the organizationalists had already been found to be more leftist than the personalists, but here we find the young going far beyond the position of the typical older organizationalist. Such a result is all the more striking when one realizes that this leftward drift could find no sanction in Perón's own rhetoric; indeed, quite the opposite.

In Figure 2 the attitudinal findings are given. Again presented in bold relief is the line of position for each group on a summary canonical variate, the one built from the attitudinal items that differentiate personalists from organizationalists. Plainly, the positions of the two youth groups here reinforce the impression given by the socioeconomic comparisons: if these two groups represented the future of Peronism, a deep schism in the movement was assured.

Figure 2. Age Cohorts in Charismatic Dispersion: Attitudinal Factors



Discussion

The evidence presented here suggests the possibility of a development in the evolution of Peronism that in fact occurred seven years later: Peronists warred with Peronists. The character of the warring camps is quite well predicted from the results given above. This remarkable fit with subsequent events adds a good deal of interest (and additional strength) to our findings.

One might ask, however, what the Peronist case teaches us about charismatic movements in general? If we can say that the nature of the original Peronism was certain to change, that inevitably there would come greater differentiation within the movement, can we also say why the change took the shape it did? Was simple disintegration equally likely? Are there general lessons about the role of new blood in the dispersion of charisma that can be drawn on the basis of these findings?

We believe our findings on the personalists to be general. The main point is simple: people in crisis are ready for—and sometimes actively seek—a personal savior; once they have found one, they do not easily let go. Of course, crises take many shapes, sometimes being more microscopic in their character and other times more macroscopic. Social scientists have a tendency to notice only the latter.

Personalists found in Juan Perón the answer to their own crises (which were triggered by macroscopic events and hence had macroscopic scope). Organizationalists, on the other hand, having escaped those circumstances—or, in the case of the young organizationalists, never having faced them—saw Perón himself in a more dispassionate light. For them, the charisma had been dispersed.

If this is correct, it suggests that all charismatic movements must founder in the face of success. When the crisis has passed, for whatever reason, the followers regain their sense of control, their sense of personal efficacy, and the leader recedes into the psychic shadows. However, any structural residue from the charismatic period may by that time have gained bureaucratic life of its own and survive.

Of course, none of this tells us why the young organizationalists were moving to the left. Obviously, there is no answer to be found in our data. One might speculate, however, that the problems confronting Argentina in the 1960s (e.g., economic stagnation, disastrous inflation, political states of seige, and military repression) must have fed a disposition to

seek fundamentally new economic and political arrangements. In that context, especially for activist middle-class youth, there must have been special appeal in a revolutionary ideology that combined a powerful world view and an attractive idealism on the one hand and a “scientific” rejection of discredited institutions and practices on the other.

Note

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