

**POLITICAL DISAFFECTION AND DEMOCRATIZATION  
HISTORY IN NEW DEMOCRACIES\***

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## **ABSTRACT**

This paper focuses on the analysis of political disaffection. After discussing and defining this notion, the article shows that disaffection affects more widely, though not exclusively, third-wave democracies. The close link between levels of disaffection and the history of democratization in each country explains its higher incidence among new democracies. For this very reason, political disaffection could also run high among more established democracies. However, regardless of its incidence in each particular country, political disaffection reveals a distinctive nature in new democracies because of the absence of a democratic past in many of these cases. Thus, disaffection constitutes a key element to explain the lower propensity of citizens of new democracies to participate in every dimension of political activity.

## **RESUMEN**

Este trabajo se centra en el análisis de la desafección política. Después de discutir y definir el concepto, en este trabajo se muestra que la desafección es un problema extendido entre las democracias de la tercera ola, si bien no es exclusivo de las mismas. Su relativa mayor presencia entre estas nuevas democracias se debe a que los niveles de desafección están muy relacionados con the democratization history of each country, but for the very same reason political diasffection could be also high among more established democracies. Sin embargo, y con independendencia de los niveles de desafección por países, lo cierto es que la desafección política adquiere una distinta naturaleza en las nuevas democracias, precisamente por la ausencia en muchos de los casos de un pasado democrático. Por este mismo motivo, la desafección se constituye en un elemento fundamental para explicar la menor propensión de los ciudadanos de estas democracias a participar en todas las dimensiones de la participación política.



Representative democratic regimes have spread out all over the countries of Southern Europe and the vast majority of countries in Asia, Latin America and the former Eastern Europe, but these “new democracies” have very defined symptoms of political disaffection: lack of interest in politics; cynicism towards everything related to politics, institutions of representation and politicians; and a sense of alienation from all things political. Since the 1960s, an increasing “confidence gap,” or increasing “symptoms of disaffection” have also been observed among citizens of advanced Western industrial countries (Barnes, Kaase, *et al.* 1979; Lipset and Scheider 1983; Dalton 1988 and 1999; Nye, Jr. 1997; Pharr and Putnam 2000).<sup>1</sup> Is there any difference in the levels of political disaffection among old and new democracies?<sup>2</sup>

In this paper I will discuss different levels of political disaffection in a series of Western and Latin American democracies. The discussion, however, is not only limited to the comparative analysis of the aggregate levels of political disaffection. I will also discuss the different nature of political disaffection in new democracies, since the factors explaining disaffection at the individual level are somewhat different in new democracies. Most studies of political disaffection focus on established democracies, attempting to explain the origin and existence of attitudes about politics in countries which have had representative democracies for fifty years or more; in other words, democracies whose citizens have accumulated considerable “democratic experience” and have been exposed to inclusive-gradual political mobilization. However, citizens in new democracies do not have the “recent and prolonged” experience that would enable them to evaluate the functioning, achievements and performance of their newly established democratic institutions. More importantly, their only reference for evaluating the institutions and practices of political representation is often linked to pseudo or non-democratic experiences of their past. In older democracies, on the other hand, these negative references are not so salient and their socializing impact is much smaller. This enables citizens in older democracies to evaluate the present with a future perspective, using the

democratic ideal as the dominant reference point. As a recent study has argued “differences in the historical origin of political confidence and the generational argument offer plausible explanations for some broad, cross-national patterns in political confidence” (Katsenstein 2000, 130).

The second part of the paper analyzes the consequences of political disaffection in new democracies. Many scholars have argued that the increase in political disaffection does not have negative consequences and in fact it has led citizens to a search for new participation mechanisms and, consequently, to a drive to transform the democratic institutional setting and functioning (see also Di Palma 1970, 30; Dalton 1988; Fuchs and Klingemann 1995; Kaase and Newton 1995). It has been proven that the nature of citizen-government relations in the more traditional democracies is currently undergoing a process of change which can be seen in citizens’ alienation from politics, their increasing mistrust of political institutions, governments and leaders, and criticism of political parties and other traditional organizations of political representation (Abramson 1983; Klingemann and Fuchs 1995; Orren 1997; Blendon *et al.* 1997; Norris 1999a; Putnam, Pharr and Dalton 2000). It could be said, then, that the relationship between citizens and the state is at the root of changes currently taking place in today’s representative democracies. Is this also the case in the newly established democracies? I argue here that political disaffection in new democracies widens the gap between citizens and the state, instead of being a source of democratic change and dynamism.

### **The Concept of Political Disaffection**

Following Di Palma, we can define political disaffection as *the subjective feeling of powerlessness, cynicism and lack of confidence in the political process, politicians and democratic institutions, but with no questioning of the political regime* (1970, 30). Political disaffection contains two aspects or dimensions that are partially independent. The first is comprised of a cluster of attitudes relating to the respondents’ lack of engagement with

the political process and general distrust of politics. I have called this *political disengagement*. The other dimension consists of beliefs about the lack of responsiveness of the political authorities (representatives) and institutions, and the respondents' lack of confidence in the institutions of political representation and their representatives. I have called this *institutional disaffection*.

It should be noted that this definition of political disaffection differs somewhat from other closely related concepts, such as political alienation, crisis of trust, political cynicism and political dissent, which are frequently used, often interchangeably, in studies of political culture. Moreover, some of these concepts are sometimes measured similarly, resulting in rather an unclear and sometimes confusing conceptual and methodological picture. Many of these alternative concepts suggest a state of crisis in the political regime that disaffection does not. Unlike the concept of political alienation, for example, political disaffection does not imply a crisis of democratic legitimacy. Political disaffection is independent of support for the democratic regime and has different behavioural consequences. Indeed, many democracies, particularly third-wave democracies, show high levels of both democratic support and political disaffection.

Moreover, much of the literature on the crisis of democracy was based on the assumption that political alienation, political trust and all the symptoms of the crisis of confidence in democracy were mainly the result of citizens' dissatisfaction with government performance. We argue here, in contrast, that political disaffection appears to occur regardless of a government's popularity or policies. Disaffection has little to do with short-term fluctuations in assessments of the government's actions, its decisions or its current popularity. Evaluations of a particular government can affect political mobilization and, ultimately, lead to electoral defeat ("*throw the rascals out*"), but they have no impact on the other two dimensions of political support: political disaffection and support for the democratic regime (Kaase and Marsh 1979; Farah, Barnes and Heunks 1979). By contrast, political discontent can be regarded as the expression of displeasure resulting from the belief that the performance of the government or political

system is falling short of the citizens' wishes or expectations (Di Palma 1970, 30). More generally, discontent is a reflection of frustration derived from comparing what one has with what one hopes or expects to have (Gamson 1968, 54); and in political terms, it results from beliefs that the government is unable to deal effectively with problems regarded by citizens as important (Dahl 1971, 144; Montero and Morlino 1995, 234), but it might not have major effects on the levels of political disaffection.

### **Comparative Levels of Political Disaffection**

This section contains a preliminary analysis of cross-national comparative data on political disaffection. Some of the data presented portrays an inconclusive picture of the comparative levels of political disaffection although it shows that overall political disaffection is slightly higher in new democracies. However, a higher level of political disaffection is not one of the distinctive features of new democracies: many old democracies also present high levels, while a few new democracies display relatively low levels.

Starting with the comparative levels of institutional disaffection, we can observe that, despite a marked decline in institutional trust in the United States<sup>3</sup> and Western Europe<sup>4</sup> over recent decades, the institutional confidence gap is a little wider among new democracies,<sup>5</sup> although it is almost impossible to distinguish new and old democracies based only on the comparative levels of institutional confidence. Comparative data from the 1990 World Value Survey (see Table 1) show that citizens in Spain and Portugal have the lowest levels of institutional trust in Western Europe,<sup>6</sup> particularly with respect to parliament, public administration and the legal system.<sup>7</sup> But this group of citizens critical of representative institutions also includes more traditional democracies such as Italy. In general, citizens in the Southern European democracies give more negative evaluations of basic institutions such as parliament, public administration and the legal system. They have more positive views of big business, the Church and the Armed Forces, although their assessments of these institutions are also below the European average. Furthermore,



data from Greece on institutional confidence are not available in this comparative survey, but, as other scholars have shown, Greek citizens displayed positive evaluations of representative institutions following the transition to democracy, although this also appears to be undergoing a shift towards institutional mistrust (Dimitras 1987, 64–84; Mendrinou and Nicolacopoulos 1997, 22–29). These findings reveal a general syndrome of lack of political institutional confidence among citizens in Southern European democracies, including second-wave democracies such as Italy.

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**TABLE 1**

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**Confidence in Institutions in 14 Democracies, 1990 (percentage of respondents stating that they have great or some confidence in institutions).**

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Country*	Church	Armed Forces	Education System	Legal System	Press	Unions	Parliament	Administration	Big Business	Social Security
Austria	50	29	65	58	18	35	41	42	42	68
Belgium	51	34	72	46	43	37	42	42	50	66
Denmark	47	46	81	79	31	46	42	51	38	69
France	50	56	66	57	38	32	48	49	67	70
Germany	39	39	53	65	34	36	50	38	38	70
Iceland	68	24	80	67	20	51	53	46	40	69
Ireland	72	61	73	47	36	43	50	59	52	59
Italy	60	46	47	32	39	33	31	25	62	37
Netherlands	32	31	65	63	36	53	53	46	48	69
Norway	45	65	–	75	43	59	59	44	53	–
Portugal	63	65	–	44	37	33	38	36	47	53
Spain	47	39	63	46	48	39	37	34	46	43
Sweden	37	49	–	56	33	40	47	44	53	–
UK	45	81	49	52	15	27	44	46	47	33
United States	67	47	55	57	56	33	45	60	50	53

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Source: World value Survey, 1990–91  
 (\*) The countries are listed alphabetically.

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The comparative data for institutional confidence in some new Latin American democracies paint a similarly fuzzy picture. Table 2, which gives the percentage of citizens who are very or quite confident in a series of institutions, shows that only the Church and the Armed Forces receive majority approval, that is, over 50 percent. The only exceptions are Argentina and Paraguay, where citizens have less confidence in the

Armed Forces, even though support for the military is still higher than that for all other institutions in Argentina and the majority of other institutions in Paraguay. This is significant when we bear in mind that the Armed Forces in these countries have often been discredited by recent authoritarian experiences. Overall, with the significant exceptions of Chile and Uruguay, two-third wave democracies, confidence in political parties, trade unions, courts, the national Congress, and the public administration is relatively low in almost all Latin American countries.<sup>8</sup> Chile and Uruguay contrast with Venezuela, where institutional confidence is very low despite the fact that this country has been under democratic rule since 1958. Therefore, although new democracies tend to have lower levels of institutional confidence, there are some significant exceptions such as Chile and Uruguay, and even Greece during the 1980s. Moreover, as exemplified by the cases of Venezuela and Italy, this lack of confidence is not exclusive to recently established regimes.

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**TABLE 2**

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**Institutional Confidence in seven Latin American Countries, 1995 and 1996  
(percentage of respondents stating that they have great or some confidence in institutions)**

	Argentina		Brazil		Chile		Paraguay		Peru		Uruguay		Venezuela	
Year	95	96	95	96	95	96	95	96	95	96	95	96	95	96
Church	65	63	74	69	81	78	89	85	78	80	56	57	77	76
Armed Forces	39	33	61	63	56	51	34	48	64	52	45	39	56	59
Unions	20	11	38	32	46	44	40	49	33	28	41	35	19	19
Courts	35	24	41	42	37	38	37	45	27	27	58	56	29	28
Big Business	36	27	42	39	41	46	37	46	45	40	37	31	38	37
Public Administration	28	20	29	28	44	39	20	34	32	28	43	38	22	18
Parliament	37	26	27	20	49	43	46	43	46	35	50	40	22	19
Political Parties	27	17	17	17	33	28	23	38	21	20	41	33	16	12
Business Associations	33	24	28	26	46	43	35	43	36	36	38	32	26	26
Government	39	20	32	25	60	52	37	40	71	50	47	37	27	16

Source: Latinobarometer 1995 and 1996.

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The lack of institutional confidence in many democracies is especially important for political parties, but, although it is higher among new democracies, it also affects some old democracies. Unfortunately, there is little comparative data on confidence in political parties. The best available data come from the 1997 wave of the World Value Survey, but few Western European countries were included in the final wave of the survey. Despite this shortcoming, the analysis of these data is very enlightening. Of all the countries for which data are available, Venezuela, a second-wave democracy, is the one with the highest level of distrust in political parties: some 60 percent of Venezuelans say they have absolutely no trust in political parties. Close behind Venezuela come Argentina, with 49 percent of “non-trusters,” Brazil with 47 percent, Peru with 44 percent, Chile with 37 percent, Spain with 29 percent, Uruguay with 26 percent, and at a considerable distance Germany with 17 percent, the United States with 16 per cent, Sweden with 11 percent and Norway with 7 percent. Although more comparative data are needed, recent studies in Southern Europe and Latin America have shown that anti-party sentiments are widespread throughout both regions, with the notable exceptions of Uruguay and Chile and, to a lesser extent, Greece (Torcal, Gunther and Montero 2002, 265–8; Meseguer 1998, 99–111). These data reveal the scale of the clear disparities among the citizens of new and old democracies in terms of their level of confidence in political parties.

These findings on confidence in a set of institutions can be seen somewhat more clearly when we compare average indexes of overall institutional confidence. These indexes are designed to show the two dimensions captured by a number of scholars when measuring European citizens’ evaluations of a series of institutions, distinguishing between specifically political institutions, and other institutions in society.<sup>9</sup> Both indexes have therefore been designed with these two dimensions in mind. The first index only includes evaluations of those institutions that belong to the political system per se (parliament, public administration and the legal system).<sup>10</sup> The second includes these three institutions as well as three other important social institutions (trade unions, the Church and big business). Although the inclusion of some of these institutions in the

**TABLE 3**

Confidence in the Political Institutions of 21 Democracies, 1981 and 1990  
(index of average confidence in the institutions of the political system and in other social institutions)

Countries*	1981		1990	
	Political	Socio-Political	Political	Socio-Political
Argentina	–	–	1.80	1.90
Peru	–	–	1.87**	2.14
Venezuela	–	–	2.03**	2.29
Italy	2.17	2.21	2.09	2.30
Brazil	–	–	2.19	2.44
Portugal	–	–	2.24	2.32
Spain	2.44	2.40	2.30	2.35
Belgium	2.39	2.36	2.34	2.35
Uruguay			2.39**	2.38
France	2.50	2.42	2.43	2.40
Austria	–	–	2.48	2.43
Sweden	2.56	2.46	2.48	2.42
Great Britain	2.57	2.48	2.50	2.41
Germany	2.56	2.45	2.52	2.41
The Netherlands	2.52	2.38	2.52	2.43
Ireland	2.55	2.59	2.55	2.61
United States	2.63	2.65	2.58	2.61
Iceland	2.20	–	2.58	2.56
Denmark	2.57	2.47	2.64	2.51
Norway	2.89	2.70	2.64	2.58
Chile	–	–	2.65	2.73
Average first- and second-wave democracies	–	–	2.46	2.45
Average third-wave democracies	–	–	2.21	2.32

Sources: 1980-81, 1990–91 and 1995–97 World Value Surveys.

(\*) The countries are listed in order of their 1990 evaluation of political institutions.

(\*\*) The data for Peru, Venezuela and Uruguay come from the 1995-97 wave.

index is debatable, they have been used in comparative studies to show the declining levels of institutional trust in many Western democracies.<sup>11</sup> Table 3, which provides data for these indexes (the scale ranges from 4, great trust, to 1, none; hence 2.50 is a neutral

position, in that it is neither negative nor positive), confirms that the citizens of Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Italy, Peru, Portugal, Spain, and Venezuela have the lowest levels of institutional confidence.<sup>12</sup> This dimension further confirms the sense of estrangement existing between citizens and government in these countries.<sup>13</sup> However, differences among citizens of new and old democracies, although statistically significant for political institutions, are small, as we can observe from the averages presented at the bottom of Table 3. Furthermore, low levels of confidence in political institutions is neither an exclusive nor a defining characteristic of new democracies; the Chilean and Uruguayan cases represent new democracies with high confidence, while Italy and Venezuela are more traditional democracies with very low levels of confidence.

A very similar situation can be observed with the comparative analysis of citizens' perception of democratic openness or responsiveness (external political efficacy), another way of measuring institutional disaffection. Despite a marked decrease in the feeling of political efficacy in old western democracies (Dalton 1999; Putnam, Pharr and Dalton 2000, 13–20), Table 4 documents that in general, citizens in the new democracies tend to declare to a higher degree that their political system and their representatives are the most unresponsive (see averages of old and new democracies in the last two rows). These differences in the average might be over-inflated because of the use of differently worded questions in Latin American countries. However, both items are intended to tap the citizens' perception of the system and representatives' responsiveness and although the data are not fully comparable, they display reliable and valid differences across countries. Even with the exact same item included in the Eurobarometer, new democracies such as Greece and Portugal present among the lowest levels of political efficacy among Western democracies. The data for Portugal confirm the high levels of cynicism and lack of political efficacy which, according to some authors, have characterized Portuguese citizens since the beginning of their political transition (Bruneau and Bacalhau 1978; Bruneau 1984a, 72–83; Bruneau and Macleod 1986, 152–55). The results for Greece also reinforce the fact that, despite initial differences with

TABLE 4

**External Efficacy in Seven Latin American Countries,  
1995–1996, and in Western Europe, 1997.**

<b>Countries*</b>	<i>% “public officials <b>care</b> about what people like me think”</i>	<i>% who considered that “politicians <b>are concerned</b> about the issues that interest you”</i>
Brazil	16	8
Venezuela	16	10
Argentina	19	7
Chile	24	13
Paraguay	28	12
Peru	29	6
Uruguay	38	13
	<i>% respondents who <b>disagree</b> that “Public services <b>look less after</b> the interests of people like me.”</i>	<i>% who <b>disagree</b> that “the people who run the country <b>are more concerned</b> with themselves than with the good of the country.” (***)</i>
Belgium	19	6
Greece	20	13
Germany	20	16
Italy	26	11
Portugal	26	19
United Kingdom	26	22
Ireland	32	19
Spain	32	22 (17****)
Austria	34	32
Sweden	35	32
France	37	19
Finland	43	28
Denmark	50	57
Netherlands	50	59
Luxembourg	56	46
Average first- and second-wave democracies	34.1	27.5
Average third-wave democracies	25.7	12

Source: For Latin America, first column Latinobarometer, 1995, and second Latinobarometer, 1996. For Europe, Eurobarometer 47.1, 1997.

(\*) The countries are listed in ascending order of the first item (first column).

(\*\*) Percentage of those who disagree greatly or somewhat.

(\*\*\*) Percentage of those who disagree.

(\*\*\*\*) The data in brackets for Spain represent the percentage obtained with the exact same question included in the Latinobarometer, 1996.

respect to other Southern European countries (Dimitrias 1987, 64–84), citizens in Greece have already joined the Spanish and Portuguese in their negative opinions concerning the responsiveness of their democratic systems.<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, these data also show that old democracies such as Belgium, Germany or the United Kingdom have similarly low levels of political efficacy. In the Latin American context, the new Uruguayan democracy presents higher levels of efficacy, whereas Venezuela, a second-wave democracy, is among the lowest in the rank.

The lack of correspondence between low levels of institutional disaffection and the third-wave democracies is just a demonstration that attitudes have nothing to do with the timing of democratization (after the 1970s). As some scholars have argued in a recent comparative study, it is not possible to identify a general trend or a particular group of new democracies suffering from special problems in this respect (Klingemann 1999, 47–48; Norris 1999b, 227). This suggests that the different trends observed in each country may be due to internal political factors that go beyond their recent authoritarian experiences and the third-wave phenomenon (Klingemann 1999, 52).

Are the preceding comparative levels of institutional-responsiveness disaffection in different countries also found in the case of the other dimension of political disaffection, political disengagement? Again, the differences between older democracies and new democracies do to some extent persist, although they are not consistent in many cases.

Tables 5 and 6 show the comparative levels of political interest found among the same set of democracies, displaying quite a similar pattern. While the citizens of new democracies generally tend to display lower levels of interest in politics, this pattern is not uniform, with important and significant contra-factuals. Spain and Portugal, together with Argentina, Chile and Venezuela, show the lowest levels of engagement in politics and public affairs, but countries such as Uruguay, Peru, Brazil, and even Colombia display higher levels of political interest.

TABLE 5

## Political Engagement in Western and Latin American Democracies, 1981-97(\*)

Countries(**)	Interest in politics				Importance of politics in life	Importance of religion in life	Difference politics minus religion
	1981	1990	1997	Mean 81-97	1990***	1990***	
United States	51	60	63	58	50	79	-29
Norway	50	72	69	64	50	40	10
Iceland	48	47		47.5	26	56	-25
W. Germany	50	69	78	66	42	37	5
Sweden	44	47	51	47	45	27	18
France	64	38	–	51	33	43	-10
Denmark	38	54	–	46	43	31	12
Austria	–	54	–	54	35	59	-24
Netherlands	41	58	–	49.5	52	42	10
Great Britain	42	49	–	45.5	43	45	-2
Uruguay	–	–	37	37	36	50	-14
Peru	–	–	32	32	38	84	-46
Brazil	–	–	31	31	51	90	-39
Colombia	–	–	29	29	26	84	-58
Italy	29	29	–	29	31	68	-37
Ireland	24	37	–	30.5	28	83	-55
Portugal	–	31	–	31	21	56	-35
Belgium	25	30	–	27.5	26	45	-19
Spain	29	25	26	27	21	53	-32
Argentina	–	–	26	26	31	67	-36
Chile	–	–	21	21	20	75	-55
Venezuela	–	–	19	19	27	85	-58
Average first- and second-wave democracies	–	–	–	44.23	37.13	53.07	-17.47
Average third-wave democracies	–	–	–	29.29	31.14	67.86	-36.71

Source: 1981, 1990-91 and 1995-97 World Value Surveys.

(\*) The data in the first three columns represent the percentages of respondents stating that they are very or somewhat interested in politics (excluding the DK/DA). The last two columns represent the percentage of those who state that politics and religion are very or quite important in their lives (excluding the DK/DA).

(\*\*) The countries are listed in order of their 1981-97 averages.

(\*\*\*) The data for the Latin American countries is from 1997.

According to data from the World Value Surveys of 1981–83, 1990–91 and 1995–97 on average (see Table 5), the levels of political interest are substantially lower in new democracies than in old ones (29.3 and 44.2 respectively). For instance, among



western democracies, the new Spanish democracy has the lowest and most rapidly decreasing levels of interest in politics of all the European countries analyzed, making the Spaniards the most politically disinterested citizens in all the Western democracies.<sup>15</sup> Portugal, only included in the 1990 study, is also among the group of countries whose citizens are the most politically disinterested in Europe. The lack of interest in politics among the citizens of these two countries is also confirmed by data from the 1983–1990 Eurobarometers.<sup>16</sup> On average, over this period just 34 percent of Spaniards declared that they were very or quite interested in politics. Lower figures are also found in Portugal and Italy (12 percent).<sup>17</sup> Moreover, between 1983 and 1990, interest in politics rose more in most other European countries than in Spain, where it decreased until 1988 and remained virtually unchanged thereafter.<sup>18</sup>

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**TABLE 6**

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**Political Engagement in Seven Latin American Countries, 1995 and 1996  
(horizontal percentages)\***

<b>Countries and years</b>	<b>% A lot or some</b>	<b>% Little</b>	<b>% None</b>
Argentina 1995	19	34	28
Argentina 1996	26	29	44
Brazil 1995	10	42	38
Brazil 1996	23	42	35
Chile 1995	12	30	46
Chile 1996	19	34	47
Paraguay 1995	15	39	32
Paraguay 1996	34	50	17
Peru 1995	17	41	27
Peru 1996	22	39	38
Uruguay 1995	20	33	27
Uruguay 1996	36	32	32
Venezuela 1995	10	30	50
Venezuela 1996	16	28	56

(\*) Countries are ranked in ascending order of political interest.

Source: Latinobarometer 1995 and 1996.

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However, Spanish and Portuguese levels are close to and even higher than those observed among very important and significant first- and second-wave democracies such as Italy, Ireland and, once again, Belgium. Furthermore, some of the new democracies in

Latin America display lower levels of interest in politics than most European countries but the gap is smaller (see Uruguay and, to a lesser extent, Peru and Brazil). They even display higher levels of political interest than some traditional Western European democracies. This conclusion is confirmed by Latinobarometer data (see Table 6). Higher levels of political interest can also be observed among the Greeks, who display a relatively higher level of interest in politics (52 percent) than Spain, Portugal and some other new democracies, remaining stable over time according to the data from 1989 and 1993 (53 and 52 percent respectively). Only in 1996 was some decrease observed, as the proportion of Greeks who are very or somewhat interested in politics dropped to 41 percent; even then, however, Greece still remained well ahead of Portugal and Spain in this respect.

Similar patterns can be observed when analyzing political saliency and comparing this with the importance citizens attach to religion. Table 5 also gives the percentage of citizens who regard politics and religion as very or quite important in their lives. On average the level of political saliency is slightly higher among old democracies (37.13), whereas the importance of religion is higher among the new ones. The data show that Spanish and Portuguese citizens give the least importance to politics in Europe, in stark contrast to their attitude to religion. Despite the intense secularization processes in both Spain (Montero 1994; Díaz-Salazar 1993) and Portugal (Bacalhau 1995, 65–67), in these two countries twice as many citizens attach importance to religion as attach importance to politics. However, this does not mean that citizens in Spain and Portugal give particular importance to religion, but rather that the number considering politics to be important are so low.<sup>19</sup> However, in Europe, Belgium, Iceland, Ireland and Italy follow the same pattern. They are also politically disaffected societies in which religion is still relatively important (especially in the cases of Ireland and Italy). On the other hand, the importance of religion is consistently higher in Latin America. Only Uruguay is close to the European pattern. This is because, despite the varying levels of political affection in these countries, religion is considered important throughout the continent. However, the

importance given to politics matches and in some cases even outstrips European levels (see Brazil, Peru and to a lesser extent, Argentina).

Finally, despite the lack of comparable indicators of internal political efficacy, Table 7 summarizes the data on questions that, although not fully comparable, were designed to measure this attitude by portraying an adequate picture of the comparable levels of this attitude among some of the countries under study. On average, internal political efficacy is higher among old democracies (see averages in Table 7). In fact, among the European citizens of the nine Western democracies included in this ISSP study, Spanish citizens display the lowest percentage of respondents stating that they do not understand important political issues (39 percent).<sup>20</sup> Similar data on the other new democracies in Southern Europe show low levels of internal political efficacy in Greece and Portugal.<sup>21</sup> However, the lack of consistency in low levels of internal political efficacy among new democracies is even more remarkable in the light of the Latin American data. It can be seen in this same table that in Argentina and Uruguay, 61 and 60 percent of respondents respectively declare that “politics is not complicated and can be understood.” Furthermore, the figure for the other countries is around 50 percent, except in Brazil and Paraguay. Hence, in some Latin American countries, we find a picture combining a high level of citizen confidence in their political abilities (internal political efficacy) and low levels of confidence in the responsiveness of the system.

TABLE 7

## Internal Political Efficacy in Latin America, 1995, and in Western Europe, 1999.

Countries*	<i>"I feel that I have a pretty good understanding of the important political issues..."**</i>
Spain	39
W.Germany	41
Sweden	41
Great Britain	45
Norway	51
Italy	52
USA	56
France	57
Ireland	62
	<i>% "politics is <b>not</b> so complicated and can be understood" ***</i>
Brazil	34
Paraguay	38
Venezuela	45
Chile	46
Peru	53
Uruguay	60
Argentina	61
Average first- and second-wave democracies	50
Average third-wave democracies	47.3

Source: For Western Europe, ISSP 96, Role of Government III, 1999; for Latin America, Latinobarometer 1995.

(\*) The countries are listed in ascending order of the first item (first column).

(\*\*) Percentage of those who agree somewhat or a lot.

(\*\*\*) Percentage of those who agree

Summing up the comparative evidence on political disaffection, it can be seen that while slightly higher among the new democracies, it is not a defining or exclusive feature of these new democratic regimes. Equally, the levels of political disaffection found among new democracies vary depending on the dimension considered. The differences between cases are even greater with respect to political disengagement and do not seem to follow any identifiable pattern. It is, therefore, impossible to conclude the link between the third-wave democratization phenomenon and political disaffection, although this phenomenon does tend to occur to a slight but significantly greater extent in new democracies. It is also

difficult to find a pattern related to the type of transition to democracy that these countries experienced. For instance, Chile, Brazil, and Spain took similar paths to democracy, but they show important disparities in the level of political disaffection. A classification of democracies according to *current institutional settings* (pluralistic vs. majoritarian models) does not seem to correspond with the differing levels of political disaffection; political disaffection is high in countries like Spain and Greece with parliamentary-pluralistic models as well as in countries with presidential models, such as Argentina and Venezuela, or semi-presidential ones, such as Portugal, whereas political disaffection is lower in countries with presidential systems such as Uruguay and Chile and traditional pluralistic systems like Norway, Netherlands and Sweden. Finally, as I have shown elsewhere (Torcal 2002), there is no relationship between the levels of democratic support and political disaffection at the individual or aggregate levels. Why, therefore, is this attitudinal phenomenon higher in new democracies? What factors account for the differences observed among the new democracies?

### **Democratic Disaffection and the Politics of the Past**

The comparative analysis of the levels of disaffection in the previous section seems to point to the importance of the democratic past in explaining the differences observed among countries. As McAllister (1999, 201) states, “confidence [in institutions] is formed cumulatively within the mass electorates” for, as the same author notes, “institutional confidence is strongly related to the period of time that democratic institutions have been in existence [and] is predicated on the frequency of free, competitive, national elections.” This is not a classical institutional argument about the origin of a lack of institutional confidence (Norris, 1999); neither, I argue in this study, is the consolidation of pro-democratic attitudes just a matter of time under democratic rule as Converse (1969) has defended, or merely a question of citizens’ experiencing repeated calls to elections.

Rather, the nature and evolution of these attitudes depend to a large extent on how the democracy in question has been incorporating citizens into the political game and the degree of mobilization generated under it (democratic inclusiveness).<sup>22</sup> So, for example, a democracy with a well-established record of adopting exclusive rather than inclusive institutions and deliberative processes, together with the presence of exclusionary practices such as political manipulation, electoral fraud or non-accountable political corruption, will inevitably suffer the consequences in terms of visible signs of disaffection. Hence, countries such as Venezuela and Italy show much higher levels of disaffection than Uruguay and Chile, regardless of the fact that the latter belong to the so-called new or third-wave democracies. As will be argued here, what matters is the time spent living in a representative democracy which is not dominated by exclusionary institutions or practices which systematically challenge or call into question the basic institutions of political representation and produce systematic political demobilization.

As I will attempt to show here, the nature of the democratic past manifests itself through its direct influence on the political disaffection found in the various countries. This influence is explored in this section, which presents a macro-analysis of data on disaffection and a series of political, economic and social indicators. The starting point for this analysis is the hypothesis that the nature of a country's "democratization history" will explain the levels of political disaffection in the present. In order to test this hypothesis, I have compiled a number of aggregate indices for various countries. These indices incorporate a series of social, economic and political indicators that, according to the literature, could influence the levels of these attitudes found in a given society. I go on to examine the relationship between these indices and three attitudinal aggregate indicators, one for the support for democracy<sup>23</sup> and three for political disaffection: the proportion of citizens who generally feel that the authorities and the system as a whole are not responsive to their demands,<sup>24</sup> the percentage of citizens who declare that politics is very or somewhat important in their lives,<sup>25</sup> and the index of confidence in the institutions of political representation which has been discussed above and which includes

confidence in parliament, the public administration, and the legal system.<sup>26</sup> The countries included in the analysis vary slightly depending on the data available, but the analysis still centers on the advanced capitalist societies of Western Europe and the United States, the Southern European countries, and the Latin American Southern Cone democracies.<sup>27</sup>

To test the three major hypotheses, four sets of variables with aggregate data were created: the influence of democratization history; the influence of current contextual political and institutional features; the influence of major economic and social achievements; and the level of modernization. The variables were as follows:

A) Three variables to measure past democratization history:<sup>28</sup>

1. Years of liberal and representative democracy from 1930 to 1997. I count only those years in which the country had a functioning democracy according to procedural criteria.<sup>29</sup>
2. The number of changes of political regime, either to or from a non-democracy (authoritarian or totalitarian), semi-democracy or democracy, from 1930 to 1997.<sup>30</sup>
3. Duration in years of the longest period of uninterrupted democracy between 1930 and 1997.<sup>31</sup>

B) Five variables to measure some basic contextual political characteristics:

1. The type of constitutional design existing since 1995: a. “parliamentary democracy”; b. “mixed democracy”; and c. “presidential democracy” (see Mainwaring 1999).
2. Achievements in civil and political liberties, measured by the variations in the “Political Liberties Index” and in “Civil Liberties Index” from the year before the introduction of the most recent democracy until 1997 or, in the case of democracies established before 1976, between 1976 and 1997.<sup>32</sup>

3. The party systems, measured by the average number of effective parties existing in each country from the beginning of democracy until 1990 or, in the case of democracies founded before 1976, between 1976 and 1997.<sup>33</sup>
4. The degree of social mobilization, measured by the average number of general strikes that took place from the foundation of democracy until 1990 or, if the democracy dates from before 1976, from then until 1990.<sup>34</sup>
5. The “Corruption Index” produced by the Center for Corruption Research for the period 1980–1992.<sup>35</sup>

C) A further three variables to measure improvements in economic and social standards:

1. Social achievements and progress, measured by the variation in the country’s “Human Development Index” (HDI) from the last time that democracy was reestablished until 1997 or, if a democracy was established before 1980, from 1980 to 1997.<sup>36</sup>
2. Economic achievements, measured by average growth in GDP from 1975 to 1997.<sup>37</sup>
3. Growth in per capita income in constant US dollars from the creation of democracy to 1997 or, in the case of democracies established before 1976, between 1976 and 1997.<sup>38</sup>

D). Modernization variables:

1. The level of GDP for 1997.
2. Cubic power of the GDP for 1997 in order to test the income threshold theory for modernization which maintains that there is an N-curve relationship between modernization and democratization.<sup>39</sup>
3. The Human Development Index (HDI) for 1997.



The results of a bivariate analysis of the relationship between these indicators and the aggregate levels of confidence in the political institutions and of external political efficacy are quite consistent and revealing. As can be seen from the significant bivariate correlations given in Table 8, the variables most consistently related to the levels of institutional trust (first column) are essentially related to the democratization history and the modernization variables. There is also an important influence by some of the political context variables such as average number of general strikes and the corruption index, as well as the increase in per capita income. These results would certainly appear to confirm the importance of the relationship between institutional confidence and the democratic history of the societies under consideration, thereby opening a new venue for the significance of this variable. Only the group of the modernization variables seems to be of similar importance to the democratic history variables. The economic and social performance variables display a secondary or null importance with the exception of the rise in per capita income, which clearly contrasts with the absence of a significant relationship with in the other main social and economic performance variables.<sup>40</sup> On the other hand, the increase in civil and political liberties does not seem, at first glance, to influence the degree of institutional confidence. It only has a low relation with one of the external efficacy items.

TABLE 8

**Bivariate relationship between some dimensions of political disaffection and democratic support with various aggregate economic, social and political indicators (only statistically significant Pearson's correlations).**

	Trust in institutions	% politically Effective (item 1)	% politically Effective (item 2)	% who declare the importance of politics in life	% of support for democracy
<b>Democratization history variables</b>					
Years of democracy since 1930	0.80*	0.45**	0.53***	0.34***	
Changes of political regime since 1930	-0.84*	-0.43***	-0.54**		
Duration of the longest period under democracy since 1930	0.77*	0.65*	0.73*	0.55*	
<b>Modernization variables</b>					
Income per capita 1997	0.78*	0.60*	0.68*		0.60*
Cubic power of income per capita 1997	0.70*	0.69*	0.70*	0.58*	0.46**
Human Development Index 1997	0.74*		0.50**		0.70*
<b>Political context variables</b>					
Institutions					
Average number of general strikes from introduction of democracy until 1990	-0.67*		-0.48**		
Effective number of parties from instauration of democracy to 1997					
Corruption Index 1980–1992	0.79*	0.44***	0.58*	0.45**	0.50**
<b>Performance Variables</b>					
Variation in Human Development Index from institution of democracy to 1997				-0.46**	
Variation in Political Liberties Index from institution of democracy to 1997			-0.40***		
Variation in Civil Liberties Index from introduction of democracy to 1997		-0.64*	-0.70*		
GDP growth 1975-1997	0.58*				
Increase in per capita income from introduction of democracy to 1997	0.78*	0.65*	0.67*	0.45*	0.56*
(N)	(20)	(19)	(19)	(20)	(19)

Source: Compiled by the author.

(\*) Significant at  $p < 0.01$ .

(\*\*) Significant at  $p < 0.05$ .

(\*\*\*) Significant at  $p < 0.1$ .

It is interesting to note the weak relationship found between institutional disaffection (confidence in institutions and external political efficacy) and some political

contextual factors including the constitutional setting. Only the corruption index (which may reflect a cultural perception rather than a political reality)<sup>41</sup> and the number of general strikes after the installation of democracy are significant; although the correlation is weaker than the variables mentioned above, this variable does show a significant negative relation. In principle, this points towards the existence of a relation between the lack of confidence in the institutions of representation and the use of less conventional mechanisms of political participation and expression.

On the other hand, the relationship between these same variables and political salience is rather different but also very revealing. There are not such strong “r coefficients,” but the significant ones tend again to confirm to some extent the relationship between political disengagement, the other dimension of political disaffection, and democratization history, but also the mobilization linked to it. The levels of the importance of politics in citizens’ lives are related to two of the democratic history variables, especially the one which measures the duration of the longest period of democracy; the effect of political mobilization during longer periods (under un-interrupted democratic rule) tend to be a good predictor of citizens’ levels of attention to political life. Furthermore, another good predictor of the different levels of this attitude in different countries is the cubic transformation of income. As Deutsch argued in his classic work, social and political mobilization is a function of modernity (Deutsch 1961, 493–514) and, regardless of the effect on democratization or democratic stability,<sup>42</sup> the intensity of mobilization in South America has had an N-curvilinear shape corresponding to the cubic transformation of income per capita: strong during the fifties and sixties, and weak or non-existent during the eighties under repressive military rule. We can, therefore, tentatively speculate that, at the aggregate level, modernization, together with the political mobilization linked to it, has an impact on the levels of relevance of and interest in politics among citizens of different countries. The impact of the institutional variables and economic performance variables is either weaker or non-existent.

These findings on political disaffection at the aggregate level contrast with the lack of relationship with support for democracy (see Table 8, last column). Only the modernization variables, the increase in per capita income from the introduction of democracy to 1997, and the corruption index are of any statistical significance. These data confirm two important points. First, they point to the distinct nature of disaffection and democratic legitimacy (highlighting one of the causes of the lack of relationship between these variables) (see Gunther, Montero and Torcal 2003; Montero and Gunther forthcoming). Second, these data also show the preceding hypotheses lack the power to explain democratic support.

All these conclusions about the distinct levels of political disaffection among Western and Latin American democracies are, however, rather contingent, as they are based on simple bivariate relations. Therefore, in a bid to provide further confirmation for these conclusions, I developed three regression models: one in which the dependent variable is the percentage of citizens who generally feel that the authorities and the political system are not receptive to their demands; one with the percentage of importance of politics in life as the dependent variable; and the other in which the dependent variable is the index of institutional trust. I have not included, however, all the variables shown in Table 8 due to the existence of strong multicollinearity between some of them.<sup>43</sup> In general, I have only included one variable for each of the four groups of the major hypotheses discussed above (the one showing the strongest correlation in Table 8). In some cases, I have maintained two variables when they do not seem to create major problems for estimation.<sup>44</sup>

The models to be estimated are:

1. Institutional confidence =  $f$ (democratization history variables, modernization, institutions in place, performance of the system).
2. External political efficacy =  $f$ (democratization history variables, modernization, institutions in place, performance of the system).

3. Salience of politics =  $f(\text{democratization history variables, modernization, institutions in place, performance of the system})$ .<sup>45</sup>

TABLE 9

Regression model with aggregate data of some indicators of political disaffection and (Ordinary Least Square [OLS])

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	<i>Dep var: Index Institutional Confidence* 100</i>		<i>Dep var: % External Efficacy Political</i>		<i>Dep: % Salience of Politics</i>	
<b>Variables*</b>	<i>Beta</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Beta</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>Beta</i>	<i>P</i>
Years of democracy since 1930 or years under longest democratic rule	0.46	<b>0.07</b>	<b>0.70</b>	<b>0.07</b>	0.28	0.40
Average number of general strikes from introduction of democracy to 1990	-0.42	<b>0.06</b>	<b>-0.57</b>	<b>0.04</b>	n.i.	
Corruption index 1980-1992	0.12	0.75	0.71	0.11	0.28	0.51
Effective number of parties from introduction of democracy to 1995	-0.1	0.7	n.i.		n.i.	
Variation in Political and Civil Liberties Index from introduction of democracy to 1997	0.42	<b>0.06</b>	<b>0.73</b>	<b>0.02</b>	n.i.	
Increase in per capita income from introduction of democracy to 1997	0.19	0.74	0.19	0.73	-0.83	0.17
Income per capita 1997	-0.03	0.95	n.i.		n.i.	
Income per capita 1997 to the cubic power	0.16	0.64	0.59	0.21	<b>0.91</b>	<b>0.06</b>
Constant	1.96		49		20.6	
R squared						
F	7.73	0.85	3.29	0.64	3.18	0.44
(N)	(20)	0.00	(17)	0.04	(20)	0.04

(\*)The lack of a bivariate relationship according to the previous correlation table 8 and problems of multicollinearity are the two reasons for deleting variables from the model.

As can be seen in Table 9, the results of the estimation of these models provide definitive confirmation of the crucial role that democratization history plays in shaping these attitudes. In model 1, focusing on confidence in political institutions, the significant variables in order of importance are: years of democracy since 1930, number of general strikes, and increase in political and civil liberties since democracy was reestablished. The

latter is the only variable related to performance (although it might be interpreted as a recent record of democratization history) that displays any relationship with institutional confidence, confirming the findings of Norris' recent comparative study.<sup>46</sup> Nevertheless, I do not think that this is an indicator, as the author suggests, of current institutional political features, but rather an indicator of past democratic history (in fact, the correlation between the latter and the increase in political liberties is 0.44). Finally, I could not find any relation with the level of corruption at the aggregate level.

These findings, as well as the crucial importance of the individual country's democratization history, are confirmed once again in model 2 which estimates the relation with the degree of external political inefficacy (also in Table 9). The relation with the number of years of democratic rule since 1930 and variation in political and civil liberties are once again the strongest. The variables related to income differences, i.e., 1997 income levels and 1997 income levels to the cubic power, are not significant. Nevertheless, the variable measuring income levels in 1997 was not included due to high multicollinearity detected with the two preceding ones, and the tolerance levels (multicollinearity) produced by the other two income variables remain very high, generating very questionable statistical inference tests for the coefficients. It is clear, however, that the variables containing some information on income per capita have the same predictive capacity for the level of external political efficacy, although, far from that detected by the years of democracy and variation of political and civil liberties. For instance, the different levels of modernization of Southern European societies do not correspond with the low levels of political efficacy observed in these countries and the differences among them. (Greece has the highest levels of political efficacy, for example.) This is also true of Argentina, Chile and Brazil.

In model 3, the only significant predictor of the different levels of attentiveness to politics is the "N-curve modernization" variable. Democratization history variables lose their predictive capacity as soon as this variable is included in the model (data not shown). Political mobilization does occur more under democratic rule than under

authoritarian regimes, however, pseudo-democratic systems in Latin America during the fifties and sixties did implement populist-mobilizing strategies to legitimate their political regimes among demobilized populations, thereby changing their basic attitudes.<sup>47</sup> This is why, as suggested by the comparative levels in the previous section, engagement and attentiveness to politics are higher in those countries. A similar hypothesis, that is to say one which emphasizes the effect of political mobilization on political engagement, has also been put forward to account for the higher levels of interest in politics in Eastern Europe.<sup>48</sup> Finally, we can conclude that these results challenge the significance, defended by other scholars,<sup>49</sup> of current economic performance, current institutional setting, and contextual political features.

### **The Distinctive Character of Disaffection in Old and New Democracies**

As we have seen in the analysis of the aggregate data presented in the previous section, the best predictor of the varying levels of political disaffection found in the countries under consideration is their democratic history or, to be more precise, their record of exclusionary and/or anti-democratic institutions, practices, and demobilizing political episodes. In this section, I argue that the effect of this democratization history not only explains differences in political disaffection at the aggregate level, but also explains political disaffection at the individual level. The main aim of the following pages is to show the distinct “nature” of disaffection at the individual level in new democracies, which are countries with long histories of democratic instability and protracted experiences of serious democratic disruption brought about by the aforementioned exclusionary institutions and practices, in a context of social complexity. In short, I will show that the factors explaining political disaffection at the individual level are different in new democracies.

The basic argument concerning the different nature of political disaffection in new democracies is that the citizens of these countries do not have a valid point of reference from which to assess the performance and representative nature of the current political

institutions or the achievements of the system. As a result, their opinions and attitudes with respect to the democratic institutions, politicians and performance of the system will be much less dependent on direct experience of the existing institutions and their functioning, and will tend to reflect accumulated non-democratic or pseudo-democratic experiences in the past.

As we saw before, high disaffection is not a problem exclusive to new democracies. Some new democracies display low disaffection due to a successful, more distant democratic past, despite recent and sometimes traumatic non-democratic experiences. At the same time, there are democracies that, although not part of the recent “third democratization wave,” have high political disaffection due to their history of troubled democratic regimes. These exceptions reinforce the conclusion regarding the importance of the political past in shaping these attitudes. However, the problem of disaffection is different in these old, stable democracies precisely because of the effect of the past. Political disaffection in new democracies is the product of the “democratization process of the past,” whereas, in old democracies, it reflects the effect of the “democratic past.” In old democracies, citizens have experienced democratic rule and have some experience on which to base their evaluation of the functioning and performance of the current institutions, so political disaffection derives from the negative evaluation of current socially-excluding institutions, their representatives, their declining performance and the long accumulation of frustrated expectations. In this respect, the causes of political disaffection in all non-third-wave democracies are the same—the result of accumulated democratic experience. The difference is that in those with high disaffection, the democratic history is full of episodes of failure, manipulation, instability, the use and abuse of exclusive institutional settings and accumulated poor performance, whereas in countries with high affection, the democratic history tends to be full of successes.

In contrast, political disaffection in new democracies—regardless of the levels observed—has a distinct origin and nature, also related with the political history, and is more closely related to the socializing experiences of previous episodes of non-democratic



or pseudo-democratic rule. In this respect, despite the almost similar presence of a certain degree of political disaffection in new and some old democracies, it does make sense to separate them when studying their nature at the individual level.

If this hypothesis is correct, the analysis of the variables that influence disaffection in the new and traditional democracies should produce very different results in each case. As well, we would also expect the basic characteristics of the disaffected citizens to be quite distinct. I have already shown elsewhere that the characteristics of the disaffected citizens are quite distinctive in their educational, generational and informational profiles: the disaffected are younger than average, have less education, and are less informed (Torcal 2002).

I will now present further evidence for the distinctive character of disaffection in the new and old democracies. This is drawn from a comparative multivariate analysis of survey data: the third wave (1995–97) of the WVS which includes a series of particularly interesting variables for this discussion. Using only the last wave of this comparative cross-national survey has two advantages: I can use more variables included in the questionnaire to test different hypotheses and I can include confidence in political parties in the institutional confidence index (only included in the WVS third wave). On the other hand, it has one disadvantage: unfortunately, the survey did not cover all the countries under analysis here. I will, therefore, present the results obtained from survey data for 12 countries, comprising six first- and second-wave democracies and six of the so-called new democracies (16,367 cases).<sup>50</sup>

In order to verify the distinctive character of disaffection I have developed a general model to look at three different attitudes: institutional confidence, the importance of politics in life (political salience), and interest in politics (another indicator of political disaffection).<sup>51</sup> The independent variables chosen from the survey are the following:

#### A. Political and performance variables:

1. Ideological scale;<sup>52</sup> according to some recent work this is an essential variable in

observing the effect of politics on individuals' institutional confidence (Newton and Norris 2000, 65).

2. Satisfaction with the way people in national office today are running the country.<sup>53</sup>
3. Perception of the level of corruption existing in the system.<sup>54</sup>
4. Evaluation of the extent of poverty in the country compared with the situation ten years earlier.<sup>55</sup>
5. Household's financial situation, used to test the effect of individual prosperity on political disaffection.<sup>56</sup>

B. Cultural variables:

1. Postmaterialist index,<sup>57</sup> since some recent literature has identified a relationship between this variable and internal political efficacy (Gabriel 1995, 357–389).
2. Social Trust,<sup>58</sup> in order to test whether there is a relationship between the type of people who express trust in others and confidence in strong and effective institutions.

C. Sociological variables:

1. Gender.<sup>59</sup>
2. Age.<sup>60</sup>
3. Education.<sup>61</sup>

D. I have also added a dummy variable in order to see whether the effect of being an established (0) or new (1) democracy has any effect on the levels of political disaffection.

Thus, the general individual level model for political disaffection I propose to test is the following:

$$\text{Model 1: } y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 A + \beta_2 B + \beta_3 C + \beta_4 D + e$$

To test my hypothesis on the specific nature of political disaffection in new democracies I will add two additional sets of variables in two steps:

E. Aggregate political variables:

1. Number of years of democracy since 1930.
  2. Average number of general strikes since the introduction of democracy.
- F. Interactions of some of the variables A, B and C with the D dummy old/new democracy variable to test if the individual level variables do have a different impact in new democracies:

Therefore, models 2 and 3 to be tested are as follows:

$$\text{Model 2: } y = \beta_o + \beta_1A + \beta_2B + \beta_3C + \beta_4D + \beta_5E + e$$

$$\text{Model 3: } y = \beta_o + \beta_1A + \beta_2B + \beta_3C + \beta_4D + \beta_5E + \beta_6F + e$$

If my hypothesis about the distinct character of political disaffection in new democracies is correct we should expect the following:

1. Coefficients of the interaction variables “E” should be other than zero ( $\beta_6 \neq 0$ ), that is, statistically significant and negative for the satisfaction with the performing variables (since this should be less important in new democracies), positive for the social trust variables (since this variable partly represents the personal socializing experiences in new democracies), and, as I discussed in the preceding section, negative for age and education.
2. Coefficients of aggregate political variables “F” should be other than zero ( $\beta_5 \neq 0$ ), that is, statistically significant. The strength and direction could change depending on the dependent variable: positive for the years of democracy since 1990 and institutional confidence, and positive and stronger for the relationship between the average number of general strikes and interest in politics and relevance of politics in life.

TABLE 10

**Estimation of models explaining institutional trust and political engagement at the individual level (Ordinary Least Square [OLS])**

Variables*	Institutional Confidence			Political Interest			Political Salience		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Years of democracy since 1930	—	<b>0.13</b>	<b>0.13</b>	—	<b>0.18</b>	<b>0.18</b>	—	<b>0.11</b>	<b>0.11</b>
Social Trust in new democracies			<b>0.07</b>						
Social Trust (V27)	<b>0.14</b>	<b>0.13</b>		<b>0.11</b>	<b>0.10</b>	<b>0.09</b>	<b>0.11</b>	<b>0.10</b>	<b>0.10</b>
Satisfaction with personal financial situation (V64)	0.08	0.07	0.07	0.06	0.03	0.03	0.03		
Satisfaction with authorities in new democracies	—	—	<b>-0.22</b>	—	—		—	—	
Satisfaction with authorities (V165)	<b>0.24</b>	<b>0.21</b>	<b>0.31</b>	0.05	0.03	0.03	0.05	0.03	
Poverty compared to ten years earlier (V171)	-0.04	-0.03	-0.03						
Postmaterialist Index (V100MPM)				<b>0.17</b>	<b>0.15</b>	<b>0.15</b>	<b>0.12</b>	<b>0.11</b>	<b>0.11</b>
Perception of level of corruption in the system (V213)	<b>0.20</b>	<b>0.17</b>	<b>0.13</b>	0.09	0.06	0.08	0.04		
Perception of corruption in new democracies	—	—	<b>0.10</b>	—	—		—	—	
New democracies	0.06	0.07	<b>0.13</b>	<b>-0.18</b>	<b>-0.30</b>	<b>-0.25</b>	-0.09	<b>-0.22</b>	<b>-0.31</b>
N	10,043	10,043	10,043	10,452	10,452	10,452	10,404	10,404	10,404
Ideology in new democracies	—	—		—	—		—	—	-0.06
Ideology (V213)			0.03	-0.06	-0.05	-0.04			
Gender (V214)				0.06	0.07	0.07	0.03	0.04	0.03
Education in new democracies	—	—	<b>-0.07</b>	—	—	<b>0.17</b>	—	—	<b>0.17</b>
Education (V218)				0.09	<b>0.11</b>	<b>0.06</b>	<b>0.11</b>	<b>0.12</b>	0.07
Average number of general strikes from introduction of democracy to 1990	—	-0.08	-0.09	—	<b>0.22</b>	<b>0.24</b>	—	<b>0.19</b>	<b>0.21</b>
Age in new democracies	—	—	<b>-0.13</b>	—	—	<b>-0.15</b>	—	—	<b>-0.08</b>
Age (V216)	0.05	0.04	0.03	0.09	0.06	<b>0.11</b>	0.07	0.06	0.09
R <sup>2</sup>	0.22	0.23	0.25	0.16	0.18	0.19	0.08	0.09	0.09
N	10,043	10,042	10,043	10,452	10,452	10,452	10,404	10,404	10,404

Source: World Values Survey 1995–97.

(\*) Numbers in brackets refer to questions in the World Values Survey.

Note: I have only shown the statistically significant beta coefficients with a p value < 0.05.

Table 10 shows the results of the estimation of the three models for each of these three dependent variables. I have only shown the statistically significant beta coefficients with p values of over 0.05, highlighting the largest beta coefficients in bold.<sup>62</sup> The parameters estimated in these models confirm the hypothesis regarding the specific nature of political disaffection in new democracies. In model 3 under institutional confidence, the interaction for satisfaction with authorities is important, significant, and negative (beta  $-0.22$ ), showing that in new democracies confidence in institutions depends much less on the performance of the system, and more on social trust (significant and positive) and the perception of corruption. On the other hand, there is no consistent relationship in all democracies between education and institutional confidence, which also shows a reduced positive coefficient with age. In contrast, the effect of age and education is more negative and significant in new democracies, showing that in these democracies institutional disaffection is greater among the youngest and less educated citizens.

The interaction variables for political interest and relevance of politics are not significant except for age (higher among the younger) and education (higher among the better educated). Even though in some non-democratic countries political mobilization has often been focused on marginal sectors of society, it has a clearer effect on the more educated and younger citizens than on those who were directly exposed to attempts at mobilization or to greater political information during these periods in the past (e.g., Argentina, Peru, Brazil and so on). In contrast, long-lasting political mobilization resulting from enfranchisement and political organization of all sectors of society has a more widespread effect on overall cultural levels with a slightly greater impact among older citizens. The particular relationship between age and education and these two attitudes in new democracies confirms the impact of past political history. However, much of the variance in these attitudes remains to be explained, as shown by the poor goodness of fit. Besides, the beta value of the old/new dummy variable in the models is very important, revealing that there are some additional factors to be included in the analysis in order to explain the lower level of political engagement in these countries.

Additionally, the results reveal a number of very interesting findings, but perhaps most importantly:

A. With regard to institutional political disaffection:

1. The dummy variable for new/old democracies has a small but positive impact on institutional confidence, showing, as we saw in preceding sections, that some new democracies have greater levels of political affection (Chile and Uruguay) than their older counterparts (such as Venezuela, Italy or even France). The classification of countries according to the levels of political disaffection does not correspond with recent non-democratic and democratization experiences. However, when I have added in to model 2, the aggregate variable measuring the number of years of democracy since 1930, it also emerges as a powerful predictor at the individual level. Institutional political disaffection is a problem related to the political history of these countries that goes beyond the third-wave phenomenon.
2. The degree of satisfaction with the incumbent authorities is a powerful predictor of institutional confidence in the traditional democracies, confirming the importance of system performance in predicting this attitude, although, as we saw, this is much less significant in new democracies. The perception of corruption is the other performance variable with the greatest effect. This result confirms the findings of recent studies which have argued that unfulfilled expectations are important determinants of confidence in institutions, such expectations including the idea that the government should “follow procedures that are unbiased,” (Miller and Listhaug 1999, 189–201) and “produce outcomes that neither advantage nor disadvantage particular groups unfairly. Additionally, citizens expect political leaders to operate in an honest (...) manner.” (della Porta 2000, 202–228). However, these expectations could be higher in different countries due to a lack of previous democratic experiences to compare with, explaining why the perception of corruption is much greater in the newer democracies than in the more-established ones; while 55 per cent of citizens in

new democracies state that all or nearly all the authorities are involved in corruption, this figure drops to 44 per cent in the more traditional democracies (and to just 38 per cent when Venezuela is excluded). This also explains why this variable shows higher predictive capacity among new democracies.

3. However, institutional political disaffection is not a pure reflection of democratic system performance. Neither respondents' evaluations of the changing levels of poverty nor their personal economic situation have an impact. Institutional confidence depends to some extent on other cultural variables that reflect personal socializing experiences. In fact, and contrary to some recent findings, social trust has a greater impact on institutional confidence than some performing variables (Newton 1999; Newton and Norris 2000; Mishler and Rose 2001). This is especially true for new democracies (see interactions in model 3).<sup>63</sup> The cultural change of postmaterialism does not have an impact.
4. Contrary to recent findings, ideology does not have any effect on institutional confidence (Newton and Norris 2000, 65).

#### B. Political interest and political salience:

1. The results of the estimation of both models are mirror images, showing that both belong to the same dimension of political disaffection (political disengagement) and respond to the same processes and factors in their origin and evolution.
2. The dummy new-old democracy variable is much stronger and consistent with this type of disaffection (lower among new democracies), but the political aggregate variables are also good predictors, especially the average number of general strikes from the introduction of democracy to 1990. Even the mobilization produced since the (re)establishment of democracy, shown in the average number of strikes, has a significant effect on the level of political disengagement.
3. The cultural-socializing variables are the strongest attitudinal predictors, confirming the importance of these dimensions on political engagement (Gabriel

1995, 357–87), whereas the performing variables have a very residual effect.

4. Ideology has very little effect on political interest and none on salience of politics in life.

### **Political Disaffection and Political Participation**

Contrary to what is claimed by the early classics on this topic (Milbrath 1977), political participation is a multidimensional phenomenon (Verba and Nie 1972; Verba, Nie and Kim 1978; Marsh 1977; Kaase and Marsh 1979; Marsh 1991). This means that each type of participation requires, among other things, different degrees of initiative, commitment, information and objectives on the part of the citizens. This multidimensionality has additional implications. First, participation may become specialized in certain areas or dimensions. Second, there may be citizens who concentrate only on certain types of political action. Certainly, we must recognize the existence of different types of citizenship depending on the form of participation preferred. Finally, the presence of distinct dimensions of participation also means there could be a set of factors that influence different dimensions of participation in different ways. Many scholars have shown that people who do not have confidence in institutions feel left out of politics or, incapable of understanding it, will be reluctant to participate in the democratic process, producing general apathy.<sup>64</sup> But, it is equally possible that political disaffection could mobilize citizens to seek alternative ways of expressing their political opinions and their frustration with the functioning and performance of existing democratic institutions (Barnes, Kaase et al. 1979; Dalton 1988 and 1999). In Gamson's (1968, 48) view, it is the combined effect of low political trust and high political efficacy that produces "the optimum combination for mobilization." Thus, according to this literature (Craig and Maggioro 1982; Sigelman and Feldman 1983; Craig and Wald 1985; Wolfsfeld 1986), an attitudinal blend of perceptions that political institutions are unresponsive provides the strongest motivation for unconventional behavior, at the same time discouraging more traditional forms of political action. Some of these attitudes become the



driving force that may be transforming the nature of the relationship between citizens and the state in representative democracies (Dalton 1988, Fuchs and Klingemann 1995; Nye et al., 1997; Norris 1999c).

Do the different dimensions of political disaffection—institutional disaffection and political disengagement—produce the same mobilizing effect on citizens in new democracies? I argue here that political disaffection in new democracies does have the same effects on both conventional and non-conventional political participation, reducing the incentive to participate in either form. Political disaffection in new democracies has a very dominant and strong “demobilizing effect,” reducing participation or the propensity to participate to the mere act of voting (and delegation) and decreasing the accountability of representatives between elections. To demonstrate this claim, I will specify two models for political participation in the new democracies I have been analyzing where data is available: one model for conventional participation and one for non-conventional participation.

To test the effect of political disaffection on participation, I have estimated and discussed a regression model for conventional and non-conventional participation. The model includes information on individual social and economic resources (the basic socio-demographic variables), indicators of political discontent such as an evaluation of the economy in general and one’s own economic situation (*Overall economic situation* and *Personal economic situation*), and finally satisfaction with the functioning of democracy (*Satisfaction with democratic functioning*), and democratic support (*Support for democracy*). Two variables were included to measure the two dimensions of political disaffection: an index with the combination of confidence in institutions and external political efficacy for institutional disaffection (*Institutional affection*) and internal political efficacy for political disengagement (*Political engagement*).<sup>65</sup> I have also included a variable combining external political inefficacy and internal political efficacy. This combination will test the hypothesis that perceptions that political institutions are unresponsive combined with a feeling of political capability, might provide, as I discussed

above, the strongest motivation for unconventional behavior while at the same time discouraging more traditional forms of political action (*Gamson's Hypothesis*).<sup>66</sup> I have also included ideology as a way of controlling the effects of current political competition and exclusion.

Model 1, estimation of conventional participation,<sup>67</sup> is as follows:

$$Y_{\text{conventional participation}_j} = \beta_{0j} \alpha_j + \beta_{1j} \text{Overall econ. situation}_j + \beta_{2j} \text{Personal econ. situation}_j + \beta_{3j} \text{Ideology}_j + \beta_{4j} \text{S.functioning}_j + \beta_{5j} \text{Support for democracy}_j + \beta_{6j} \text{Institutional affection} + \beta_{7j} \text{Pol. engagement}_j + \beta_{8j} \text{Gamson's hypothesis}_j + \beta_{9j} \text{Education}_j + \beta_{10j} \text{Gender}_j + \beta_{11j} \text{Age}_j + \beta_{12j} \text{Ingresos}_j + e$$

In order to test the mobilizing effects of political disaffection in terms of non-conventional participation and the fostering of institutional innovation, I have added two additional variables for the model of non-conventional participation:

1. Conventional participation (*Conventional*).
2. Interaction between not using the conventional mechanisms of participation and institutional disaffection (*conven\*institutional dis.*). This variable is intended to tap the attitudes of those citizens who, refusing conventional modes of participation, turn to non-conventional modes, in correspondence with their lack of institutional disaffection.<sup>68</sup>

Model 2, estimation of non-conventional participation,<sup>69</sup> is as follows:

$$Y_{\text{non-conventional participation}_j} = \beta_{0j} \alpha_j + \beta_{1j} \text{Overall econ. situation}_j + \beta_{2j} \text{Personal econ. situation}_j + \beta_{3j} \text{Ideology}_j + \beta_{4j} \text{S.functioning}_j + \beta_{5j} \text{Support for democracy}_j + \beta_{6j} \text{Institutional affection} + \beta_{7j} \text{Pol. engagement}_j + \beta_{8j} \text{Gamson's hypothesis}_j + \beta_{9j} \text{Education}_j + \beta_{10j} \text{Gender}_j + \beta_{11j} \text{Age}_j + \beta_{12j} \text{Ingresos}_j + \beta_{13j} \text{Conventional}_j + \beta_{14j} \text{Conven*institutional des.} + e$$

If political disaffection is a source of democratic innovation, an alternative source of political control and a new instrument for the expression of citizens' preferences, we should find the following:

- a) Neither dimension of political affection should be related with conventional participation, therefore, in model 1,  $\beta_{6j}=0$  and  $\beta_{7j}=0$ .
- b) Gamson's index (external disaffected with internal efficacious) should have a negative relationship with conventional participation; therefore, in model 1,  $\beta_{8j}<0$ .
- c) Both dimensions of political affection should have a negative relationship with non-conventional participation; that is, the disaffected should be the ones promoting this kind of non-formal participation; therefore, in model 2,  $\beta_{6j}<0$  and  $\beta_{7j}<0$ .
- d) Gamson's index should have a positive relationship with non-conventional participation; therefore, in model 2,  $\beta_{8j}>0$ .
- e) Conventional participation should not be related or should be negatively related with non-conventional participation; therefore, in model 2,  $\beta_{13j} \leq 0$ .
- f) The interaction of dummy conventional participation and institutional affection should be negatively related with non-conventional participation; therefore, in model 2,  $\beta_{14j}<0$ .

If the preceding discussion of the different consequences of political disaffection in new democracies is correct and constitutes a reason for the widening of the gap between citizens, institutions, and political authorities, and thus promotes a general lack of participation, less expression of political preferences and less political accountability of authorities between elections, creating a more elitist, less participatory democracy, we should expect the following:

- g) Both dimensions of political affection should have a positive relationship with conventional participation; therefore, in model 1,  $\beta_{6j}>0$  and  $\beta_{7j}>0$ .

- h) Gamson's index (external disaffected with internal efficacious) should have a positive or non-existent relationship with conventional participation; therefore, in model 1,  $\beta_{8j} \geq 0$ .
- i) Institutional affection and political engagement should have a positive relationship with non-conventional participation; that is, the affected should be the ones promoting this kind of non-formal participation; therefore, in model 2,  $\beta_{6j} > 0$  and  $\beta_{7j} > 0$ .
- j) Gamson's index should have a negative or non-existent relationship with non-conventional participation; therefore, in model 2,  $\beta_{8j} \leq 0$ .
- k) Conventional participation should be positively related to non-conventional participation; therefore, in model 2,  $\beta_{13j} > 0$ .
- l) The interaction of dummy conventional participation and institutional affection should be positively or not related with non-conventional participation; therefore, in model 2,  $\beta_{14j} \geq 0$ .

Before estimating the model, I should point out that this model obviously fails to include important contextual variables for political participation. However, my main goal is not to develop a complete model to account for political participation in these countries. I only intend to show the influence and the direction of political disaffection with respect to conventional and non-conventional participation, after controlling for a set of significant variables on an individual level typically included in the literature. Furthermore, the non-inclusion in the model of contextual national-level variables in individual-level analyses by country should not be considered an under-specified model problem.<sup>70</sup> National contextual level variables are constant within each country and only provide information to explain the differences in the levels among countries, which is not my primary concern here.

Moreover, as I have demonstrated earlier, the political attitudes under study here (particularly those that measure political disaffection) contain important information

about the political context of the past. As discussed previously, this means that, although political attitudes are reflections of individual features, they contain a cultural legacy of past political events. Most models of political participation try to include in their explanations current contextual political factors, but political attitudes can carry information about past political events. This claim is important because most current models of political participation give politics a residual role when they include only current contextual political features—politics is generally thought to explain only what is left after sociological and individual attitudinal attributes are taken into account. Considering and stating more clearly the effects of the “politics of the past” on attitudes may help to overcome this “residual status” of politics in the models explaining political participation.

Table 11 contains the results of the estimation of the models for conventional participation as the dependent variable in eight new democracies.<sup>71</sup> The results show that political disaffection, together with socio-economic resources, is in general a strong predictor of conventional participation. But the coefficients of political disaffection have a positive sign (the greater the affection the greater the use of conventional mechanisms). This confirms hypothesis (g) instead of (a), and shows that political disaffection reinforces the political inequality produced by the individual resources in the dimension of political disaffection. This holds true for institutional affection as well as for political engagement. Even Gamson’s hypothesis is not confirmed; hypothesis (b) is rejected for all the countries except Chile, where the combination of external inefficacy and political engagement produces a rejection of conventional forms of participation. In the remaining countries, hypothesis (h) is confirmed; i.e., this attitudinal combination of politically engaged but discontent citizens does not produce a negative reaction against conventional participation and even in Peru and Greece it has a positive effect.

TABLE 11

Models to explain conventional political participation in eight new democracies (only statistically significant beta coefficients)

Independent variables	Argentina	Brazil	Chile	Greece	Peru	Portugal	Spain	Uruguay
Overall economic situation								
Personal economic situation								-.07***
Ideology	-.15*						-.15*	-.15*
Satisfaction with democratic functioning								
Support for democracy						.13*	.10*	
Evaluation regime functioning		.09***	.08*	n.i.		n.i.	n.i.	
Institutional Affection	.18*	.19*	.07***	.11*	.13*		.11*	.15*
Political engagement	.14**		.27*	.26*		.20*	.31*	.18*
Gamson's Hypothesis			-.16*	.09*	.13**			
Education	.16*	.10***	.14*	.16*	.15*			.18*
Gender	.17*			.10*	.14*			.17*
Age	.08**			.08*		.14*	.07**	.07***
Income		-.11**				.12**		
Constant (coefficient)	.25*	.27*	.12**	.58*	.25*		.51*	.26*
R <sup>2</sup>	.16	.12	.12	.10	.08	.10	.18	.17
(N)	(638)	(548)	(837)	(594)	(735)	(537)	(699)	(768)

Source: 2002 CSES Portuguese Study; 2002 Spanish and Greek surveys of Values Systems of the Citizens and Socio-Economic Conditions—Challenges from Democratization for the EU-Enlargement and Latinobarometer 1995.

(\*) Significant at  $p < 0.01$ .

(\*\*) Significant at  $p < 0.05$ .

(\*\*\*) Significant at  $p < 0.1$ .

Table 12 present the results of the estimation of model 2 for non-conventional participation in the same group of new democracies. In this case, the major predictors are the individual resource variables (especially education and age), ideology (possibly because leftist respondents use this kind of participation more) and conventional participation. However, political affection variables either have a positive, significant effect in some countries or a non-existent one. Furthermore, this positive relationship between political affection and this type of participation becomes more conspicuous

when the conventional participation variable, highly related with these attitudes as we saw before, is removed from the model (data not shown); in that case, hypothesis (i) is confirmed instead of (c); showing, political affection has a positive relation with non-conventional participation as well. This leads me to conclude that political disaffection is in part responsible for the lack of *both types* of political participation in these societies, reinforcing the political inequality produced as a direct result of the significant differences in individual socio-economic resources that exist in the societies. Furthermore, with the weak and anecdotic exception of Spain, Gamson's hypothesis is not confirmed for this dimension of political disaffection; i.e., the combination of disaffected but politically engaged citizens does not produce an increase in non-conventional participation. Hypothesis (d) is not confirmed for new democracies. Instead, hypothesis (j) is verified; i.e., this attitudinal combination does not have any effect on non-conventional participation in the eight new democracies under study.

The results contrast with the effect of political disaffection on political participation in more traditional democracies. According to the dominant literature, political disaffection in old democracies produces a mobilizing effect that leads to non-conventional forms of participation, resulting in greater control, alternative ways of expressing political preferences, democratic and institutional innovation, political accountability beyond pure democratic delegation and more responsive leadership. In fact, in new democracies, the best predictor for non-conventional participation is conventional participation forms, but with a positive relationship, confirming hypothesis (e) instead of (k). The use of non-conventional forms of participation in new democracies is not a response to the lack of satisfaction with the current conventional forms, but the result of decades of political exclusion during the democratization periods of the past, reflected in high levels of political disaffection. Even the effect of political disaffection among the citizens that do not use conventional forms of participation is very revealing. The relationship is significant only in Portugal. This means that in only one country does institutional disaffection among the conventional non-participants increase the probability

of using non-conventional forms of participation (hypothesis (e)). For the rest, there is no effect (hypothesis (l)).

**TABLE 12**

<b>Models to explain non-conventional political participation in eight new democracies (only statistically significant beta coefficients)</b>								
Independent variables	Argentina	Brazil	Chile	Greece	Peru	Portugal	Spain	Uruguay
Overall economic situation		.09**			-.09**		-.07**	
Personal economic situation	-.11**							
Ideology	-.20**	-.07***	-.14*	-.08**	-.06***		-.13*	-.21*
Satisfaction with democratic functioning	-.10*		-.11*					-.06***
Support for democracy				-.10*				-.10*
Evaluation regime functioning				n.i.		n.i.	n.i.	-.07**
Institutional Affection				.09**	.12*			.13*
Political engagement				.15*				
Gamson's Hypothesis							.07***	
Education		.19*	.09*			.24*		.07***
Gender								.06**
Age	-.10*				.11*			
Income				.14*			.10*	
Conventional Participation	.29*	.23*	.29*	.44*	.31*	.22*	.57*	.29*
No participation*								
Institutional disaffection						.15***		
Constant (coefficient)	.45*	.45*	.35*	1.57*	.33*	.42*	.38*	.46*
R <sup>2</sup>	.25	.19	.22	.34	.16	.13	.44	.31
(N)	(606)	(525)	(829)	(594)	(734)	(530)	(696)	(764)

Source: 2002 CSES Portuguese Study; 2002 Spanish and Greek surveys of Values Systems of the Citizens and Socio-Economic Conditions—Challenges from Democratization for the EU-Enlargement and Latinobarometer 1995.

(\*) Significant at  $p < 0.01$ .

(\*\*) Significant at  $p < 0.05$ .

It is also important to note that the effect of democratic support on political participation in the new democracies under study is non-existent (the only exceptions are Uruguay and Greece and they go in the other direction). Political discontent does not have



any relevant effect either. There is only a weak relationship between non-conventional participation and satisfaction with the functioning of democracy in Argentina, Chile and Uruguay. That is, people tend to use fewer non-conventional forms when they are more satisfied with the functioning of democracy, but there is no effect with the conventional forms. This shows, again, that satisfaction with the functioning of democracy is actually more a measure of satisfaction with incumbent authorities (Linde and Ekman 2003) and, therefore, people tend to participate less using alternative forms when they are satisfied with the current authorities, since there are less incentives. It seems, thus, that democratic support and political discontent do not substantially affect political participation, a basic aspect of the nature of the relationship between citizens and their representatives. Of the attitudes of political support, only the two dimensions of political disaffection have any effect on the citizens' individual decisions to participate in new democracies.

To conclude, I can therefore assert the importance political disaffection plays in the low levels of conventional and non-conventional political participation that mark new democracies. Contrary to what seems to happen in more traditional democracies, political disaffection discourages any kind of political participation and, thus, appears to be the force driving the nature of the relationship between citizens and incumbent authorities. In fact, political disaffection is broadening the already significant gap between citizens and representatives. While traditional democracies are aiming for a more inclusive and more participatory republican democratic polity, new democracies are following another path, toward a more elitist and less participatory democracy. This difference in the nature of democracy is due in part to the distinct effect that political disaffection has on new democracies, which may be linked to the distinctive nature of political disaffection in these countries.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Some scholars have disputed the existence of this declining pattern, finding instead trendless fluctuations (Newton 1988.) An argument against the internationalization of the decline of political confidence can be found in Holmberg (1999).

<sup>2</sup> By “new democracies “we should understand the third wave democracies established since the mid-1970s, whereas “old democracies “are more traditional democracies established during the first and second democratization waves. See Huntington (1990).

<sup>3</sup> It has also been argued that this decline in confidence taps confidence in incumbent authorities more than in institutions *per se*. See Lipset and Schneider (1983, 88–89); Merkl (1988, 32–33); and Dogan (1995, 57–71).

<sup>4</sup> Some studies carried out during the 1980s and 1990s dispute the alleged decline in confidence in institutions. Some authors argue, for instance, that this has only affected government institutions, whereas confidence in national parliaments, for instance, has remained stable or even increased. See Ola Listhaug and Matti Wiberg (1995, 298–322). However, in more recent studies, scholars have demonstrated the presence of a clear decline in confidence in public institutions. See Dalton (1999, 62–69); Kenneth Newton and Pippa Norris (2000, 54–58).

<sup>5</sup> For a similar comparative conclusion about the case of Spain, see Maravall (1984, 125–126). Despite a clear decrease in the United States and Great Britain, Maravall found significantly lower figures in Spain. The comparison includes references to the *output of the system*, i.e., approval and legitimacy given by citizens to the decisions made by incumbent authorities (30–33 percent), bureaucratic authorities (81 percent) and courts (47 percent). For similar conclusion see Rose (1989, 14). The data come from Parisot (1988, Table 1).

<sup>6</sup> For discussion and data showing the lower confidence in parliament among the Portuguese, see Bruneau and Macleod (1986, 152–55); and also Bruneau (1984b, 38–39). In Spain, confidence in democratic institutions was higher in 1981 than in 1990, but still lower than among its Western European partners. See Merkl (1988, 31–33).

<sup>7</sup> It is important to note that Spaniards only seem to trust the mass media (they come in third in the ranking of countries trusting the media) and trade unions (fourth). However, this data on trust in trade unions may not be very reliable and deserves further consideration, as this level of trust is not confirmed by other Spanish surveys (CIS and CIRES), in which trade unions systematically appear as the institutions which enjoy the lowest levels of institutional trust among Spaniards. Moreover, membership and participation in trade unions in Spain is much lower than in the rest of Western Europe.

<sup>8</sup> For similar conclusions, see Turner and Martz (1998, 66–70).

<sup>9</sup> According to Listhaug and Wiberg, the distinction between political and private institutions can be observed in trends in confidence seen in a set of European countries studied. See Listhaug and Wiberg (1995, 320). Rose divides these institutions into those belonging to the government and other non-governmental institutions. See Rose (1984). Döring has distinguished between institutions of “civil society “and institutions of “established order.” See Döring (1992, 133–137). Despite the different labels used, the relevant institutions are generally distributed very similarly between the two categories.

<sup>10</sup> Political parties were only included in the 1997 WVS wave, which covers only a few Western European countries.

<sup>11</sup> The classic study of this topic is by Lipset and Schneider (1983). These scholars demonstrate the decline in confidence in institutions by analyzing trust in major industries (pp. 33–40), the educational system, big corporations, and the financial system (pp. 57 and 68; these data come from the *Gallup, Harris* and *NORC* surveys).

<sup>12</sup> This lack of institutional trust can also be concluded from the classic indicators of political trust. The 1994 CIRES survey, which includes these indicators, found that 77 percent of Spaniards stated that rarely or never can “you can trust the government to do what is right “. The percentage in the United States who also chose “rarely or never “was only 45 percent in 1972 and 68 percent in 1978. Moreover, 70 percent of Spaniards believed that “the government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves.” The percentage of Americans agreeing with this statement was only 53 percent in 1972 and 67 percent in 1978. For the United States data, see Miller et al. (1980, 257).

<sup>13</sup> For similar conclusions, see Listhaug and Wiberg (1995, 302).

<sup>14</sup> Already in 1989, 68 percent of Greeks agreed with the statement “politicians do not care about what people

like me might think, “and 77 percent maintained that “politicians only defend their own interests.” The percentage of people agreeing with both statements in 1993 increased to 72 and 82 percent respectively, and in 1996 only 29 percent disagreed with the first statement. These data come from different Greek surveys: for 1989, the EKKE post-electoral study; for 1993 the 1993, OPINION postelectoral study; and for 1996, the CNEP. This last survey includes a third neutral response category, “it depends,” selected by 14 percent of the respondents. I want to thank Ilias Nikolopoulos, Diamandouros and Takis Kafetzis for sharing these data, which were passed on to me by Irene Martin. Similar conclusions can be also observed in Mendrinou and Nicolacopoulos (1997, 22–29).

<sup>15</sup> For similar conclusions, see Ester, Halman and de Moor (1983, 79). These scholars also maintain that falling interest in politics among the Spanish runs contrary to increasing interest observed in the rest of Europe, with the exception of France.

<sup>16</sup> These data come from *Eurobarometer, Trends 1974–1993*, pp. 161–164. See also Montero and Torcal (1992, 261).

<sup>17</sup> The averages in the other European Community (EC) countries are: Belgium, 34 percent; Denmark, 67; Germany, 57; Greece, 52; France, 44; Ireland, 42; Luxembourg, 47; Holland and Great Britain, 55.

<sup>18</sup> In Spain, interest in politics has increased 4 percent since 1988, a smaller increase than that seen in the other EU countries with the exception of France and Holland, where it has decreased, and Luxembourg and the United Kingdom, with a 1 and 4 percent increase, respectively. However, it is important to note that these countries display a much higher level of interest in politics than Spain. Moreover, in a recent comparative study, scholars have argued that, with very few exceptions, stability is the dominant tendency in the evolution of political interest in all Western European countries over the last two or three decades. See Gabriel and van Deth (1995, 410).

<sup>19</sup> For similar conclusions, see Maravall (1984, 117–120); Montero and Torcal (1990, 131–134); Bacalhau (1995, 85–90); Morán and Benedicto (1995, 55–58).

<sup>20</sup> These data come from the International Social Survey Program (ISSP), the Role of Government III survey 1996–99, variable v50.

<sup>21</sup> According to the Four Nation Study data, in Greece and Portugal 68 and 75 percent of respondents respectively think that “politics is too complicated for people like me.” Furthermore, contrary to what we have seen in the case of the other dimension of political disaffection, this situation in Greece has remained stable over time (55, 61 and 55 percent of respondents agreed with this statement in 1989, 1993 and 1996, respectively).

<sup>22</sup> According to Dahl (1971, 4–10) democratic inclusion (inclusiveness) is one of the major dimensions to classify political regimes and polyarchies. This dimension is measured by the right to participate in elections and hold office. Therefore, institutions that foster democratic inclusion are those that recognize and encourage electoral and political participation in general. Although there is an explicit relationship between political contestation, the other dimension for measuring democratization, and inclusiveness, I do not consider political contestation as part of the phenomenon of democratic inclusion.

<sup>23</sup> These data come from Torcal (2001 and 2002).

<sup>24</sup> These data are given in Table 4.

<sup>25</sup> These data are given in Table 5.

<sup>26</sup> These data represent confidence in the three institutions. They were drawn from the 1990 World Values Study and can be found in Table 3. Unfortunately, confidence in political parties was not included in the World Values Study until 1997, and many of the other cases of interest to this research were not included in this latest round. Norris has developed a similar index of institutional confidence which also includes confidence in parties and in the government. I have excluded parties in order to consider a greater number of traditional democracies that were not part of the 1997 round of the World Values Study. Moreover, excluding parties does not alter the conclusions of the present study. On the contrary, as will be seen below, the study of confidence in political parties serves to reinforce my conclusions. Including confidence in the government in the index is more problematic from my point of view since this indicator largely represents confidence in the incumbent authorities. See Norris (1999b, 222); and Norris (1999c, 260).

<sup>27</sup> The countries included in the present analysis using the index of institutions and political saliency are: Germany, Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, Denmark, the United States, Spain, France, Holland, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Peru, Portugal, England, Sweden, Uruguay and Venezuela. For the analysis using the indicator of internal political efficacy, Greece and Paraguay could also be included, though Austria, the United States, Norway and Sweden were excluded because data were not available.

<sup>28</sup> As Altman and Pérez-Liñán (2002, 87) have asserted, there is a substantial difference between addressing the quality of democracy and the level of democratization of a political regime. By the same token, it is also important to distinguish the history of the quality of democracy and the history of democratization. Nevertheless, both are highly interconnected, and I will consider both past democratic history and democratization history as similar concepts during the presentation of this argument. This is also why I consider years under democratic rule a good proxy for the history of democratization.

<sup>29</sup> I have used Mainwaring “s (1999, 14–20) classification of political regimes. He classifies governments as democratic, semidemocratic, or authoritarian (or totalitarian). I have only counted the democratic ones. To be classified as democratic, a government must meet four criteria: (1) the president and legislature in presidentialist systems, or the legislature in parliamentary systems, are chosen in open and fair competitive elections; (2) these elected authorities have real governing power; (3) civil liberties are respected; and (4) the franchise includes a sizable majority of the adult population. I have taken the data for the Latin American cases from Table 1 in Chapter 1 (Mainwaring 1999). I myself have computed the rest of the data for the other European and North American cases from other sources.

<sup>30</sup> Computed from Mainwaring (1999), Table 1 and other sources.

<sup>31</sup> These data for Latin America were collected from (Mainwaring 1999), Table 2.

<sup>32</sup> These data come from Freedom House (1985, 1992–3, and 1996); and also from the web site [www.freedomhouse.org/research](http://www.freedomhouse.org/research).

<sup>33</sup> The Latin American data come from “Latin American Democracies Data set “, collected by Scott Mainwaring, Anibal Pérez-Liñán and Daniel Brinks. The data for the other countries come from the ACLP Dataset. For a formula for the Effective Number of Parties, see Laakso and Taagapera (1979, 3–27).

<sup>34</sup> This includes any strike of 1,000 or more industrial or service workers that involves more than one employer and that is aimed at national government policies or authority. These data come from Banks and Muller (1995).

<sup>35</sup> This index goes from “1 “, indicating considerable corruption, to “10 “, indicating no corruption. The data used here were taken from the web site: [www.gwdg.de/~uwvw](http://www.gwdg.de/~uwvw), and are published by Transparency International Publishers.

<sup>36</sup> These data were obtained from the *Human Development Report 1999* and *Human Development Report 2000*.

<sup>37</sup> These data come primarily from the OECD, *Historical Statistics*, various years; and OECD, *National Accounts* Vol. 1, various years.

<sup>38</sup> These data come primarily from the OECD, *Historical Statistics*, various years; and OECD, *National Accounts* Vol. 1, various years.

<sup>39</sup> O “Donnell challenges the classic modernization theories with respect to the relationship between modernization and democracy, arguing that rapid modernization created bottlenecks of development in most industrialized Latin American countries which triggered the emergence of military regimes in the 1960s and 1970s; see O “Donnell (1973). For a similar argument see Huntington (1968).

<sup>40</sup> For a similar conclusion, see Miller and Listhaug (1990, 206–210); McAllister (1999, 201–203); Pharr (2000, 179–180).

<sup>41</sup> For a very interesting critique of this index reaching quite a similar conclusion about the validity of this item to measure corruption see Heywood (2002).

<sup>42</sup> For more sophisticated arguments critically revising the relationship between economic development and democracy see Przeworski and Limongi (1997, 155–183); and Mainwaring and Pérez-Liñán (2000).

<sup>43</sup> Some variables presented coefficients with a tolerance of less than 0.1 and a very high Variance Inflation Factor (VIF).

<sup>44</sup> Different tests have been carried out to ensure that these relations do not produce biased estimators or type II error in the test of significance.

<sup>45</sup> To test the modernization hypothesis in models 1 and 2, I have included 1997 income and the cubic 1997 power of income, since both test different theories. However, 1997 income was not included for model 3 since there was no correlation (see Table 3.15). Finally, in models 1 and 2 I have included a new variable that combines the average increase in civil and political liberties (the indices of political and civil liberties), since the original two variables were found to be very closely related ( $r=0.8$ ). This variable was not included in model 3 due to the lack of relationship detected in the correlations.

- <sup>46</sup> For an analysis demonstrating the importance of these two variables, see Norris (1999b, 232–234).
- <sup>47</sup> As noted above, a perfect demonstration of this argument can be found in Stokes (1995).
- <sup>48</sup> For this argument and useful data on political interest, see Irene Martín (2000).
- <sup>49</sup> Anderson and Guillory argue in favor of the influence of constitutional design. Norris, in addition to putting forward the same argument, also defends the importance of the electoral and party systems as well as the accumulated frustration of supporting losing opposition parties. See Anderson and Guillory (1997, 66–81) and Norris (1999b, 232–234). Similar arguments can be found in Miller and Listhaug (1990, 357–389); Clarke, Dutt and Kornberg (1993, 998–1021); Anderson (1995); Weisberg (1996); Nye and Zelikow (1997, 268–276).
- <sup>50</sup> The countries included in the analysis are: Germany, the United States, Great Britain, Norway, Sweden and Venezuela. Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Peru, Spain and Uruguay are included as representative cases of new democracies.
- <sup>51</sup> The WVS does not include any of the traditional items to measure internal or external efficacy, so I have decided to use this indicator of political engagement.
- <sup>52</sup> Question V123 of the WVS questionnaire.
- <sup>53</sup> Question V165 of the WVS questionnaire: “How satisfied are you with the way the people now in national office are handling the country’s affairs? Would you say you are very satisfied, fairly satisfied, fairly dissatisfied or very dissatisfied? “
- <sup>54</sup> Question V213 of the WVS questionnaire: “How widespread do you think bribe taking and corruption is in this country? ‘1’, almost no public officials are engaged in it; ‘2’, a few public officials are engaged in it; ‘3’, most public officials are engaged in it; ‘4’, almost all public officials are engaged in it.”
- <sup>55</sup> Question V171 of the WVS questionnaire: “Would you say that today a larger share, about the same share, or a smaller share of the people in this country are living in poverty than they were ten years ago? “
- <sup>56</sup> Question V64 of the WVS questionnaire: “How satisfied are you with the financial situation of your household? ‘1’ means you are completely dissatisfied on this scale, and ‘10’ means you are completely satisfied.”
- <sup>57</sup> Variable V100mpm of the WVS questionnaire containing the materialist-postmaterialist scale.
- <sup>58</sup> Variable V27 of the WVS questionnaire: “Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can’t be too careful in dealing with people? ‘1’, Most people can be trusted; ‘2’, Can’t be too careful.”
- <sup>59</sup> Question V214 of the WVS questionnaire.
- <sup>60</sup> Question V216 of the WVS questionnaire
- <sup>61</sup> Question V217 of the WVS questionnaire.
- <sup>62</sup> The variable was created with individual score loadings resulting from the following factor analysis: Legal system, 0.58; administration, 0.70, and national parliament, 0.77. Unlike Norris (1999a and 1999b), I did not include confidence in political parties for this part of the analysis only, in order to maintain consistency with the index analyzed in previous sections.
- <sup>63</sup> For a different position in which social trust is considered to be part of the vicious circle see della Porta (2000, 202–228).
- <sup>64</sup> Di Palma (1970, 30) claims “people tend to participate in politics if they are not disaffected from the political system, “i.e., “I expect participation to be sustained by the belief that the political system, or at least some of its strategic institutions are open and accessible to the individual. Also, participation does not flourish unless people feel that the polity is not a remote entity, but rather something that is present and important in their daily lives, and unless they are closely identified with and committed to it.” For similar conclusions, see Parry, Moyser and Day (1992).
- <sup>65</sup> Political interest is another powerful predictor of political participation and part, as I have shown before, of political disengagement. However, I have decided to keep it out of the model because this attitude has a behavioral component that would have favored my argument most questionably.

<sup>66</sup> In order to create the double condition of these variables (external inefficacy and internal efficacy), I have created and multiplied together two dummy variables with value '1' for external inefficacy and '1' for internal efficacy, so value '1' is equal to external inefficacy and internal efficacy, and '0' to the rest of the other combinations.

<sup>67</sup> The dependent variables for conventional participation are: for Latin America trying to convince others of my own political opinions, contacting or asking an official representative or politician and working for a political party (variables p64b to p64e of the 1995 Latinobarometer); for Spain and Greece, contacting a politician, working for a political party and going to a party rally (2002 Values Systems of the Citizens and Socio-Economic Conditions—Challenges from Democratization for the EU-Enlargement survey); and, finally, for Portugal trying to persuade friends during the campaign, attending a meeting or helping during the campaign, contacting or asking an official representative (variables p19, p19b, p33a of the CSES 2002 Portuguese study).

Again, all these questions in all the surveys contain quite similar response categories so I was able to recode the answers in the following order: '1,' "I will never do so;" "2," "I might do so;" and '3,' "yes, I have done so." I have created an average participation index with all these items from 0 to 1.

<sup>68</sup> I first created a dummy variable for conventional participation with values "1" "when  $x \leq \bar{x} - 1S$ ; and "0" "when  $x > \bar{x} - 1S$ . Then, I multiplied this dummy variable by the institutional disaffection index. This variable has value 0 for those who use some conventional mechanisms and the values of the institutional disaffection index for those who do not.

<sup>69</sup> To create the dependent variable for non-conventional participation, I have done the following. I have created a participation index with the following activities: 1) participating in demonstrations and 2) blocking traffic and 3) occupying buildings or factories (variables p65a, p65b and p65d of the 1995 Latinobarometer); and 1) blocking traffic, 2) occupying buildings or factories, 3) participating in actions and opinion movements and 4) signing petitions (variables p63\_1, p63\_4, p63\_6 and p63\_7 of the CSES 2002 Portuguese study); 1) signing a petition, 2) participating in demonstrations, 3) boycotting products and 4) participating in a strike (variables p24E, p24F, p24G, p24H of 2002 Values Systems of the Citizens and Socio-Economic Conditions—Challenges from Democratization for the EU-Enlargement survey).

These questions in all the surveys contain quite similar response categories so I was able to recode the answers in the following order: '1,' "I will never do so;" '2,' "I might do so;" and '3,' "yes, I have done so." Only the Portuguese data are dummy variables with values '1,' "yes, I have done so;" '2,' "I have not done so." I have created an average participation index with all these items from 0 to 1. These variables measure at the same time the potential for participation as an attitudinal predisposition to participate and participation itself, so they are impossible to disentangle and our dependent variable is an index containing both. Therefore, I gave a value of "0" "to the potential participants. For Latin America, the respondent is asked about the frequency with which he/she does the activity.

<sup>70</sup> Furthermore, under-specification substantially favors my conclusions and parameters given that the most relevant variables in the discussion are significant and robust.

<sup>71</sup> The Latin American data include a question on how democracy can resolve problems which is not used for the other surveys (p 22 in the 1995 Latinobarometer). For the Latin American data, I have also used a socio-economic status variable instead of income.

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