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2016

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Mass Party Formation: Land, Civil Society, and Political Organization in Post-Revolutionary Mexico and Bolivia

By

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A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

Sociology

in the

Graduate Division

of the

University of California, Berkeley

Committee in charge:

Professor Dylan J. Riley
Professor Peter Evans
Professor Margaret Chowning

Summer 2016

Abstract

Mass Party Formation: Land, Civil Society, and Political Organization in Post-Revolutionary Mexico and Bolivia

by

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Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology

University of California, Berkeley

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How do political parties emerge? Prevailing understandings conceive parties forming as reflections of pre-constituted social sectors, seizing divisions that exist in society prior or independently of the party itself (Katz and Mair 1995; Lipset and Rokkan 1967; Marx 1848; Mayhew 2014). The advent of parties has also been understood as an after-effect of democratization undertaken by modernizing states (Michels 1911; Duverger 1962; Sartori 1976; Slez and Martin 2007; Weber 1919). My dissertation tests these theories by asking why the *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* (PRI) in Mexico emerged as a mass party after the revolutionary upheaval of the early twentieth century, while Bolivia's *Movimiento Nacional Revolucionario* (MNR) failed in undertaking a homologous process after the country's revolution of the mid 1950s, despite attempts to do so and the presence of similar sectors available for mobilization and identical bureaucratic structures.

I develop a two-pronged argument contending that the emergence of parties requires the existence of a strong civil society upon which to act; in turn, the presence of this civil societal realm is facilitated by the collapse of 'pre'-capitalist land tenure arrangements. The dissolution of village identity and traditional authority in Mexico and not in Bolivia – underpinned by the destruction of communal property – permits the emergence of a civil societal realm of unions and organizations. This realm enables the articulation of demands and interest aggregation in a way compatible with the party-form. Hence, I show the power of the party to shape and construct political constituencies; at the same time, by pointing to the role of property arrangements, I identify structural determinants to the capacity for political organizations to produce constituencies. To control for differences between countries, the dissertation is organized around four subnational case studies showing how *both* inter- and intra-country variation in party formation is explained by examining the relationship between land privatization and organizational absorption.

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Acknowledgements

I could not have completed this dissertation without the support of my committee members Dylan Riley, Peter Evans, and Margaret Chowning. I am grateful to have learned so much from them. Dylan Riley, whom I first met when I was an undergraduate at Berkeley taking his Social Theory course, was central to my subsequent decision to go to graduate school. He introduced me to the study of Gramsci and Comparative-Historical methods, and has generously guided me through the long process of completing this project. I remain forever indebted. I hope this dissertation does some service to his work as a teacher and mentor.

Peter Evans' dedication to his students is a model I hope to reproduce. I benefited greatly from the depth of his knowledge and the kindness with which he shared it. Margaret Chowning inspired in me a deep appreciation for the craft of the historian. She provided invaluable comments through the different phases of this project and I thank her for this.

For the laughs, the music, the coffee, and the fernet, that underpin this dissertation, I thank my colleagues Katherine Maich, Zachary Levenson, and Graham Hill. I admire them as scholars and feel lucky to count them as my friends.

Finally, I want to acknowledge my family. Marisela, my mother, Federico, my father, and my siblings Astrid and Alonzo, were each in their own way my support base and my source of motivation. Jennifer Siqueira was relentless in encouraging me to finish this project; if I am still standing after the long days and nights during the final haul, it is because of her.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Parties remain the predominant form of political mobilization and organization at a global scale, even in an age of dissatisfaction with conventional political organization and persistent experimentation with new forms of association. As mass social movements remain caught in the juncture of becoming a party (or joining one) or cease to exist, it becomes clear that there is a very strong bond between the party-form and the contemporary world. What is it? Marxism envisioned capitalism as a force centrifuging classes until becoming parties; Weberians contended that democracy's technical necessities would call forth parties. In this dissertation, I argue that parties' relationship to capitalism and the modern state is a deeper one: it is in the context of erosion – of dispossession of means of production, of centralization of political authority -- where the very possibility of *articulatable* interests emerges. Parties, as entities ambiguously sitting between state and civil society, are privileged actors in this sense. The historical dismantling of means and material bases of political self-representation produces an autonomous sphere of politics, lending space for parties to *constitute* political subjectivities.

Mass parties – as opposed to parties of the elite (parliamentary cliques, clubs of notables) – are oriented towards mobilizing and incorporating increasingly broader sectors of society (Weber 1946 [1919]). A mass party is characterized for its aim at increasing membership (Duverger1962: 71), and for a high degree of extra-parliamentary organization and action (Neumann 1956; for a discussion see Gunther, Montero, and Linz 2003:140). To a degree, most contemporary parties fit this description.

What explains mass party formation? Prevailing approaches to the understanding of mass party emergence fall within two camps. A representational approach sees mass parties as reflections of *pre-existing* social constituencies (Engels 1895; Marx 1848; similarly Kirchheimer 1966; Lipset and Rokkan 1967; Neumann 1956:403; more recently Katz and Mair 1995). A state modernization approach focuses on the role played by the rise of the bureaucratic state and the advent of universal suffrage (Michels 1949 [1911]: 21-41; Ostrogroski 1964 [1902]: 1; Weber 1946 [1919]: 102; a similar take on this point is found later in Aldrich 1995: 103-104; Duverger 1962; Epstein 2000 [1980]: 19; Panebianco 1988:103, 268; Sartori 1976: 18, 36; more recently Slez and Martin 2007: 65).

To illustrate the limits of existing approaches and contribute to a theory of party formation, I examine the rise of the *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* (PRI) *as a mass party* in post-revolutionary Mexico, and the attempt but ultimate failure of

Bolivia's *Movimiento Nacional Revolucionario* to undertake a homologous process in the aftermath of the 1952 uprising. Both cases share similar starting points – capitalist developmentalist revolutions with a radical agrarian discourse, where governments foisted state modernization, and attempted to mobilize a cross-class coalition with the peasantry as the center. The approaches outlined above cannot explain why mass party formation fails or succeeds in cases where similar sectors are available for mobilization, and a similar state structure and electoral arrangements are present. Why did the PRI successfully emerge as a mass party in Mexico, and why did the MNR fail to do so in Bolivia?

This dissertation develops an original framework for understanding party formation. On the one hand, it builds on a tradition that has emphasized parties' capacities to shape their constituency and engage in state-building (Desai 2001; De Leon, Desai, and Tugal 2009, 2015; Eley 2002; Huntington 1968: xix, 11; Lenin 1987 [1902]: 73-74, 96; Ware 1996: 184-213). On the other hand, it situates parties' capacities for articulation within a structural context by developing a synthesis of Antonio Gramsci's (1971) theory of hegemonic politics and Barrington Moore's (1967) emphasis on the relationship between agrarian class struggle and regime formation. A *structurated constitutive* approach posits that party formation is dependent on the construction and absorption of a civil societal realm, a process enabled by the collapse of 'pre'-capitalist property arrangements.

APPROACHES TO MASS PARTY FORMATION

Marx (1994 [1848]: 166-169) and Weber (1946 [1919]: 102) conceived of mass parties as the key political organizations of 'modernity.' This is not surprising considering the emergence of mass parties in late nineteenth century Europe paralleled a significant expansion of capitalism, and the development of the modern bureaucratic state (Mudge and Chen 2014). Arguably, the two predominant approaches to mass party formation that have developed since are marked by this fact. On the one hand, classical Marxist accounts see political organizations as the carapace of a class that has become sufficiently developed and self-aware that it creates an electoral arm to fight for its interests (Kautsky 1996; Marx 1994 [1848]); similarly Pluralist political science in the second half of the twentieth century saw parties emerging as translations of latent conflicts in society (Lipset and Rokkan 1967). Both classical Marxism and Pluralism share a 'representational' approach to party emergence[1]. On the other hand, an implicitly state-centered approach sees mass parties emerging in response to changes in state and governmental structure (Aldrich 1995: 103; Duverger 1962; Epstein 2000 [1980]: 19; Michels 1949 [1911]: 21-41; Ostrogroski 1964 [1902]: 1; Weber 1946 [1919]: 102; Panebianco 1988:103, 268; Sartori 1976: 18, 36; Slez and Martin 2007:

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[1] The similarities between Pluralist thinkers and some forms of Marxism have been identified before (Evans 2002 [1999]: 130; Manza and Brooks 1999:13; Mudge and

65)[2]. This state-modernization current, heavily influenced by Weber, sees the transition from elite parties to mass mobilizing organizations as a response to the joint pressure introduced by the growing opportunity for government posts that comes from bureaucratization, and the broadening of suffrage.

A "party-agency" vein in the literature has criticized these approaches as incapable of accounting for a party's capacity to shape its constituency and intervene in state-building processes (Lenin 1987 [1902]: 73-74, 96; Desai 2001; Huntington 1968: xix, 11; De Leon, Desai, Tugal 2009, 2015; Ware 1996: 184-213). I build on this line of work by offering a framework for understanding mass party formation, a notion so far absent from this literature. Gramsci's (1971) contention that hegemonic relationships require a civil society upon which the party can form, can be productively complimented by Moore's (1969) assertion that property structures influence political regime forms: The absorption and construction of civil society, which is facilitated by particular property structures and not others, offer the conditions of possibility for the mass-party form itself.

Representational Approaches

For Marx, parties were the end point of a process of class formation. The party is in this sense only the organizational carapace of a given class. In Engels' (2003 [1895]: 18) terms: "political parties are the more or less adequate political expression…of classes and class fractions." Class formation itself responds to developments in the mode of production (Marx 1994: 474): "with the development of industry the proletariat not only increases in number; it becomes concentrated in greater masses, its strength grows, and it feels that strength more…. [transforming] proletarians into a class, and, consequently into a political party (ibid: 480)." A homogenization of labor conditions results initially in trade unionism but eventually leads to the emergence of a party (ibid: 481). Marx conceives the party then as mapped onto concrete, preexisting, social groups[3].

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[2] Representation and state-modernization approaches are not mutually exclusive (for instances of overlap see Michels 1949[1911]; Katz and Mair 1995). Also, the authors discussed mostly claim to present explanations of historically specific cases, not a generalizable theory of party formation. Yet, there is a crucial need to draw out the conceptual underpinnings of these works (for broader reviews of approaches to the study of parties see De Leon [2014] and Mudge and Chen [2014]).

[3] At the same time, Marx's position already foreshadows notions of party-agency that would critique the potential economistic readings of his work (for example Lenin's notion of the "vanguard party"). This is particularly evident in his idea in the *Manifesto* that the aim of the Communist Party is the "formation of the proletariat into a class (1994:169)." But for Marx this is not so much that the party shapes the interests of the proletariat, as much as the party *is* that group in its political form: a party is a class-for-

For Marx, this theory also holds for cases of failed party formation. In the "18th Brumaire" (1994:200), the isolated, small-holding peasantry, lacking the homogenizing pressure that results in shared class interests is incapable of political self-organization. Their existence as a "sack of potatoes" means that "they can not represent themselves," and therefore they are prone to facilitate the consolidation of charismatic authoritarian regimes. For Marx then, truncated class formation blocks the emergence of a party precisely because he relies on the assumption that parties emerge out of pre-constituted groups.

This understanding of mass parties is not exclusive to classic Marxist accounts[4]. For example, for Katz and Mair (1995: 6) a mass party's "fundamental units of political life are pre-defined and well-defined social groups…Politics is primarily about the competition, conflict and cooperation of these groups, and political parties are the agencies through which these groups, and thus their members, participate in politics." Katz and Mair argue that while this understanding is appropriate for late nineteenth century mass parties it is no longer operative. Building on Kirchheimer (1966), Katz and Mair contend that the gradual relaxation of class polarization in advanced industrialist societies – among other factors -- undermined the possibilities of mass party formation. That is, they essentially hold on to a representational approach to the understanding of mass party emergence.

Similarly, Lipset and Rokkan (1967) argued that party systems reflected "cleavage structures." That is, parties are indicators of pre-existing lines of social division. Parties "help crystallize and make explicit the conflicting interests, the latent strains and contrasts in the existing social structure (ibid: 5)." Essentially, Lipset and Rokkan (ibid: 6) are interested in the "translation" of conflicts into party systems. While the "hierarchy of cleavage bases" (language, region, ethnic groups, class) varies among polities and time, the character of parties reflects tensions manifested in early phases of party consolidation (ibid: 8). although parties emerge by reflecting immediate cleavages, they subsequently "freeze": in the Western world, the party systems of the 1960's, they argued, reflected the cleavage structures of the 1920s (ibid: 50). Hence, Lipset and Rokkan (ibid: 54) propose an analysis "not of contemporary sociocultural structure" but of "the historically established foci of identification." For the authors, mass parties emerge by seizing and channeling divisions that exist in society prior and/or independently of the party itself.

All the authors discussed above coincide in their basic understanding of party formation. Political parties arise in relation to pre-constituted sources of division in society; and these divisions correspond to social groups. From this perspective, party organizations map onto social sectors, often classes, already undergoing a separate

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itself. As will be clear later in the text, I rely heavily on thinkers within the Marxist tradition to develop an alternative explanation.

[4] For a broader discussion on the notion of parties as "reflection" *see* Mudge and Chen (2014), De Leon et al (2009), De Leon (2014).

process of politicization, or with enough objective interests so as to find in the party a *representative*. A representational approach is limited when confronted with variation in cases where very similar sectors are available for mobilization.

State-Modernization Approaches

Approaches that emphasize a relationship between party formation and state modernization see mass parties resulting from two related developments: the expansion of popular suffrage and the formation of modern bureaucracies (Epstein 2000 [1980]: 19; Ostrogroski 1964 [1902]; Sartori 1976: 18 [see table 1], 37; Weber (1946 [1919]: 102). As Weber (1946 [1919]: 105) puts it "democratization of the franchise…calls into being a tremendous apparatus of apparently democratic associations" in order "to win the masses." At the same time, Weber (1946 [1919]: 82) contends that: "the development of the modern state…paves the way for the expropriation of the autonomous and 'private' bearers of executive power." Bureaucratization increases the number and accessibility of posts. For Weber (ibid), modern party struggles are oriented to controlling patronage of office. This struggle becomes central as bureaucratization progresses. When this is coupled with mass franchise, the incentive to cease to be a party of elites and seek to incorporate broader sectors of society takes hold.

Weber does not explain mass parties as automatic outgrowths of state modernization in a mono-causal sense. Rather he conceives of state-building as introducing a set of pressures conductive to the formation of a mass organization:

> Every advance of simple election techniques based on numbers alone as, for instance, the system of proportional representation, means a strict and interlocal bureaucratic organization of the parties and therewith *an increasing domination of party bureaucracy and discipline, as well as the elimination of the local circles of notables*-- at least this holds for large states (Weber 1978: 984, emphasis mine).

In Weberian terms, mass parties are the end result of institutional restructuring -- for example, changes in electoral rules may influence party formation (Duverger 1962), or a particular institutional structure can define interests and possible political alliances and actions (Slez and Martin 2007: 65). In this sense, state-formation eliminates incentives for certain forms of political mobilization while encouraging others.

For Weberian approaches, the institution of suffrage creates a competition for voters at the same time it channels masses to engage in politics through party representatives (Michels 1949 [1911]; Panebianco 1988: 103, 268). Suffrage expansion prompts isolated members of lower classes to enter formal politics, but at the same time makes party organization itself likely (Michels 1949 [1911]: 22; Przeworski 1985:103), on account of the "technical and mechanical impossibility of direct government by the masses" (Michels ibid: 23). Aldrich (1995:103), from a rational-choice theory

perspective, has iterated the argument: for him, parties emerge as solutions to the collective action problem introduced by suffrage expansion.

From the perspective outlined in this section, franchise expansion and bureaucratization push parties to break with their elite orientation and aim to incorporate broad sectors of society. In a general sense, changes in the institutional framework of the state introduce incentives for party building. Hence, for Weber (1946 [1919]: 102): "modern [parties] are the children of democracy." From this approach we would expect successful mass parties in places where state modernization is underway and universal suffrage is present (or the electorate is being broadened).

Structurated Constitutive Approach

The classic studies of parties discussed above cannot account for variation between cases with similar state structures and suffrage arrangements and very similar sectors available for mobilization. A party-centered point of view has critiqued the approaches outlined above for overlooking the active role of parties in the construction of states or the creation of social divisions themselves (Desai 2001; Huntington 1968: xix, 11; Lenin 1987 [1902]: 73-74, 96; De Leon et al. 2009, 2015; Ware 1996: 184-213). This critique seeks to establish the centrality of the party as an agent. Parties can have a key role, for example, in articulating and constituting identities and collectivities that then act politically (De Leon et al. 2009: 194). Parties cannot be conceived as after-effects of group or state formation.

Hence, I develop a 'structurated constitutive' approach that places party agency at the center of mass party formation, but that relates this agency to structural contexts – put differently, I offer an analysis of the structural conditions for party agency. Gramsci (1971) and Moore (1967) can aid in the development of a theoretical interpretation of mass party formation. Gramsci's (1971: 12, 57, 259, 263) theory of hegemonic politics becomes useful here. Hegemony as a form of political control entails both coercion and the organization of consent (ibid: 259). Hence, hegemony involves at least a partial alignment of interests between subordinate groups and dominant ones, albeit to the ultimate benefit of the dominant one (Bobbio 1987; Burawoy 2003; Laclau and Mouffe 1985; Gramsci 1971: 161, 182; Riley 2011). Hegemony does not preclude conflict – indeed, the relationship requires a real margin of contention, otherwise it lapses into straightforward dictatorship (Anderson 1976; Gramsci 1971: 57; Riley 2009). Contestation (within institutionalized boundaries) is needed to legitimize the hegemon as exercising 'leadership' as opposed to 'domination' (Gramsci ibid: 57-59; Roseberry 1994: 361).

If, on the one hand, hegemony as a political organizational arrangement can be contrasted to authoritarian dictatorship, it can also be thought of in opposition to what I here will call alliances. *Hegemonic incorporation* refers to a permanent arrangement of interest negotiation and representation in which a sector of the population advances claims from within a party structure: according to party rules and traditions and, ultimately, prioritizing the interests of party leadership (Anderson 1976; Gramsci 1971;

Laclau and Mouffe 1985; Riley 2011) [5]. *Alliance* refers to an arrangement of temporary cooperation: social sectors are not *absorbed* into a political project per se, but rather join in as 'partners' willing and able to break away from this partnership as they see fit.

These two modes of political activity contrast along two dimensions: First, there is a difference in the sorts of interests negotiated. In a hegemonic relationship, subordinated sectors have programmatic, and mid and long-term interests and demands. In practice this means they will be willing and able to postpone rewards. Alliances pursue narrower patronage claims, and their survival is contingent on relatively immediate fulfillment. Second, these qualitative differences in interests entail different forms of conflict. In a hegemonic relationship, absorbed groups sacrifice their independence to the party; conflict takes place within it but not against it. In an alliance, groups maintain their capacity to break away and engage in anti-systemic (anti-party system) contestation. In short, hegemony entails the institutionalization of the capacity for party leadership to articulate their particularistic interests as universal ones (as those of the subordinated sectors) (Gramsci 1971: 182); alliances are momentary coalitions of particularistic interests. The first relationship offers a stable structure of interest aggregation and is therefore conductive to mass party formation, while the second is inherently unstable and complicates mass party formation.

Gramsci (1971: 238-239, 259, 261) proposes that a hegemonic arrangement requires the presence of a civil society – an associational sphere distinct from the state and the family unit. Borrowing from Hegel, Gramsci (ibid: 259) sees civil society as the "'private' woof of the State." If coercion ultimately lies in the state, consent is organized "by means of the political and syndical associations…private organisms… (ibid)." Civil society is the arena where individuals coalesce around particular interests and aggregate and articulate demands. This is why the presence of a civil society has often been understood as a condition for the emergence of liberal democracy – as intermediary structures (Kornhauser 1959), voluntary associations function to check the power of the state and protect individual liberties (Putnam 2001; Tocqueville 1992 [1848]). However, recent work (Berman 1997; Fung 2003; Jamal 2007) has questioned the connection between civil society and liberal democracy, and some (Riley 2010; Tugal 2009) have used a Gramscian framework to show that, while remaining important for understanding political mobilization, civil society can also contribute to the consolidation of regimes independent of whether they are liberal democratic or not; a regime can co-opt the sphere of voluntary associations and make use of their accumulated organizational resources.

A Gramscian theory of party formation suggests that hegemonic mass parties require the presence of a civil societal[6] realm upon which to act, as a condition of

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[5] This definition borrows from long-standing notions of corporatism and interest mediation (Collier 1979; O'donnell 1973; Schmitter 1974; Stepan 1978). However, whereas this literature is deeply state-centered (it has an in-built assumption that the state is the agent of mediation), 'party incorporation' shifts attention to a civil-societal realm of interest mediation in which the party exists as a differentiated sphere.

possibility for their emergence as such. In the absence of this civil societal realm, the party is devoid of access to accumulated organizational resources, and unable to coordinate its interests with those of its putative constituency in a way sustainable in the long run. Gramsci (1971:152-153) contends that for "a party to exist…three fundamental elements have to converge:" 1) A "mass element" which is composed of ordinary people that provide discipline and loyalty. This mass is not a pre-constituted group, rather "they are a force in so far as there is somebody to centralize, organize and discipline them," in the absence of which "they would scatter into an impotent diaspora and vanish into nothing (ibid: 152);" 2) A "cohesive element" –a leadership structure that centralizes, provides direction, and renders effective a complex of forces; 3) finally, and most importantly for the present discussion, "an intermediate element" which "articulates the first element with the second and maintains contact between them, not only physically but also morally and intellectually." Hegemonic mass parties then are not direct reflections of the mass element but require a civil societal sphere as a mediating mechanism. Returning to the previous discussion, it could be said that in the absence of this intermediate element the party cadre can relate to the mass as a dictator (*imposing* its interests via force) or, at best, in the form of an alliance (temporarily and narrowly coordinating differentiated interests).

But how is the absorption of a civil societal realm possible in the first place? Moore's (1967: 415) central question is whether there are "structural differences in agrarian societies that might in some cases favor subsequent development toward parliamentary democracy while other starting points would make this achievement difficult or rule it out altogether?" The resolution of agrarian class struggle was key in the development of liberal democracy: for example, enclosures in England – the destruction of traditional agrarian structures -- left no massive reservoir of autonomous peasants to serve reactionary ends of the landed upper classes, or to serve as a base for peasant revolutions, yielding dictatorships of right and left respectively (ibid: 426). Going beyond the concern with "democracy" as an outcome, Moore's work points to the importance of land tenure arrangements as a central variable in the understanding of political mobilization (Migdal 1974; Paige 1975; Scott 1976; Skocpol 1979; Wolf 1969). The question becomes whether there are structural differences in agrarian societies that favor the development of mass parties by facilitating the construction and absorption of civil society?

I use the term "cohesion" as a short-hand for the permanence of traditional peasant structures, and concomitantly "erosion" for the absence of these structures. Conceptually, cohesion/erosion refers to the level of communal landholding arrangements coupled with traditional politico-organizational arrangements (Moore 1967; Paige 1975; Scott 1976). In this sense, a peasant village in its most cohesive format is a quasi-mini-state as well as a productive unit (Therborn 2008:67). That is, no

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[6] I use this phrase to draw a distinction to "civil society," which in contemporary uses carries the assumption of absolute autonomy from the state as a defining feature.

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intermediary structures exist – production and political organization are relatively undifferentiated from each other. Moore's general thesis that a cohesive peasantry is conductive to dictatorship suggests that, in contrast, hegemonic arrangements are facilitated in the context of an eroded peasantry (and concomitantly, cohesion allows for alliances).

If it is true that Moore's work lacks a firm understanding of the role of political organizations in regime formation (De Leon 2008), despite pointing to the causal importance of class coalitions (Esping-Andersen 2013 [1990]), it is all the more important to read him alongside Gramsci. Gramsci posits the need for party absorption of civil society, while Moore provides a theory about the conditions under which such mobilization is possible. If civil society is key in the consolidation of mass parties, and tenure patterns are key to the analysis of regime types and political mobilization: might there not be a connection between the two?

In the "18th Brumaire," Marx (1994) identified a relationship between traditional agrarian structures and blocked party formation similar to the one presented here. However, his *explanation* for this correlation was limited – relying on a reflective approach he contended that since class formation preceded party formation, an isolated peasantry constituted only a semi-formed class and was hence incapable of political self-organization. Gramsci and Moore help us make sense of the relationship identified by Marx in a different way. The demise of 'pre'-capitalist social arrangements, the elimination of corporate solidarity, opens up the *possibility* for the articulation of political claims that transcend the immediate community, and that are in this sense compatible, for example, with political organizations with national – or, say, class-based – programs. It is not that a party reflects a ready-formed social group but that the possibility for the party form itself as a political organizational arrangement emerges historically in the wake of feudal collapse.

Synthetizing Gramsci and Moore to understand mass party formation yields a two-pronged hypothesis: party incorporation requires the absorption of a civil society, which in turn is facilitated where erosion of traditional agrarian structures is present[7]. The structurated constituency approach to party formation presented here differs from previous understandings because it does not conceive of political organization as an act of representation of pre-existing constituencies or after-effects of state development. Instead, it places party agency at the center while at the same time identifying structural openings and constraints for this agency. A party's absorption and construction of civil societal organizations is critical to its successful emergence as a mass party, but the level of absorption varies depending on the level of cohesion/erosion of traditional structures.

Both representational and state-centered approaches would in fact expect erosion to be detrimental to party formation. Class disintegration would not be

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[7] This does not imply that erosion is a done matter when the party appears on the scene. In fact, however, incipient parties may be central to the process of eroding pre-capitalist arrangements (de Leon 2008).

conducive to political organization. The absence of firmly established local brokers could complicate state – and therefore party – building since brokers provide information and strike deals. Here I argue the opposite: *erosion facilitated the emergence of the PRI, and cohesion blocked the emergence of the MNR*. Within Mexico, the PRI undertook hegemonic incorporation and hence secure it status as a mass party in relatively more eroded regions, and achieved alliances in more cohesive ones. In Bolivia – more cohesive than Mexico in the overall scheme – the MNR's attempt at hegemonic incorporation gained some traction only in the most eroded regions, although it was not able to forge anything more than alliances; in the most cohesive regions, the relationship between the party and the peasantry was disastrous.

LOGIC OF CASE SELECTION

I rely on comparative-historical methods of inquiry (Moore 1978:376; Weber 1949:164) to develop an explanatory account of mass party formation by comparing cases that are similar on theoretically relevant grounds but present variation in outcomes that cannot be explained by existing theories. I treat variation in party formation *between and within* countries as a "negative case" (Bartram 2000; Emigh 1997; Riley 2005), where an outcome predicted by theory did not occur. Existing approaches would not expect variation in cases with similar sectors available for mobilization and similar state structure and electoral arrangements. The objective of this dissertation is to extend a theory of mass party emergence by further specifying the conditions under which it can take place. In line with this, I take as a point of methodological departure what Sartre (1967: 91-93) calls the "project." While objective structural limitations to human action exists, these limitations are paradoxically only revealed when there is an attempt to transcend them (ibid: 101). Hence, looking at instances in which the party *attempted* incorporation *reveals* structural determinants.

Why Study Post-Revolutionary Parties?

Examining post-revolutionary contexts offers an advantage. Despite the differing outcomes in terms of party organization, the revolutions were effective in several important measures (*for Mexico see* Gilly 1971; Knight 1990; Tutino 1986; Womack 1970; *for Bolivia see* Dunkerley 1984; Hylton and Thomson 2007; Klein 1982; Malloy 1970; *for comparative analysis of both cases see* Eckstein 1976; Huntington 1968; Grindle and Domingo ed. 2003). As Alan Knight (2003:55) has written: "Mexico and Bolivia are the two Latin American countries which, in the course of the twentieth century, experienced 'great' or 'social' revolutions that were successful in the sense of substantially transforming their societies." For the purpose of party formation then, a post-revolutionary scenario offers the closest thing to a tabula rasa, where the 'noise' of the past can be muffled for the purpose of analysis.

In Mexico, the armed upheaval began in 1910 after a botched attempt to depose long-standing dictator Porfirio Diaz through electoral means; while Diaz was toppled within a year, this was followed by a decade of violent factional disputes before eventually quelling down in the 1920s. In Bolivia, the cycle of rebellion began in 1947, after a military-nationalist government hesitantly courting peasant support, eliciting the largest wave of violent uprisings in the countryside in the twentieth century (Hylton and Thomson 2007:74); the government eventually veered to the right. In 1952, when a post-electoral conflict that had begun a year before escalated into urban violence, it took only a couple of days for the oligarchical government to be overthrown.

The revolutions -- as political projects – where led by urban middle and upper class intelligentsia. Leaders like Francisco I. Madero or Venustiano Carranza in Mexico, or Victor Paz Estenssoro, Hernan Siles Zuazo, and Walter Guevara in Bolivia, all hailed from a similarly privileged background. Their project was essentially a liberal democratic political revolution focused on modernizing state institutions. Neither country had developed a strong liberal institutional infrastructure by the outbreak of the revolution. The pre-revolutionary Mexican regime was more formally a dictatorial (the Diaz government lasted close to 30 years). A powerful coalition of landlords and a small but emerging capitalist class had established themselves in power, fostering a strong alliance with foreign capital, which held overwhelming control over the natural resources. In Bolivia, although elections did exist in the pre-revolutionary period, parties where little more than personalistic ventures, and universal suffrage was absent. Bolivia's oligarchy had become entrenched after the loss of the Chaco War against Paraguay that ended in 1935. Government was in the hands of a bloc of hacienda owners and mining industry barons. In both cases, the revolution effectively dismantled these governing blocs. Two important results of these revolutions were precisely the nationalization of key natural resources (oil in Mexico and minerals in Bolivia), and significant land reform.

In Mexico, the period studied (1929-1946) encompasses the different phases of formation of the party, beginning in 1929 as the *Partido Nacional Revolucionario* (PNR), then in 1938 becoming the *Partido de la Revolucion Mexicana* (PRM), and finally emerging in 1946 as the *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* (PRI). In Bolivia, the period (1946-1964) encompasses the attempt of the *Movimiento Nacional Revolucionario* to transition to a mass party and its eventual collapse.

Social Forces Available For Mobilization

The peasantry constituted the vast majority of the countries' population through the period of formation of both the PRI and MNR. This population was available for party mobilization and 'representation.' Both revolutions took place in overwhelmingly agrarian economies. The peasant population in Mexico in the 1929-1946 period of formation of the PRI averaged seventy percent; the same was the case for Bolivia in 1946-1960. The armies and militias that fought the revolutionary battles in each country were mostly comprised of peasant sectors. The presence of the peasantry in the

revolutionary coalition left strong imprints in the subsequent government programs in each country, veering towards an agrarian radicalist discourse and, at least some times, policy measures. Indeed, a broad body of work has pointed to the centrality of peasants in regime stability in Mexico (e.g. Cordova 1974; Eckstein 1969; Fox 1993; Sanderson 1986; Silva Herzog 1964; Simpson 1937) and Bolivia (Berdicheuwky 1979: 492; Dunkerley 1984; Gordillo 2000; Pearse 1972)[8]. Methodologically, focusing on the peasantry offers the possibility of controlling for a group available for mobilization – but whatever the case, explaining the formation of the PRI and the MNR as mass parties depends unequivocally on understanding how they attempted to incorporate the peasantry.

Processes Of State-formation

In both Mexico and Bolivia, post-revolutionary state building was a process of national proportions that restructured key institutions such as the army, the school system, and public service, along the lines of a modern bureaucratic state. In both countries, the post-revolutionary state secured a wide array of workers' rights (unionization, collective contracts, strikes, etcetera) and political rights (freedom of expression and freedom of association, for instance) that were operative in the period studied (Medina 2006: 161; Malloy 1970). The general basis for electoral competition was set, establishing a system of direct election and legalizing political parties. Male suffrage was confirmed in the 1917 Constitution (universal suffrage began in 1953). In Bolivia universal suffrage was instituted in 1955.

In Mexico, after a recurrence of military insurrections in the 1920s, the military was tamed, incorporated as a sector into the party – and in 1946 the president who took office, for the first time in the post-revolutionary period, did not come from the ranks of the military. In Bolivia, the MNR attempted to emasculate the army (Grindle 2003:7) and succeeded at least in "downgrading the old military organization (Malloy 1970: ix)."

The PRI as a Model For the MNR

The similarities between the cases did not escape the people of the time. Indeed, in the 1950s the Bolivian revolutionaries explicitly aimed at reproducing what the PRI had accomplished in Mexico during the 1930s and 1940s: a corporatist party in control of peasants, workers, and the middle classes. As Jose Fellman Velarde (1953:11), an MNR leader, wrote in a "draft to define the MNR" presented in a party national convention in 1953:

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[8] This has also been argued for other regions in the world (e.g. Esping-Andersen 2013 [1990]; Heller 2011; Huntington 1968:292; Moore 1967; Waldner 2011).

> What is the MNR?...In a party like the MNR, which in reality is the organized vanguard of the working class, the peasants, and the middle class in Bolivia, it is normal for there to be representative fractions of each of these classes since they have their peculiar interests; but if these representatives were to forget that, within the National Revolution, beyond class interests, there are national interests, they would sentence the realization of their shared ideas to failure.

Like the PRI, the MNR was aimed at incorporating a broad coalition under the banner of a national revolution.

Mexico's experience was the clear point of comparison. As MNR founder Walter Guevara Arze put it: "we wanted to make a Mexican Revolution without the ten years of Pancho Villa (quoted in Malloy 1970: 235)." Guevara Arze had written in 1946 in his "Manifesto to the Ayopaya Peasants" that was part of the party's "political education course" for new cadres:

> If there is a similarity to be found with our nationalism, it is not that of Germany, Italy, or Japan…but that of Mexico…. Bad political faith…has confused these two nationalism, so different to each other…Mexico has already consolidated its revolution in a definitive manner, and it has entered into a stage of industrial progress, Bolivia has just began its National Revolution.

The PRI's influence on the MNR came directly and indirectly from several directions. It came in a direct manner through the series of consultants invited by the MNR government to assess the state of agrarian reform programs, oil industry and nationalization of minerals sector, and school reform. Diplomatic correspondence points to visits by Jesus Silva Herzog, a top advisor to Lazaro Cardenas and scholar of agrarian matters, and Antonio Diaz Soto y Gama, also with a long history of involvement in agricultural policy matters. Lazaro Cardenas communicated his solidarity according to the same reports, expressing interest in the agrarian reform program and nationalization measures. The relationship between Bolivian agrarian activists and Cardenismo had a longer-standing history, as the Warisata School (a peasant and indigenous learning project) established links to Mexican school reformers during the 1930s (Vilchis 2014: 153).

Another government invitee was Manuel Rodriguez Aguilar, a top advisor in Petroleos Mexicanos (PEMEX), Mexico's nationalized petroleum company. As a newspaper of the time reported, he was received with honors by the heads of Yacimientos Petroliferos Fiscales Bolivianos (YPFB), the state owned oil company. YPFB leaders found "this occasion was propitious to exchange impressions about the precedents and antecedents of the Mexican Revolution, similar to the Revolution in Bolivia these days."

One of the most interesting visits was that of Vicente Lombardo Toledano, who had been the central link between government, organized labor, and the Comintern

during the creation of the Central de Trabajadores de Mexico (CTM), the national union confederation under the PRI in Mexico during the 1930s. In an interview for the main newspaper in Bolivia, Lombardo Toledano, dubbed the "maximum leader of the Mexican workers" expressed that:

> [F]rom what I have seen, the national revolution is on course…the most important problem to be resolved by the working class in Bolivia is the problem of unity amongst all workers: intellectual workers, manual, and the peasants. Without the unity of all those who partake in economic production, you cannot undertake any socio-economical and democratic development project in the country. Unity must be understood, in my view, as a unique front for all the workers, independently of their beliefs and their ideology, to defend their rights and push the national revolution to accomplish its goals (*El Diario* 1952a: 15).

On a separate occasion, Lombardo Toledano, invited by the Central Obrera Boliviana (COB) (the main workers' central) to the nationalization ceremony of the mineral industries, doubled-down on his push for unification:

> I sustain that the main problem of Latin America's workers is their unity, which must be realized as soon as possible, with the objective of obtaining shared demands. If for whatever reason, organic unity was not possible to obtain immediately, at least you must search for a unity in action available to all (*El Diario* 1952b: 7).

The influence of the Mexican case on Bolivia was less direct as well -- it was constant fodder for discussions in mainstream press. The Mexican revolution – and the PRI -- were used as an example of moderation, a successful revolutionary process due to its centrism. For example, the main newspaper in Bolivia, *El Diario* (1953a), reproduced in three columns, a 1920 speech by the Mexican revolutionary leader Alvaro Obregon, where he argued that "land reform must move with absolute caution." A year later an editorial in the same newspaper contended that:

> [T]he conditions in which politicians in the land of Aztecs have had to work, were not more favorable that those existing in other countries in the continent: yet, there was a continuity in terms of agrarian policy that had now given surprising results. The trust of peasants in a very much revolutionary programs set in motion, helped to obtain spectacular gains .

Whether Lombardo Toledano's visit – as that of others – had any impact is difficult to measure. What is important from a methodological perspective is the fact that the Bolivian revolutionary leaders held the Mexican PRI as the key referent. In this

sense, the MNR attempted to reproduce the PRI model. The question of why they failed to do so hence calls forth a structural explanation.

Subnational Comparison

In order to control for differences between the countries, I examine variation in party formation *within* each country. The question becomes why did the PRI emerge as a mass party in some regions of Mexico but not others, after the country's revolutionary upheaval in the early twentieth century – and why did the MNR have relative success in some regions but not in others?

To focus on the relationship between agrarian structures and party building, I concentrate on states with a high concentration of peasants. In Mexico, I develop a sample of the most overwhelmingly agrarian in the country in the period studied: places where the rural population was above the national average of 68%. The seventeen states in this sample[9] constitute about half of the country's thirty-one states and shared similar bureaucratic structures (Hamilton 1982; Medina 2006) and identical electoral rules (male suffrage until 1953 and universal suffrage thereafter). Similarly, in Bolivia, I focus on six out of nine states concentrating the country's agrarian population. These states form part of the widely recognized regions of the "valleys" and the "altiplano" – the three states excluded from the sample comprise the "llanos" region, which was extremely under populated in the period studied. The states in the valleys and the altiplano shared identical bureaucratic structures and electoral rules. Hence, this case selection offers controls for causal variables posited as central in representational and state-modernization arguments about party emergence.

The PRI As a Strategic Research Site

The emergence of the PRI is a particularly fruitful object of analysis: sub-national variation constitutes a "negative case" in relation to the expectations of existing theory, while its condition as a particularly strong mass party, makes it a strategic research site. Although this is essentially a comparative project, it is important to point out that the PRI is a critical case study in and of itself. While negative-case methodology guides the overall logic of inquiry, studying the PRI in and of it self is particularly important for understanding mass political organizations.

The PRI is a strategic research site (Merton 1987) for the study of mass party emergence given its particularly strong capacity for mobilization and its key role in maintaining political order under semi-democratic conditions. Unlike other non-liberal democratic arrangements the party in Mexico was not irrelevant or secondary to other political institutions (McDonald 1971; Story 1986: 9). A formalized electoral process

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[9] The states considered are the following: Chiapas, Durango, Guerrero, Hidalgo, Mexico, Michoacan, Morelos, Oaxaca, Puebla, Queretaro, Quintana Roo, San Luis Potosi, Sinaloa, Tabasco, Tlaxcala, Veracruz, and Zacatecas.

with opposition parties was present throughout its tenure; a degree of competition was especially present at the beginning stages of the regime (1929-1940) and post mid-1980s. Regular elections were held every six years and re-election was not allowed. While fraud and violence were certainly present (Gillingham 2005; Pansters 2012), they were by no means the normal mechanism for imposing political order (Greene 2007; Magaloni 2006). The PRI stayed in power by building extensive patronage and clientelar networks within popular classes and successfully pushed for compromises and resolutions between conflicting sectors of society -- it remains to the present, an extremely efficient mass party[10]. The party was central to one of the longest-lived regimes of the twentieth century (Magaloni 2006:1). Not surprisingly, the PRI has been a common case in comparative studies of parties (Almond and Verba 1965; Collier and Collier 1991; Greene 2007; Huntington 1968; Levitsky and Way 2002; Linz 2000; Linz and Stepan 1996; Magaloni 2006; Sartori 1976; Rustow 1967). Giovanni Sartori (1976: 232) has written that: "All sorts of conceptual, interpretive, and predictive errors have resulted from our inability to accommodate into an appropriate framework the Mexican PRI." In other words, if existing theories cannot explain the PRI, there is a serious problem with them.

In summary, the PRI and MNR developed out of similar revolutions, mobilizing seemingly identical social forces, and aimed to build homologous organization. Yet, the PRI developed into on the most long-standing mass parties of the twentieth century, while the MNR collapsed within a decade of power, giving way to decades of political instability. Variation in outcomes between these two cases cannot be explained by existing theories. Representational approaches are ill suited to explain variation in cases with similar social cleavages available for mobilization; State-centered perspectives would expect a party emerging in Bolivia as well, where institutional re-structuring was underway and universal suffrage was present. My goal here is not to develop an explanation for all existing cases of party emergence, but rather, show the limitations of existing understandings and suggest an alternative explanation.

In subsequent chapters I will show the causal relevance of agrarian structures when mass party formation is attempted and show *how* these structures were causally significant. Agrarian structures were important because some facilitated the absorption

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[10] The role of patronage is a clear condition for the stability of the regime *once it is built*. The crafting of a well-oiled patronage system is an end point in a process of party incorporation. It helps explain the permanence of the party in power, but it has a limited role in understanding the process of formation studied in the paper. Establishing systematic patronage and clientelar mechanisms required a process of absorption first. In the period studied, in areas in which the PRI emerged as a mass party, the circulation of patronage was more patterned and consistent, whereas in other areas, the distribution of patronage was haphazard and unsystematic (used to quench sudden conflicts or during the electoral season).

of a civil societal realm, which was in turn favorable for party incorporation once attempted, while other agrarian forms precluded it.

In other words, the key difference between the cases I explore in this dissertation, is the level of traditional agrarian structures. In Mexico, the Spanish rule (1519-1821) had allowed the existence of large estates while at the same time tolerating communal property (Van Young 1983); state strategies for preserving rural stability were predicated on the existence of the self-governing landholding village (Florescano 1986). Extensive land privatization in Mexico began during the Benito Juarez presidency in the mid-1800s when he instituted a series of liberal reforms that affected both the property of the Catholic Church and village lands held collectively (Tutino 1986). The liberal ideologues of the Juarez government set out to foster the emergence, only partially accomplished, of individual small property owners (ibid). The Diaz dictatorship (1876-1911) however, pushed through communal expropriation in a serious way, resulting in heavily concentrated landed property (Kouri 2004). Land became increasingly devoted to market-oriented haciendas with labor-intensive arrangements (Servin, Reina and Tutino 2007).

In 1810, 40% of arable lands in the center and south of the country (where the peasantry was concentrated) were held communally (Warman 1980:16-17). By 1910, at the outset of the revolution, this number was down to 5%, and 91% of peasants had no property rights (ibid). More than half of the national territory was under hacienda ownership (Vazques 2004: 26). The traditional village was decimated. The most violent uprisings took place not necessarily in the most destitute regions, but precisely where land had only recently been privatized (Katz 1974; Tutino 1986; Womak 1969).

In Bolivia, Spanish rule (1538-1809) played out in similar fashion as in Mexico, with communal property as an important element of the region. Attempts at land privatization began during the 1860s as well. The general Mariano Melgarejo, undertook a series of reforms to dismantle the Indian corporate community (Gotkowitz 2007: 19). The process of land expropriation elicited a wave of significant uprisings. Melgarejo's project ultimately failed when the peasant uprisings couple with the traditional elite's dissatisfaction with a process of land privatization that benefited mostly loyal relatives, bureaucrats, and other military. In 1870, a revolt led by a coalition of long-standing elites conceded to restoration of communal property as a condition for the support of the peasantry (ibid:20). This arrangement, later ratified by the Constituent Assembly, protected traditional tenure arrangements well into the twentieth century.

According to the Agrarian Census, in the 1950s – despite persistent encroachment by big landowners -- a close to a third of the land was partitioned in small holdings operated by the owner; 38% of land was under an hacienda system; and close to a quarter (22%) of the land nation-wide was held communally. Communal villages (known as "ayllus") accounted for 26% of the total agricultural lands in the country.

The aim of subsequent chapters will be to illustrate how these differences in land tenure arrangement had a causal effect on mass party formation.

Archival Material

I make use of available agrarian census data in each country, as well as extensive archival material. For Mexico, for example, the bulk of documents consulted come from the defunct Direccion General de Investigaciones Politicas y Sociales (General Directorate of Political and Social Investigation). This directorate was a network of political spies, whose confidential and highly descriptive reports of both PRI and opposition activities from the period 1929-1965 were made available to researchers in 1999. While the perspective of these government informants is obviously biased, the reports were by no means reproducing party propaganda since they were meant for an audience of high-level state bureaucrats. The reports are particularly useful considering that several agents were deployed to cover different regions during the same time frame allowing for comparison and constituting a unique look into the every-day of party formation. For Bolivia, the archival materials are more varied. The personal files from MNR's co-founder Walter Guevara provide an underexplored vantage point to the study of party activity. Another key source is the several case studies and ethnographic reports commissioned by the Land Reform Agency and Peasant Affairs Office during the 1950s and 1960s. These reports, intended mostly for internal governmental consumption, are often very detailed, cover a variety of regions, and give a sense of the relationship between communities and party activists on the ground.

THE LITERATURE ON THE PRI AND THE MNR IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

In the preceding section, I placed this dissertation project in the context of general theories of mass party formation. I identified the Mexican PRI as a critical case for understanding party emergence, and argued for the fruitfulness of a comparative analysis with Bolivia's MNR. As I have stressed, the process of mass party emergence in Mexico and Bolivia took place in the aftermath of revolutions with important similarities. Both insurrections mobilized a similar demographic, placed land reform and liberal institutional reforms as the central aims, and engaged in a process of state modernization. Furthermore, Bolivia's MNR looked at the PRI as model – assuming that conditions were more or less similar, it sought out explicitly to replicate its integrative capacities. Both countries shared similar potential constituencies available for mobilization, and identical bureaucratic structures. Hence, reflective and state-centered approaches to party formation were unsuited to explain why the PRI was successful and the MNR failed in developing as a mass party. Here, I focus on the historical puzzle proper: how have the Mexican and Bolivian cases themselves been explained separately?

As will be clear below, existing explanations for the PRI's success and the MNR's collapse in the area studies literature for each country sit in close relationship to the theories outlined in the previous section. However, in the following paragraphs I

want to mainly draw attention to the fact that, first, that both the success of the PRI and the failure of the MNR have been explained in identical terms – as a consequence of incorporating disparate sectors. And, second, I argue that this convergence in the literature further reveals the need for a theory of party formation. Put differently, positing incorporation as the explanatory variable as existing works do, simply renames the puzzle to be pursued: why was the PRI able to incorporate disparate sectors in the first place and why was the MNR unable to? I conclude the section by pointing out the conceptual reworking that can yield a theory of party formation from the cases at hand.

Incorporation as the Explanandum

The simultaneous convergence on origins and divergence on outcome between Mexico and Bolivia's post-revolutionary trajectory has given way to a peculiar phenomena in the literature on the subject: both the success of the PRI and the failure of the MNR have been explained in identical terms[11]. That is, I will illustrate below, the Mexican party's integrative capacity – bringing together a myriad of disparate and contradictory groups under one organizational umbrella -- is the common explanation for its ascendance and consolidation. At the same time, the Bolivian party's failure is attributed to its pursuit of an integrational project – wedging together groups too contradictory to remain in a stable coalition. Capacity for incorporation, establishing "paradoxical" (Middlebrook 1995) or "contradictory" alliances (Collier 1992), then is casted as the explanation for the PRI's success; while the "uneasy alliance" (Ladman 1982: 46) and "inherent contradictions" in the MNR coalition (Bethell 1998: 318; Blassier 1968: 227; Malloy 1970: 120; Mitchell 1977:78) caused its downfall. The mirroring phenomena in the scholarship regarding the explanation for each case is noteworthy given the disparate outcomes in the cases – signaling the importance of undertaking comparative analysis. It also revelatory: 'capacity for incorporation' is a *description* of the outcome that must be explained. Why was the PRI able to incorporate social sectors, and why was the MNR unable to do so? *This* question calls forth the need for a theory of party formation.

Thinking the PRI

Mexico's *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* has always been an ambivalent creature. The duality inscribed in its very name – institutionalized revolution – has been fodder for a long line of formal academic categorization and use of metaphors: the regime it presided has been described as "electoral authoritarianism" (Linz 2000:34) or "competitive authoritarian" (Levitsky and Way 2002); and the PRI has been defined as

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[11] It is important to point out that the works reviewed here do not necessarily deal explicitly with the question of party formation – indeed, part of my contribution here is to point out this absence. However, implicit explanations for the emergence of the PRI and the MNR can be drawn from this body of work, and oblige analysis.

a an experiment in one-party democracy (Brandenburg 1955), janus-faced (Frank 1962), a philanthropic ogre (Paz 1979), a "pragmatic-authoritarian party" (Sartori 1976), corporatist (Cordova 1974), a centaur (Pansters 2012), bonapartist (Aguilar 1984), a contradictory alliance (Collier 1992), a dictablanda (a soft dictatorship) (Gillingham and Smith 2014), and famously indicted by Vargas Llosa as a "perfect dictatorship." It has often been referred to as a "hegemonic party" – a term that in most accounts, even when Gramsci is invoked, is explicitly or implicitly taken as a synonym for total domination as will be clear below. Attempts to explain the rise and consolidation of the party have centered on this ambivalence concretely as it pertains to the party's capacity for incorporation.

Three distinct waves of thinking about the party can be identified. First, a series of works within a pluralist framework noticed the ambiguity of the regime and interpreted it as de-facto polyarchy. Brandenburg's (1955) contention that mid-20th century Mexico was undergoing "an experiment in one-party democracy" is perhaps the clearest example. Lipset (1959: 74) classified the country as one the few of democracies in the developing world. The argument regarding party formation – a version of the reflective approach outlined above -- boiled down to the fact that elites did not take unilateral decisions, but constantly bargained and compromised with different sectors (Cline 1963; Cumberland 1968). Padgett (1976) for example, argued that "the magnitude of direct intervention by the president is less than imagined" and that the decision making process followed certain rules however tacit. The president consulted with interest groups, and *within* the governing coalition there was a back and forth in terms of demands. The process of negotiation was short enough to prevent mounting tensions, and formal organizations would regularly make their positions public with the hope of being taken into consideration but remaining careful of not openly supporting any internal party candidate (Scott 1971). For Cline (1963:167) the PRI developed as mass party because they 'delivered the goods' and "incorporated into its program any really popular issues that seemed to attract voters to minority parties (167)." Hence, for Needler (1971: 37): "despite everything…the national party [was] a force for democracy and progress." The party was -- in the aggregate – *representative of several sectors*, facilitating its consolidation.

A second wave of literature in the 1960s and 1970s thoroughly debunked the claim put forth by pluralists. This wave posited instead that power was indeed heavily concentrated, and that putatively alternative centers of power (unions for example) were little more than state-directed entities: the PRI was corporatist at best, authoritarian at worst (Alba 1967; Coleman and Davis 1978; Cordova 1974; Cosio Villegas 1972; Kauffman 1975; Reyna 1977). Pablo Gonzalez Casanova's (1970) work was key in exposing the limits of participation in the political process. Working classes were nominally organized but rarely engaged in serious decision-making (Baird and McCaughan 1979; Cockfroft 1983; Reyna and Weinert 1977). Democratic "civic culture" lagged (Almond and Verba 1963; Fromm and Maccoby 2014 [1970] :89). Organizations of the lower classes were manipulated by a 'hegemonic' (dominant) party, and membership was coercive: every sector was locked in to this system -- from

the urban poor (Eckstein 1977), to the peasantry, and labor unions (Handelman 1979). The underlying notion here was that the party was little more than an after-effect of state formation.

A motivating question for thinkers of this wave was how to explain the absence of oppositional politics. In the context of extreme inequality, the absence of persistent conflict seemed puzzling. The answer they developed was precisely that state corporatism prevented people from rebelling. In a more sophisticated version of the argument, Jose Revueltas (1962), a prominent Marxist intellectual in Mexico in the beginning of the second half of the 20th century, contended that class formation itself was blocked by the PRI. As he explained: "[working masses] participate in a real and effective way in the activities of the bourgeois party [the PRI] because – aside from compulsion – in the worst of cases they believe that, at least, they are not doing it for the party itself but for the union of which they are members (ibid: 157-158)." The party, he continues, "can penetrate its organizational filaments all the way to the deepest layers of the population and thus impedes the concurrence of class politics (ibid:158)." The political incorporation of labor during the 1930s took place in the context of a weak labor movement (a feature of countries in early stages of industrialization), producing in some instances a "multi-class governing coalition (Collier 1992:4)," encouraged unions to adopt a collaborationist stance which enabled them access to state resources while aiding in the consolidation of the regime (Collier 1992: 11, 26-27). This arrangement shaped the types of demands generated by mass actors, creating a tendency towards compromise (Middlebrook 1996: 12). That is, as Weberian approaches to party formation would posit, the state institutional edifice channeled groups into the party. Polyarchy was an illusion for "there [was] only one real political center. The state [could] activate or exclude the masses according to the circumstances (Reyna 1977: 162)." In this sense, the party itself was heavily subordinated to the federal government, and emerged only acting as its electoral arm.

The corporate-authoritarian framework carried a strong implication that the PRI, which was indistinguishable from the state, centralized power and had effective and absolute political control. It is precisely against this point that a wave of writers, mostly historians, criticized the state-centered approach of the second wave. Energized by James Scott's treatment of Gramsci, this tradition attacked the notion of total domination and pointed to the myriad ways in which of the party had failed in obtaining consent. Joseph and Nugent's (1994) collection *Everyday Forms of State-Formation*, attempted to "bring the people back in" by studying the PRI from the perspective of popular culture, and being sensitive to 'subcultures of resistance' (ibid: 11), the presence of which challenged the notion that the state-party had ever had effective centralized control. The PRI had been a hegemonic *project* but not in fact hegemonic in *outcome.* Official programs were confronted with negotiation from below, contested at the local level at every turn (Kay Vaughan 1997, Fallaw 2001). Populations refashioned revolutionary discourses of citizenship when these proved threatening to local forms of identity (Joseph and Nugent 1994: 22).

By focusing solely on the absence of autonomous organized movements, the corporatist view overlooked the 'weapons of the weak' – the myriad ways through which subalterns resisted full incorporation. The contention here is that since Gramsci argued that hegemony required consent, anything short of full ideological alignment breaks the spell – in effect debasing the concept of hegemony as different from domination. For example, Rubin (1997) who sets out to "de-center the regime" argues that social scientists in the 1970s "were right to characterize the postrevolutionary regime as *hegemonic and authoritarian*…but wrong about what hegemony is, and thus about what upholds domination and how it may be resisted (ibid: 13, my emphasis)." The influence of James Scott's use of 'hegemony' as a heuristic device for elucidating instances of resistance in these works, has not given way to a more analytically precise use of the concept, particularly missing the relationship posed by Gramsci between a relatively autonomous civil society and the party.

The literature coming from this culturalist third wave has added an important corrective to the notion of total control carried forth by the corporatist-authoritarian framework. But the deconstruction has so far yielded no reconstructed theory or concept to understand the integrationist capacities of the PRI. In fact, recent works have actually returned to pre-existing paradigms. The state-centered authoritarian thesis has been revived in scholarship that points to the use of force in upholding the "*pax Priista*" (Avina 2014; Gillingham 2014; Padilla 2008; Pansters 2012). Even more interestingly, the pluralist framework has re-appeared as well. Rational-choice scholars have explored the logic behind the electorate's decision to "vote for autocracy" (Greene 2007: 5-6; Magaloni 2006). Benjamin Smith's (2014) "Who governed?" – in direct reference to Robert Dahl's classic – is particularly noteworthy here because its starting point is precisely the culturalist historiography:

> Scholars have started to pick apart the consciously managed facade of presidentialism, unity and party discipline, disaggregate the PRI regime, and discover considerable spaces for conflict, autonomy and a rough-and-ready form of democracy… Formal vertical hierarchies continually intersected with informal horizontal relations. Attempted imposition often necessitated considerable negotiation (ibid: 232).

But Smith takes the lessons of Joseph and Nugent (1994) and Rubin (1997) – in what points to their limitations -- to re-open the pluralists' claims:

> Political negotiations often involved popular groups… At the same time, social movements against tax increases, the loss of local resources, commercial exploitation, transport costs and unpopular local leadership were common… Popular dissent forced officials to accept their demands. And caciques who were unable to demonstrate the appropriate blend of coercion and flexibility seldom lasted long. Even elections, so long viewed as the centerpiece of the authoritarian system, involved regular participation, contestation and at least some popular input (Smith 2014: 233).

As he puts it: "[in many parts of mid-century Mexico] what Dahl and Lindblom termed 'polyarchy' trumped elite bargaining and authoritarianism (ibid: 266)."

Ultimately – aside from the conceptual tensions -- the accounts above provide a rich *description* of the organization at the peak of its capacity for incorporation. The features that are commonly emphasized about the PRI -- its corporatist structure, its patronage and clientelistic mechanisms, and it being the result of compromise between conflicting forces – help explain its stability over time.   But this capacity for incorporation is *the outcome* that should be explained. That is, in trying to understand the emergence of the PRI as a mass party, arguing that incorporation is the explanatory variable simply conflates the issue by renaming the puzzle to be pursued: why was the PRI able to incorporate disparate sectors in the first place? This question remains unaddressed, either missed entirely or taken as an "exogenous factor" (Magaloni 2006: 3) in explanations of the party's consolidation.

Thinking the MNR

The literature on Bolivia's *Movimiento Nacional Revolucionario* (MNR) is not as vast as that for the Mexican case, but a systematic reading reveals a clear pattern. The MNR failed, it is argued, because it attempted to reconcile cross-class forces too contradictory to establish a sustainable relationship (Bethell 1998: 318; Blassier 1968: 227; Dunkerley 1984:75; Gogol 2002: 258; Hylton and Thomson 2007: 78; John 2009: 88; Klein 1992:236; Malloy 1970: 120).

Pointing to the need for comparative analysis of party emergence, ironically, the failure of the MNR has often been explained in the same terms as those of the PRI's success. Perhaps because of this absence of comparative analysis, the rowdy history of 20th century Bolivian politics – including the failure of the MNR – has often been naturalized, mostly for romantic purposes, as inherent to a "revolutionary" people. Titles such as *Rebellion In Their Veins* (Dunkerly 1984), *Permanent Revolution in the Andes* (John 2009), and the notion that "[Bolivian] peasants resist the incursions of the state because of their capacity to tap into their long term historical memory (Rivera 1984)," attest to this. The impossibility of incorporation is left unquestioned, attributed to -- as the prominent thinker Rene Zavaleta (1974) famously put it – Bolivia's condition as a *"formacion social abigarrada* [a motley, variegated, or brindled social formation]." That is, assuming a reflective approach, party formation is blocked, the argument goes, because of the saturation of variegated social forces.

Incorporation was *tried* in Bolivia: land reform sought to mobilize peasants, and a "multi-class governing coalition" like that described by Collier (1992) when discussing Mexico, was much more a feature of the Bolivian case, were literally a "co-government" was instituted were organized labor under the *Central Obrera Boliviana* (COB) shared power at certain junctures with the MNR (Malloy 1970: 185). But, the MNR suffered from "a conflict arising from the fact that as a cross-class alliance the movement incorporates groups with different interests and aims, reacting to different problems. In an environment of scarcity, these differences eventually result in clashes

(Blasier 1968: 227)." The peasant-worker bloc, for example, was ridden with tensions and contradictions. Relations between workers and peasants were marked, for example, by a sense of cultural and class distance (Hylton and Thomson 2007: 78). Urban worker organizations thought of themselves as the leading faction, directing and organizing their rural counterparts (ibid). And the relationship between the party and the COB was also fraught with difficulties, failing to co-opt it at key junctures (Dunkerley 1984: 75). Delivering on promises to the peasantry required a firm foot in urban centers, which in turn required "a diligent redistribution of wealth under certain conditions of increasing crisis – even bankruptcy – but also a sustained populist image and a coherent apparatus (ibid: 75)." The MNR, it seemed, had their work cut out for them, coming face to face with the perils of coalition building. How this was different from Mexico's situation is unclear.

Internal tensions existed within rural and urban organizations themselves. Gogol (2002: 258) points to "the deeper contradictions" revealed once land was expropriated from haciendas – the manner in which expropriation took place "created different types of peasants (ibid)." The MNR subsumed ethnicity under class with its policy of "integrating the Indian into the nation (ibid)." All of this exacerbated the tensions; adopting a reflective approach, the party's misreading – trying to incorporate pre-constituted groups in a uniform manner – is thought to set the stage for its downfall.

Then there were the middle classes. Paz Estenssoro's original support within these sectors declined as he became dependent on the COB and workers' organizations in general. Seeing this, he pushed the MNR to create an organizational space for the center and right wings of the middle class. But it was not enough, as Klein (1992: 236) puts it: "Just as the left was growing and new peasant power was developing, the MNR found itself losing its most basic and traditional center of support, the urban middle class." The MNR was attempting to put a mantle over highly stratified society bursting at the seams. Even the attempt to forge a nationalist agent was an obstacle for the MNR's success. The discourse of nationalism required class fractions to align behind a progressive bourgeois elite (Malloy 1970: 339). But as Malloy (ibid) put it:

> The assumption of common set of interests is overly optimistic in the extreme. This is particularly true when the segments are so diverse as to include the economically dependent and racially conscious urban middle, the workers in industries at various levels of development, and the indian peasants with little or nor previous contact with national society (Malloy 1970: 339).

In a similar vein, for Rene Zavaleta (1988: 90) the issue was tied to the petty-bourgeois origin of the MNR leadership. The party conceived of the state as an administrative unit, failing to dig their heels in serious mobilization along class lines. That is, the MNR sought to incorporate disparate sectors, weakening its positions, when it should have been delineating the differences between friends and enemies. The consequence, as Zavaleta (ibid) put it, was a "vacillating power, a negotiator, moderate and essentially

pragmatic." This doomed the MNR. But, again, somehow it is this very characteristic that for PRI scholars explains the Mexican party's success.

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

Similarly to the literature about Mexico discussed above, the invocation of incorporation – in the Bolivian case, of attempted incorporation – as a causal mechanism seems misguided. Failed incorporation is a description of the MNR's condition during the 1950s, not the reason behind this condition. Why did the MNR fall short of undertaking the cross-class coalition that the PRI achieved?

Few works have systematically compared the Mexican and Bolivian cases. While some (Eckstein 1976; Knight 2003) have developed analyses of the revolutionary process itself, interestingly, Samuel P. Huntington is an exception, having developed a PRI-MNR comparison in his classic *Political Order in Changing Societies* (1968: 315-334). It is worth discussing in some detail.

Huntington (ibid: xix) argues that the development of political institutions is the central condition under which societies undergoing rapid and disruptive social and economic change may achieve political stability. It is from this perspective that he approaches the disparate trajectories of post-revolutionary Mexico and Bolivia (political order in the former, instability in the latter). The PRI was the source of political stability in Mexico; the absence of an equivalent is the explanation for Bolivia's disarray. For Huntington, this absence is explained by four factors: 1) elimination of rival claimants to leadership and "exhaustion" given the longer insurrectionist period in the Mexican case (ibid: 327); 2) "the importance of statesmanship" possessed by the Mexican revolutionary leaders (ibid: 328); 3) the subordination of autonomous social forces to the authority of an integrating political party (ibid: 329); and 4) absence of anti-foreign nationalism in Bolivia (ibid: 332).

The historical record simply does not adhere to Huntington's theses. *First*, the exhaustion and lack of leaders produced by extended violence do not help explain the successful emergence of the PRI – exhaustion could have just as well led to a multi-party competitive party system, not a sole integrative party. Also, in Mexico there was no lack of leaders – the assassination of key figures during the revolutionary period only opened *more* space to be filled by up and coming leaders; the prolonged war *increased* the number of autonomous leaders. Furthermore, the relative quickness of the revolution in Bolivia could mean the there were *less* leaders that had the time to develop and muster support, which would have made it easier to govern and achieve stability under Huntington's view.

Second, there are reasons to believe that Paz Estenssoro held statesmanship as an important value and that Mexican leaders did not. By statesmanship, Huntington means the willingness to cede the transfer of power. In the Mexican context, the key figure was Plutarco Elias Calles. As Huntington (ibid: 329) puts it:

> In the 1920 Obregon and Calles alternated in the presidency, and when Obregon was assassinated in 1928 Calles adhered to the principle of no

reelection and refused to succeed himself. Instead he declared that the revolution must be institutionalized and took the lead in creating the party. Similarly, five years later, Calles had the wisdom to recognize that the revolution was stagnating, that new leadership was necessary, and to acquiesce in the nomination of Cardenas as President. In contrast, Paz Estenssoro undermined the political stability of his country by attempting to perpetuate his own hold on political office. Political stability is in part the product of historical conditions and social forces, but it is also in part the result of choices and decisions made by political leaders. [A] reason for the differences in political stability produced by the Mexican and Bolivian Revolutions is the differences in statesmanship between Calles and Paz Estenssoro.

Huntington's bizarre adulation for Calles leaves out crucial details. Calles remained in de-facto control 'behind the throne' all through 1929-1934 (his reign during this period is commonly referred to as the "maximato"). Calles only ceded power when he was forced to go into exile by his wisely chosen successor, Cardenas. In contrast, Paz Estenssoro transferred power to Hernan Siles Suazo in 1956 – four years after the revolution, and via the first elections in the country with universal suffrage.

Third, the control over other sectors of power *was also attempted* in Bolivia. The MNR attempted to incorporate peasant and workers, and redefine and emasculate the army (Malloy 1970: 184). This third factor as we can see is basically a re-statement of the notion of incorporation discussed above. Why subordination of autonomous social forces took place effectively is precisely what needs to be answered, it cannot constitute an explanation.

Finally, "lack of anti-foreign sentiment" is not quite an accurate depiction of Bolivia. Certainly, the US gave aid to the MNR government, but it also demanded the reduction of the power of organized labor, asked for repayment on defaulted bonds from the 1920s, and demanded a modification in the legal codes that would allow direct US private investments in Bolivian oil (Klein 1982: 240). Anti-foreign sentiment was not, then, entirely lacking in the country.

Huntington is not able then to provide an explanation of the conditions under which a party like the PRI could have emerged successfully. Like the authors discussed above, the central question that concerns us is missed: why was incorporation possible in Mexico and not in Bolivia? While the PRI's success is explained by reference to its ability to bring disputing factions to coalesce, the MNR weakness is explained as tied to the underlying tension involved in bringing different factions together.

MOVING FORWARD

A representational approach has seen parties as reflections of pre-existing latent social divisions, mainly class (Engels [1895]; Marx 1994 [1848], similarly Kirchheimer

1966; Lipset and Rokkan 1967; Neuman 1956:403; *more recently* Katz and Mair 1995). A state-modernization approach developed Weber's view that changes in the institutional framework of the state introduce incentives for party building (Michels 1949 [1911]: 21-41; Ostrogroski 1964 [1902]: 1; Weber 1946 [1919]: 102; a similar take on this point is found later in Duverger 1962; Sartori 1976: 18, 36; *more recently* Slez and Martin 2007: 65). These approaches cannot account for variation between cases with similar sectors available for mobilization and similar state arrangements. Yet, there remains a general dearth of sociological understanding of party formation.

Similarly, Pluralist, corporate-authoritarian, and culturalist approaches to the study of Mexico's PRI converge on the idea that the party consolidated through a process of broad incorporation. Studies of the MNR argue that the failure of the party was due to its attempt at incorporate a coalition that proved too broad. As I have argued here, while incorporation is a fair assessment of the mechanisms that enabled the day-to- day maintenance of power by the PRI, it does not in fact constitute a theory of its emergence. The MNR's alliances were not more contradictory that those in Mexico. Its failure to incorporate is not an explanation of its thwarted emergence – it is a description of it.

Existing literature has failed to pose the crucial question of party formation because they all conceive the party as ready-made, indistinguishable from the state, and existing in the absence of a civil societal realm. Assuming no differentiation between state and party, no role for autonomous civil society, the image of incorporation is retroactively projected, missing the arduous labor required to get the machinery so finely tuned. As I argued in the introduction to this dissertation, I construct a theory of party formation that synthetizes Gramsci and Moore to argue that mass political organizations emerge in the context of eroded traditional agrarian structures which facilitate the construction and absorption of civil society organizations.

The approach to explaining the PRI and the MNR beg the question of party formation. To begin this task, two-spheres of political action must be de-conflated. On the one hand, it suggests that – at least at some point in time – a differentiation existed between the party and the state. That is, whether the party and state become eventually indistinguishable in Mexican case is a question to be explored – the party-state is an end-point that requires explanation. On the other hand, the framework pushes for a conception of a civil societal realm relatively differentiated from the party, again, at least at some point in history. Indeed, the Scottsian wave missed what a unique feature of Gramsci's political sociology: the key role of a relatively autonomous civil society in party formation. It is precisely this claim – that the party was hegemonic, because a civil societal realm existed – that needs to be explored, including the conditions for this realm to exist.

Why was the PRI able to incorporate disparate sectors in the first place and why was the MNR unable to? The general underlying argument is this: mass parties are possible only after traditional agrarian structures have been sufficiently destroyed. The reason why the demise of 'pre'-capitalist arrangements matters is because it enables the

construction of a civil societal realm; the absorption of this realm is conductive to mass party emergence.

I develop this two-folded hypothesis in subsequent chapters. Chapter 2 delves into the Mexican case. It explores the role of erosion of traditional agrarian structures on party organization. Showing how the regions in the country with relatively higher levels of erosion where the bastions of PRI mobilizational strength, both electorally and in terms of civil societal absorption. While the party achieved hegemonic incorporation in eroded regions, it developed haphazard alliances in relatively cohesive regions. I point as well to evidence that party operatives were aware of the organizational benefits of erosion.

Chapter 3 develops the Bolivian case. It explores the role of cohesion of traditional agrarian structures on party organization. Showing how the regions in the country with relatively higher levels of cohesion where places were it was essentially impossible for the MNR to establish sustainable links with the peasantry, failing to form unions attached to the party. In the region with less communal property holding, the MNR developed close links to existing and emerging peasant unions without achieving full incorporation. In the regions where most collectively held land was concentrated, the MNR failed in establishing a firm relationship with peasant leadership. This feature complicated party mobilization.

In a concluding chapter, I outline the broader theoretical implications of the present study, and point to different avenues for applying and extending my findings. My work pushes for a revitalization of the sociological study of parties, filling a critical gap in political and historical sociology that has been increasingly noted (De Leon, Desai, Tugal 2009; Mudge and Chen 2014). The concerns of comparative-historical sociology in the past decades (state formation, revolution, the welfare state) are deeply state-centered (Evans, Rueschemeyer, and Skocpol 1985; Mann 1986; Skocpol 1979; Tilly 1992); political sociology studying mobilization has mostly focused on social movements within civil society (McAdam 1985; Offe 1985; Tilly 1978). Parties are ambiguous entities, being both public institutions and voluntary associations. Perhaps because they do not fit neatly in either the rubric of the state or civil society; their role has been obscured in both of these subfields. A sociology of parties can yield new answers to classic questions in these sub-disciplines: How do political identities form? What is the relationship between class structure and political representation? What is the role of the state in all of this?

My aim is to illustrate the power of the party -- not to be the vessel of a pre-constituted group – but to shape political identities; and -- at the same time – locate structural openings and closures to the capacity for organizations to produce constituencies. I proposed a framework that can carry over to other studies of party emergence: that party formation should be studied as a process of absorption of intermediary associations, and that in turn this process is facilitated within particular structural economic conditions and not others.

CHAPTER 2

THE EMERGENCE OF THE PRI IN MEXICO

INTRODUCTION

As outlined in the introduction, reflective (Katz and Mair 1995; Kirchheimer 1966; Lipset and Rokkan 1967; Marx 1848) and state-centered approaches (Aldrich 1995: 103-104; Duverger 1962; Epstein 2000 [1980]: 19; Michels 1949 [1911]: 21-41; Panebianco 1988:103, 268; Sartori 1976: 18, 36; Slez and Martin 2007: 65; Weber 1946 [1919]: 102) to the study of parties conceive of these organizations as epiphenomenal -- as an after effect of a process of class or state formation imagined taking place in a vacuum. A party-centered framework has critiqued these approaches for overlooking the active role of parties in the construction of states or the creation of social divisions themselves (Desai 2001; Huntington 1968: xix, 11; Lenin 1987 [1902]: 73-74, 96; De Leon, Desai, Tugal 2009, 2015; Ware 1996: 184-213). This critique seeks to establish the centrality of the party as an agent. Parties can have a key role, for example, in articulating and constituting identities and collectivities that then act politically (De Leon et al. 2009: 194). Yet, this model assumes the party as already in existence and capable of mobilizing sectors of society. In the absence of a theory of party formation, the notion of 'articulation' runs the risk of lapsing into a voluntarist or circular account of party agency.

My aim is to develop an approach that places party agency at the center of an understanding of mass party formation, but that relates this agency to structural contexts. Put differently, I offer an analysis of the structural conditions for party agency. Synthetizing Gramsci and Moore to understand mass party formation yields a two-pronged hypothesis: party formation requires the absorption of a civil society, which in turn is facilitated where erosion of 'pre'-capitalist agrarian structures is present.

The present chapter establishes a relationship between agrarian property patterns and mass party formation in Mexico, along three dimensions: electoral mobilization, organizational absorption, and party strategy (that is, how actors themselves made sense of the connection). The goal is to illustrate the connection between erosion of communal property forms and 'hegemonic incorporation.' If, on the one hand, hegemony as a political organizational arrangement can be contrasted to authoritarian dictatorship, it can also be thought of in opposition to what I here call alliances.

Hegemonic incorporation refers to a permanent arrangement of interest negotiation and representation in which a sector of the population advances claims from within a party structure: according to party rules and traditions and, ultimately, prioritizing the interests of party leadership. Alliance refers to an arrangement of temporary cooperation: social sectors are not *absorbed* into a political project per se, but rather join in as 'partners' willing and able to break away from this partnership as they see fit. These two modes of political activity contrast along two dimensions: First, there is a difference in the sorts of interests negotiated. In a hegemonic relationship, subordinated sectors have programmatic, and mid and long-term interests and demands. In practice this means they will be willing and able to postpone rewards. Alliances pursue narrower patronage claims, and their survival is contingent on relatively immediate fulfillment. Second, these qualitative differences in interests entail different forms of conflict. In a hegemonic relationship, absorbed groups sacrifice their independence to the party; conflict takes place within it but not against it. In an alliance, groups maintain their capacity to break away and engage in anti-systemic (anti- party system) contestation. In short, hegemony entails the institutionalization of the capacity for party leadership to articulate their particularistic interests as universal ones (as those of the subordinated sectors) (Gramsci 1971: 182); alliances are momentary coalitions of particularistic interests. The first relationship offers a stable structure of interest aggregation and is therefore conductive to mass party formation, while the second is inherently unstable and complicates mass party formation.

The PRI made its official appearance in 1946 -- supplanting two predecessors (the PNR and the PRM) dating back to 1929. The PNR and the PRM can be thought of as stages in the formation of the PRI as a mass party. Indeed, scholars have long emphasized three mass party features as characteristic of the PRI: its quasi-corporatist structure (Collier and Collier 1991; Cordova 1974; Gonzales Casanova 1970, 1981; Hodges and Gandy 2002; Middlebrook 1995; Story 1986), its patronage and clientelistic machinery (Bruhn 1997; Centeno 1994; Greene 2007; Magaloni 2006), and it being the result of a compromise between conflicting forces (Di Tella 2005: 21; Garrido 1991; Hamilton 1982; Huntington 1968; Medina 1994; Paz 1967). Despite the huge scholarly attention the PRI has received, the bulk of these efforts are aimed at explaining how the party maintained power once it was consolidated. Paralleling the limitations of party-centered approaches, the reasons why the party was able to consolidate in the first place remain severely understudied – party formation has been swept under the analytical rug as an "exogenous factor" (Magaloni 2006:4) to the understanding of the PRI's tenure.

At the same time, recent historiography has pointed out that the party's seemingly absolute control during its 71-year stay in power is mostly a retrospective myth (Aviña 2014; Fallaw 2001; Gilbert and Nugent 1994; Gillingham and Smith 2014; Padilla 2008; Rubin 1997; Salinas 2014; Smith 2009). If the party was not born ready-made in the aftermath of the revolutionary upheaval of the early 20th century, were there regional dimensions to its successful formation and if so, *why did the PRI emerge as a mass party – why did it achieve incorporation -- in some regions but not others?*

The backbone of the party was the peasantry, which had a higher likelihood of voting for the PRI and consistently higher voting turnout than other groups (Ames 1970; Brandenburg 1956; Klesner 1993; Reyna and Weinert 1977). While urban workers' unions attached to the party were also important in the formative years of the party (Collier and Collier 1991; Middlebrook 1995), through this period (1929-1946) the peasantry constituted the vast majority of the country's population (reaching close to 70% in 1950). The strength of the peasant sector within the party in the initial phases is clear when considering that over half of the delegates in the first PRI convention were agrarian representatives (Garrido 1991). During the 1960s, a third of national congressmen hailed from peasant union activity (Smith 2014). Understanding the PRI's emergence as a mass party must focus on explaining peasant incorporation.

EROSION

The efforts to build the PRI and incorporate the peasantry took place on an uneven terrain. In the following section I identify regional differences in the relative erosion and cohesiveness of 'traditional' peasant villages. The terms "erosion" and "cohesion" here are meant as a short-hand for the absence or permanence of "pre-"capitalist land tenure structures: communal landholding coupled with traditional politico-organizational arrangements (Moore 1967; Paige 1975; Scott 1976). In the subsequent section, I will show how erosion mattered for the emergence of the PRI as a mass party.

The Spanish rule (1519-1821) had allowed the existence of large estates while at the same time tolerating communal property (Florescano 1986: 109); in fact, state strategies for preserving rural stability were largely based on the existence of the self-governing landholding village, and Spanish courts often came down on the side of village landholding rather than individual landholding (Van Young 2006: 295). More extensive land privatization in Mexico began during the Benito Juarez presidency in the mid-1800s when he instituted a series of liberal reforms that affected both the property of the Catholic Church and village lands held collectively (Tutino 2007: 234). The liberal ideologues of the Juarez government set out to foster the emergence of individual small property owners -- a project that achieved limited pockets of success (ibid). The Diaz dictatorship (1876-1911) that preceded the revolutionary outbreak, on the other hand, developed new ways to speed communal expropriation and transfer vast amounts of land into a few private hands (Servin, Reina, and Tutino 2007:7; Kouri 2004). Land became increasingly concentrated in market-oriented haciendas with labor-intensive arrangements (Wilkie and Hammond 1998).

In 1810, 40% of arable lands in the center and south of the country (where the peasantry was concentrated) were held communally (Warman 1980:16-17). By 1910, at the outset of the revolution, this number was down to 5%, and 91% of peasants had no property rights (ibid). More than half of the national territory was under hacienda ownership (Vazques 2004: 26). The traditional village was decimated. The most violent

uprisings took place not necessarily in the most destitute regions, but precisely where land had only recently been privatized (Tutino 1986: 34-35).

Three basic categories of land tenure existed prior to land reform process put in place by the post-revolutionary government in Mexico: sole owned-and-worked small plots, haciendas with either peons living inside the estate or under sharecropping arrangements, and communally owned land. While individual small plots concentrated in the north of the country, the two latter forms of tenure were more common in the center and south of the country (Tutino 1986: 233, 298, 313). Peasants in communally owned land were often struggling against expansionist landowners; occasionally work in the family plot was complemented with work in the neighboring haciendas (Womack 1969: 6, 61).

Land reform instituted a system of collective ownership known as the "ejido" – however, this did little to reinvigorate the eroded village. When land reform was instituted, reversing the process of land grabbing, possessors of land grants could decide whether to work the land collectively or as individual parcels. According to the 1950 Agrarian Census, 96% of the ejido hectares were worked as individual parcels (Direccion General de Estadistica 1950). So, although land was technically owned collectively, it was mostly worked individually. Collective labor was associated with subsistence non-commercial farming, despite some exceptions -- the opposite of individually worked parcels, where production had a stronger commercial orientation (Walsh 1984: 79). Individual parcels were often worked by paid journeymen, and illegally sold or rented out (Tai 1974: 246). The predominance of individual parcels signals the decline of non-capitalist labor arrangements and the gradual disappearance of the notion of the "commons." The possibility of individually worked parcels even under conditions of collective ownership allowed for the weakening of traditional forms of village government, one of its central roles having been the coordination of production. Land reform governmental agencies promoted concepts of capitalist efficiency, and were organized to orient production towards the market (via credits loans, subsidized machinery, creating incentives for production cooperatives, etcetera). General erosion is also evident in the number of "restituciones" versus "dotaciones:" When grant petitioners had proof that land had been held collectively in the past, the government granted a "restitution" of their land; if petitioners could not provide property titles but could show that land was *needed*, a "dotacion" was granted. According to the Agrarian Reform Institute, close to 97% percent of land grants were dotaciones (Archivo General Agrario 1999). This means, partly, that only 2.5% of those townships requesting land had an organizational body that could preserve and transmit centuries old land titles from generation to generation. In most regions, post-revolutionary land reform served to intensify an ongoing process of erosion.

Regional Variation in Erosion and Cohesion

Regional variation can be identified even if in general terms the traditional peasant village was eroded in Mexico. To do so I constructed an indicator of erosion

that synthetizes the following variables: lands privatized 1850-1909[12], rural townships created after 1930[13], lands worked collectively in 1948[14], and the percentage of family members over fifteen years of age working ejido lands without a salary in 1948[15]. Since land reform expanded collective ownership, looking simply at property numbers obscures the issue of village cohesion. Each variable is meant to touch on an aspect of cohesion. *Land privatized by 1909* refers to instances legally recognized by the Porfirista government; it is likely that privatization was more extensive but the government tolerated illegal land grabbing that did not go into the books. The more *rural townships created post-1930*, the more eroded is the state: dwellers in new rural townships were often migrating from another part of the state or even the country, or were people who could no longer count on an ancestral family plot. Looking at *land worked collectively* is important because, as mentioned above, after land reform, a large portion of the land was owned collectively for legal purposes, but was rarely worked communally. The indicator of *family member labor* is meant to get at the permanence of traditional labor exchange systems. *The most eroded states would be the ones where the most land had been privatized by 1909, the more new rural townships were created post-1930, the less land was worked collectively, and less family work without salary was present. The most cohesive would be the ones where the least land had been privatized, less new rural townships were created, more land was worked collectively, and more work was done by family members without a salary.*

       Figure 1 (see below) represents an indicator of erosion based on an overall tally of whether each state fell above or below average on each of the variables, following the logic of composite indicators (Bandura 2006; Spector 1992)[16]. Figure 1 represents a

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[12] Data adapted from Wilkie and Hammond (1998).

[13] Data adapted from Archivo General Agrario (2000)

[14] Data adapted from Censo Ejidal Agricola y Ganadero (Direccion General de Estadistica 1950).

[15] Ibid.

[16] First, each state was coded in binary form, depending on whether it fell below or above average on each of the variables (below average land privatization = 0; below average new townships= 0; above average collective work = 0; above average family work = 0, and vice-versa: above average land privatization = 1; above average new townships= 1; below average collective work = 1; below average family work = 1.) (states that scored exactly on the average were coded .5). Then, I tallied the overall sums (see tables 1-5 in appendix); for example, a state got a "4" if it had above average numbers on each of the four variables, "3" if it scored above average in three of the variables, etcetera. The states that scored "3.5" or more were categorized as "eroded;" the states that scored ".5" or less were categorized as "cohesive;" the states that scored either a "1," "2" or "3" were categorized as "average." Note: When standard deviation was above the mean, I used the median instead.

sample of seventeen states[17] that were the most overwhelmingly agrarian in the country in the period studied: the rural population was above the national average of 68%. These states constitute about half of the country's thirty-one states and shared similar bureaucratic structures (Hamilton 1982; Medina 2006) and identical electoral rules (male suffrage until 1953 and universal suffrage thereafter). Hence, this case selection offers controls for causal variables posited as central in representational and state-modernization arguments about party emergence. Figure 1 shows the regional patterns of cohesion: the Gulf states were the most eroded, while the Central Pacific states were the most cohesive. Based on these patterns, my hypothesis would predict that Michoacan, Morelos, and Guerrero are areas where the PRI had difficulty incorporating the peasantry, while Tabasco and Veracruz were areas of strong incorporation.

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[17] The states considered are the following: Chiapas, Durango, Guerrero, Hidalgo, Mexico, Michoacan, Morelos, Oaxaca, Puebla, Queretaro, Quintana Roo, San Luis Potosi, Sinaloa, Tabasco, Tlaxcala, Veracruz, and Zacatecas.

Fig. 1 EROSION IN PEASANT STATES
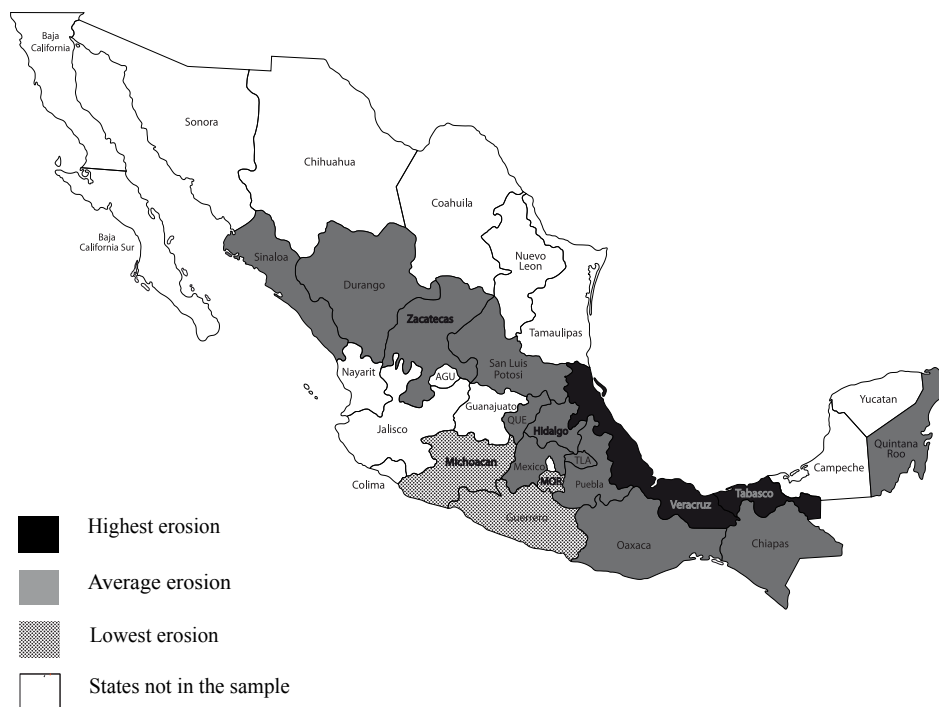
Sources: Adapted from Archivo General Agrario (2000), Direccion General de Estadistica (1950), Wilkie and Hammond (1998).

The destruction of the traditional peasant village in Mexico had been ongoing for almost a century prior to the end of the revolution. Land reform did not remedy this deterioration – in a way it re-enforced this by allowing individually worked parcels. Yet, regional variation was identifiable at least up to the middle of the twentieth century. In the following section I will show how this variation in terms of erosion corresponded to variation in party formation.

HEGEMONY AND ALLIANCES

Although the PRI eventually achieved a strong presence through out the country, regional bastions of strength and weakness existed. As I show below, these differences

play out in terms of effective electoral mobilization as well as in broader forms of political activity, namely the level of which the party was able to absorb unions and peasant organizations. In relation to the peasantry, this variation is better categorized as "hegemonic incorporation" and "alliances." In the first, peasant sectors are brought into organizations that are then linked to the party. This arrangement offers a vehicle for interest negotiation that is at least somewhat effective, but that also sacrifices independence. The interests negotiated might take the form of more protracted programmatic agenda; hence postponing immediate rewards for mid-term or long-term goals. The structure of interest aggregation is conductive to party incorporation. Conflict within the party becomes likelier than conflict against it. On the other hand, alliances offer temporary and often tenuous support. The relationship between party and peasantry can be broken off if the latter feels its interests, often of a more immediate nature, are no longer being met. Therefore, there is an increased likelihood of anti-systemic conflict. Alliances offer unstable grounds for party formation.

The 1946 Elections

The 1946 presidential elections provide a glimpse of what the party had accomplished during its period of emergence. Electoral data should not be taken as a measure of individual *support* for the party (as in a liberal democratic model). Results should be interpreted as a rough measure of the party's effectiveness to put its political machine in operation and strike deals with local leaders. The PRI cared about winning elections, and doing so by as big a margin as possible (Furtak 1969; Magaloni 2006; Pacheco 1988; Reyna 1974). Seeking a "carro completo" ("the entire cart" -- winning all elections at the local, state, and national levels), and "acarreo" ("hauling" -- transporting people to polling stations or rallies), were part of the common parlance in the political culture of the time. The party placed importance as well on candidates having – in the terminology of the period -- "arraigo popular" (literally "rootedness" or "settlement" within or amidst the people). "Arraigo" was not just a buzz word thrown around in campaign propaganda; in the numerous profiles of aspiring candidates for local level posts drafted by government informants for internal consumption found in the national archives, government observers reporting to the Department of State routinely praise a primary candidate as possessing "authentic *arraigo* within the peasantry" or warn against an aspiring candidate with no arraigo being pushed by regional higher ups, like a state governor.

Although the party achieved a strong national presence by the mid-1950s, the 1929-1946 period was tumultuous and highly contested (Fallaw 2001; Knight 1994; Padilla 2008; Rubin 1997; Rus 1994). The range of pro-PRI vote in the 1946 elections suggests that the party's ability to mobilize voters (or even, for that matter, rig the vote)

was uneven: while the PRI won in all states, the victories range from garnering 57% to 95% of the vote. Similarly, the turnout varied between 14% and 42%[18].

There were clear regional dimensions to the relative electoral strength and weakness of the party. Figure 2 (see below) synthetizes the overall voting results and turnout rates for the seventeen states in the sample[19][20]. Based on the indicator of cohesion presented above, I expected the PRI to show weakness in Michoacan, Morelos, and Guerrero, and show strength in Veracruz and Tabasco. As fig. 2 shows, my expectations are consistent in the case of Michoacan, Morelos, Veracruz and Tabasco, while Guerrero shows only average levels of mobilization. That is, Veracruz and Tabasco, the states with highest levels of erosion by this measure, are also the areas where the PRI was electorally stronger in the period studied. Vice-versa, Michoacan and Morelos, states with the highest levels of cohesion, presented the lowest levels of strength for the PRI. These results are consistent with regional trends in other periods. Pacheco (1986: 74) found that in the 1961-1985 period, the median pro-PRI vote in federal congress races was above average in Tabasco and Veracruz, and considerably below average in Morelos and Michoacan[21]. Two other states in figure 2, Hidalgo and Quintana Roo[22], also show PRI strength[23] – while these two states are not classified as

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[18] No official voter roll numbers are available for this period. I calculated these percentages based on the total number of votes by state divided by the number of males above age fifteen. No data for males above age eighteen is available – but given that age distribution is similar through out the country, this does not pose a problem for calculating percentages. Females were not allowed to vote until 1953.

[19] Data adapted from Ramirez (1977) and Direccion General de Estadistica (1950c).

[20] I coded states into four categories of mobilizational strength (see Table 6 in Appendix): 3=over one standard deviation above the mean; 2=within one standard deviation above the mean; 1=within one standard deviation below the mean; 0=under one standard deviation below the mean. None of the states scored a "6;" when tallying both pro-PRI vote *and* turnout. The highest scoring states (which scored a "5") fell into the category "strong mobilization;" states scoring "0" fell into "weak mobilization." States with mixed results (for example, above average pro-PRI vote but below average turnout) fell into "average mobilization."

[21] Guerrero presented above average strength.

[22] It should be noted that in 1950, Quintana Roo had an unusually small population, which can potentially explain why mobilization had a different effect there. Its population of 26,967 was by far the lowest in the sample, being ten times smaller than that of the state with the second-to-smallest population.

[23] Consistent with Pacheco's (ibid) findings.

most eroded, they do show an average level of erosion. *Yet, none of the highly eroded states show low support for the PRI; and vice versa, none of the states showing strong support for the PRI had a highly cohesive peasantry.*

Fig. 2 ELECTORAL MOBILIZATION IN PEASANT STATES
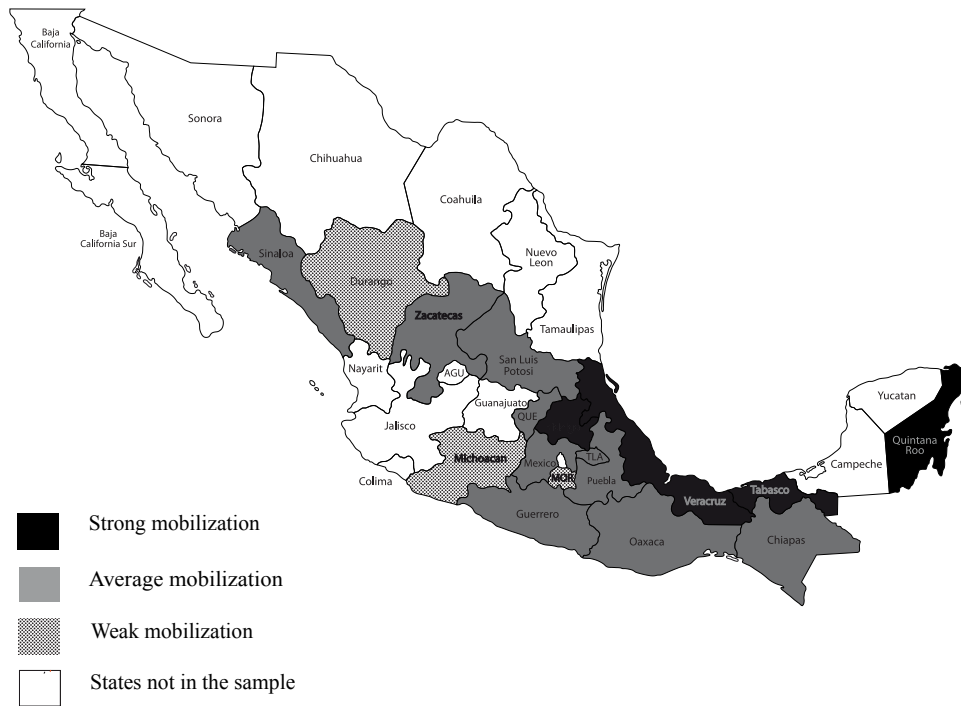
Sources:Adapted from Ramirez (1977) and Direccion General de Estadistica (1950c).

Michoacan, Morelos, Veracruz and Tabasco – the states at opposite sides of the spectrum -- share important characteristics, starting with the fact that these were places with a particularly high agrarian population, averaging a peasant population of over 75%, with very similar levels of population density (see Table 1). Tabasco and Morelos, on opposite ends of the spectrum of cohesion, had similar percentage of indigenous populations (8% and 6% respectively, according to the 1950 Census, see Table 2). Veracruz, a very eroded state, actually has the highest percentage of indigenous

speaking peoples in the states considered [24]. Morelos and Tabasco were both significantly tied to sugar production (Aurrecoechea 1993; Warman 1980). Important regional strong men – "caciques" – connected to the party where a fixture in each state, particularly Michoacan (Lazaro Cardenas), Tabasco (Garrido Canabal) and Veracruz (Adalberto Tejeda). And in fact, the amount of land redistributed by 1940 (after the big push of the Cardenas' government) was considerably higher in Michoacan and Morelos than it was Veracruz (where my argument would predict the PRI to be stronger).

Table 1. Source: Censo General 1950.

	% of population in towns with <2,500 inhabitants in 1950
Michoacan	**68%**
Morelos	**58%**
Tabasco	**78%**
Veracruz	**66%**

Table 2. Source: Censo General 1950.

	%indigenous language speakers in 1950
Michoacan	**5%**
Morelos	**6%**
Tabasco	**8%**
Veracruz	**15%**

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[24] In any case, it is in fact inaccurate to associate indian communities with 'cohesion.' As Kouri (2004) has shown, indian elites were direct brokers of land privatization projects.

Figures 3 and 4 explore the relationship between erosion and electoral results in greater detail. For ease of comparison, all of these measures have been converted into standardized z-scores. Figure 3 represents the bivariate relationship between erosion and 1946 electoral results. This correlation has a coefficient of .6, suggesting the centrality of erosion in understanding the level of mobilizational strength that the party had achieved at the moment it takes it final form.

Fig. 3 ELECTORAL RESULTS IN 1946 AS A FUNCTION OF EROSION
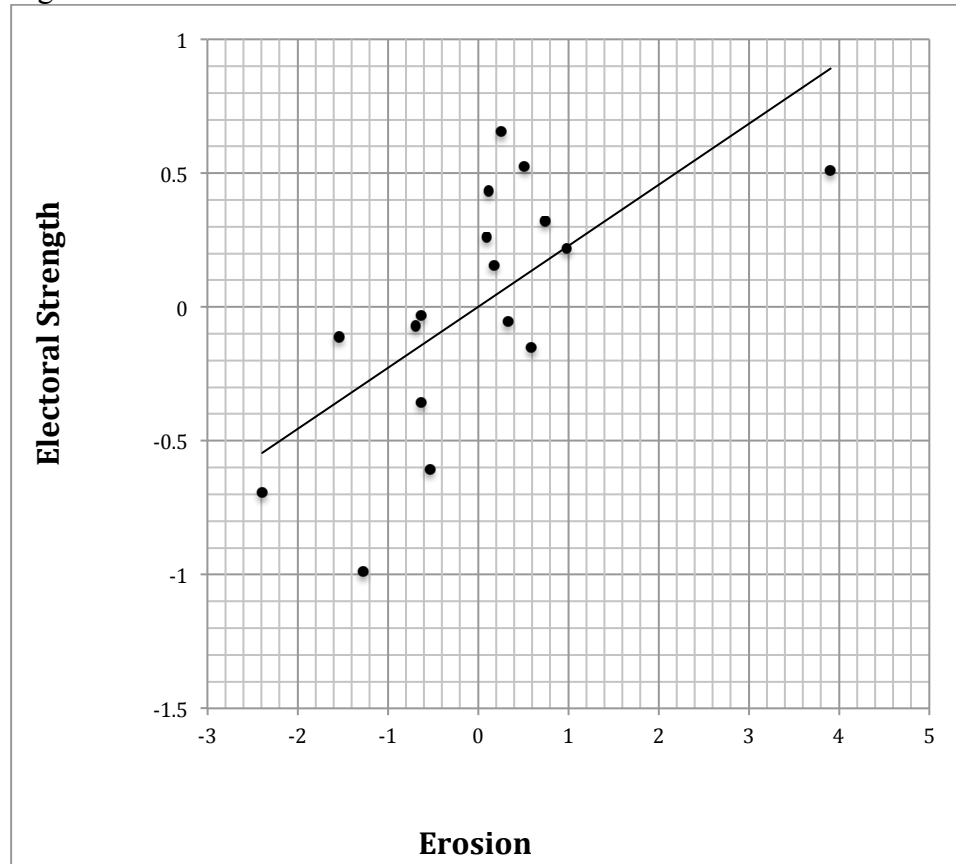
Returning to the question of representational approaches, it is important to point out that peasantry levels within the sampled states have little effect on electoral mobilization: Figure 4 below presents the bivariate relationship between peasantry levels and electoral results in highly agrarian states, which has a correlation coefficient of .2. As the plot shows, the effect of peasant concentration on mobilizational strength is marginal.

Fig. 4 PRI's ELECTORAL STRENGHT IN 1946 IN STATES WITH A CONCENTRATION OF PEASANTS, AS A FUNCTION OF THE PERCENTAGE OF RURAL POPULATION IN EACH STATE.
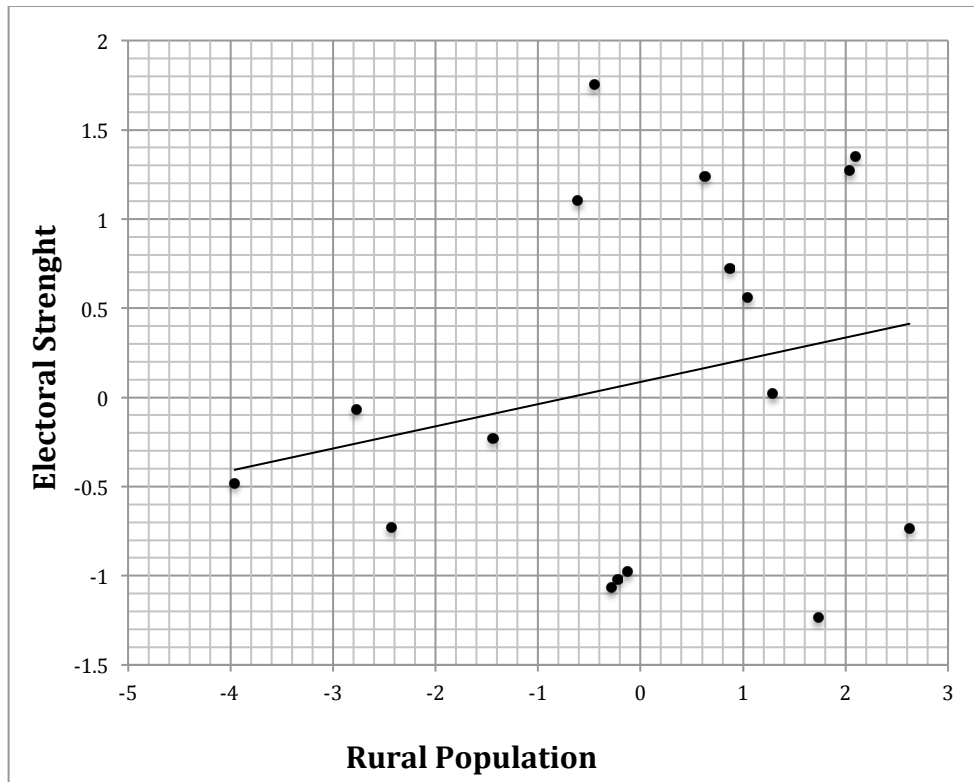
The PRI ran as such for the first time in 1946. The presidential elections of that year are important for the purpose of this chapter because they serve as a gauge of what the party had accomplished during the formative period that began in the end of the 1920s. As evidenced in the preceding discussion there were clear regional dimensions to the relative electoral strength and weakness of the party: the Gulf region – the most eroded in the country – was the area where the PRI concentrated its mobilizational capacity, while the Central-Pacific area – the most cohesive in the country – remained a considerably difficult place for the party.

Elections On The Ground In Cohesive States: Morelos and Michoacan

To further explore the relationship between erosion and political organization, it is important to give a sense of how electoral mobilization looked on the ground. Consider

the case of Morelos, a particularly cohesive state. The tenuous nature of the alliance between peasantry and party is quite explicit in the following excerpt from a 1935 government informant's report to the State Department on the party's *internal* elections to select a candidate for the upcoming gubernatorial race. The informant describes an incident during election day in Cuautla, Morelos:

> After 7am, several buses with peasant contingents started arriving, coming from towns near Cuautla, brought by orders of [the candidates] Mendoza, Heredia, and Abundez; I saw how Heredia's [staffers] would house them in house no. 9 of Escolta street, locking them inside; later on [the peasants] started leaving, at the same time arguing that they were not pigs to be locked up like that (AGN DGIPS box 68).

The type of logistics involved in busing in people from different townships to go to the polls suggests that a relationship existed between party agents and peasant leaders, and that in broad terms peasants did offer support – but it was feeble. In fact, many informants' reports contend that people were being bused in from other places (from outside a given municipality or even the state), suggesting that even this form of coordination was impossible in the area.

With no consensus around any one primary candidate, the race had become conflictive; the elections had to be monitored by federal troops. Particularly troubling was the municipality of Jojutla; as the informant reported: "it should be warned, that this is considered one of the most difficult municipalities when it comes to electoral issues, due to its inhabitants' proneness to uprisings (AGN DGIPS box 164)." Interestingly, the available 1940 agrarian census data, suggests that Jojutla was particularly 'cohesive.' For example, out of its nine ejidos, four reported no sale whatsoever of their products, signaling little connection to market oriented production (only fifteen other ejidos in the state – out of a total of 200 – reported a similar situation). This insularity and self sufficiency is also evident when looking at the amount of communally owned machinery and implements: the average worth of communal machinery by ejidos at the state-wide level was around $2,800 pesos, while ejidatarios in Jojutla alone owned an estimated $13,000 pesos worth of communal machinery.

Party-linked organizations in the state, seemed incapable of establishing a close link to from their base. Consider for example an informant from Morelos who in 1938 reported that while the party's candidate for state governor was supported by the League of Agrarian Communities in the state, "the majority of members of that league did not heed the instructions of their leaders, and hence the [candidate] only received 6,600 votes (AGN DGIPS box 171)." Another report from the same year gives a sense of the gap between base and organizational leadership: "the performance of the current leaders in the [party-linked] league, according to the opinion of most ejidatarios who are members of it, is that nothing has been done for the peasantry since leaders have…imposed municipal presidents that don't have the support of the majority of the

ejidatarios and [have bypassed] candidates with majority support also members of the league (ibid)." An earlier report contended that "[the] official candidate…completely lacks any political force…he is actually hated, first because he is considered an imposition, and secondly, because he is unknown (ibid)." Cohesive regions posed a problem for party incorporation, creating a disjuncture between leadership and base that often resulted in *imposition* of party interests (since interest alignment was not an option).

As tough as elections were for the party in mid-1930s Morelos, some evidence suggests that setting up elections in this state had been a more serious problem before. A 1924 newspaper report (sent to the Department of State by a government agent) contended that "authorities had ordered the poor police men to install the polling stations [and] and forcefully bring out the town's dwellers, whose abstention was causing the failure of local political authorities (AGN DGIPS box 162)." In the article a peasant leader denounces "outside politicians who call themselves agraristas" and criticizes "agrarismo politico" –the intermingling of the agrarista movement in party and electoral squabbles. Instead of "agrarismo politico" -- this person is quoted as saying – "the people of Morelos want an agrarismo without pillaging the peasants who want to work the land without the intervention of leaders." The lackluster participation in electoral politics and the contempt for *agrarista* politicos signals not an outright rejection but a uneasy reception of the notion that agrarismo (which will be discussed in detail below) can and should be translated into party politics.

By the late 1930s the party's capacity for electoral mobilization had improved slightly, but the support that had been garnered from peasants appears still too highly conditional and far from the institutionalization of strength achieved in other places. It is telling that the organizational reach of the party in the region discussed remained spotty up through the end of the 1930s. According to government informants, at least until 1938 few major agrarian centers in Michoacan had permanently stationed party agents. As a bewildered informant laments in a report: "in Uruapan…there is yet to be organized any sort of committee of the [Party] and no orders have been given to do so by the State's committee that does exist in the capital of the State (AGN DGIPS box 60)." And, reports from Michoacan also signal a tension within existing peasant organizations and their putative constituents. As an informant reported from the municipality of Zitacuaro in the mid-1930s: "I received information that even though all organized peasants belong to the same [party-affiliated] agrarian league in the state, the upcoming election has accentuated their political differences (AGN DGIPS box 51)." In other words, the party was far from establishing a relationship of discipline or a forestallment of immediate interests in favor of the party line.

Elections On the Ground in Eroded States: Veracruz

Morelos and Michoacan, cohesive states, presented obstacles for electoral mobilization. Compare the scenario described above with that in Veracruz. Government informants just like the ones reporting from Morelos and Michoacan, presented a very

different image of the mid-1930s local elections. For the most part, reports about the mood surrounding the 1935 electoral process and election day in Veracruz contrast those described above: "the election took place in perfect calm and was even somewhat boring (AGN DGIPS box 171);" "none of the polling stations reported disagreements or complaint (ibid)." In Veracruz, for starters, every municipality seemed to have a party committee by 1935: a report informs that rallies for the party's candidate were organized by the local committee in each and every municipality (AGN DGIPS box 66). A description of one of these rallies in Soledad del Doblado is illustrative of the confidence in public displays of strength:

> At the head [of the march] goes the committee's president, carrying a great tricolor flag with a PNR symbol in the center. He is followed by the municipal employees and people by foot, and at the end, the horsemen…this rally took place in absolute order. It was composed of 600 or 700 men on foot and 93 on horse, I counted each one – according to people who know these individuals perfectly well, the former are peasants, servants in the ranches and workers for the cattle-ranchers in the nearby estates. As for the horsemen, that's formed of municipal police agents (many carrying guns), some rural policemen, and small cattle-ranchers from the region (AGN DGIPS box 171).

The march offers a striking visual representation of hegemonic incorporation: the peasantry leading a cross-sectorial coalition that cuts across classes but does so under the banner of the party's flag, held not by peasant leaders but by party officials -- all followed by the coercive arm of the state.

The government informant's accounts of elections in Veracruz present an organization in the *process* of becoming a mass party. This is evident, for example, in the party's victory against Adalberto Tejeda's bid for power. Tejeda was a regional strongman who used to be a member of the party. His authority in the state was significant (and, in a sense, this is precisely why he broke off, calculating he had amassed enough support to become an independent contender). His defeat shows, on the one hand, that the work of party activists was bearing fruit (and signals a more general phenomenon: the gradual submission of individual caudillos to the party's rule). As a 1934 report indicates: "The district of Misantla, a place that in previous periods had been the strongest bastion of Tejedismo and where all of the peasants were armed, in the present, his supporters do not reach 30, since almost all of them have joined the P.N.R. (AGN DGIPS box 66)." Another report from the same period states: "[In the El Modelo sugar mill at Villa Cardel] supposedly where the biggest contingents of Tejedistas existed…in the present that situation has disappeared. On the other hand, the efficient and active labor of rapprochement with the workers that the P.N.R.'s municipal committee has undertaken is noticeable, getting the majority to join its ranks (ibid)." Yet another informant reports: "In the district of Huatusco [even though there is a group of Tejedistas numbering in the dozens], the majority is addicted to the P.N.R.

(ibid)." The optimistic reports coming in from Veracruz are interesting because the power of the party was not taken as a given, but understood as the result of activism – in this sense, they offer a still image of a mass party being built. In this sense, consider as well an example from a 1935 informant's report that states:

> I became aware from the day I arrived here in Jalapa [in Veracruz], that the strong party is the Partido Nacional Revolucionario [PRI's predecessor]. I went to two assemblies and had a chance to advise them to act with equanimity and prudence; in turn, I saw the other party, the Frente Unico, being composed of one committee with few people, maybe because theirs is a recently formed group (AGN DGIPS box 171).

The informant draws a distinction between these parties based on their mobilizing capacity, but remains surprised by the apparently newfound strength of the PNR -- the advise of prudence signaling the emergence of a power still in the process of finding balance. The "addiction" reported by the preceding informant was of course an overstatement. But the enthusiasm regarding the party's advances in the region is undeniable – especially when compared to the reports coming from Morelos discussed above.

In contrast to Morelos and Michoacan, where party candidates were perceived as impositions from higher-ups, the following example from a 1937 report of candidates for federal congress is striking: "seeing that Mr. Pena was not accepted by peasant leaders, since he was a rich man…he was politically discarded, and in his place, they set Jose Vera Arroyo, a local peasant. The meeting to approve this candidacy was promoted by the municipal authorities who sent invitations to districts' presidents several days in advance and these in turn invited ejido leaders (ibid)." Returning to a previous discussion, the PRI in Veracruz was able to field candidates with more "arraigo popular" (social rootedness) precisely because it had channels through which to tap these potential candidates. While remaining cautious of overstating a political pluralism apparently present here, the statements above are a clear departure from the sense of disconnect between leadership and base discussed in Morelos and Michoacan. Having established differences in electoral mobilization, let me move now on to a second realm of political activity, that of organizational absorption

Peasant Organizational Absorption

The PRI's construction and absorption of existing peasant unions was key to its development as a mass organization. As will be illustrated further below, agrarian unions had a broad set of functions: not only were they essential in the logistics of voter turnout, they also provided ideological orientation, coopted emerging grass-root leadership, and channeled dissent into manageable forms.

The Confederacion Nacional Campesina (CNC), created in 1938 under the auspices of president Lazaro Cardenas and party leadership, was meant as an umbrella organization that would consolidate a myriad of existing peasant associations (Garrido 1991). Landless field laborer's unions, cooperatives, regional *ejidatario* leagues, etcetera, were linked to the party through the CNC. In most of the country, radical anti-state peasant organizations were gradually destroyed (mostly through state-sanctioned violence) (Collier and Collier 1991). The narrowing landscape of organizations coupled with occasional actual material concessions, pushed even more peasant groups to join the CNC -- although these organizations did not lose their formal autonomy and local-level power, the effect was to funnel the peasantry to support the prerogatives of the party (Gonzalez 1968)[25]. Indeed, while in 1938, instructions for government informants signaled a certain unease about the CNC's autonomy, asking them to "observe the CNC's activities, making an effort to get a sense of the true feelings of this group in all of what concerns the next electoral campaign, as well as the preference that their leaders might have for a particular candidate;" by 1965, article 47, section VII, of the CNC's statutes stipulated as obligations of every organization under the *Confederacion* to "remain vigilant that its members fulfill their duties as citizens, in accordance with the ideas of the Revolution, and affiliate to the party that the *Confederacion Nacional Campesina* belongs to." Article 127 concluded decisively: "the Confederacion Nacional Campesina is a member of the Partido Revolucionario Institucional."

In addition to these organizations' capacities for electoral mobilization, they were crucial for a variety of reasons. As will be illustrated in the following sections, the cooptation of popular grass-roots leaders through these organizations was of critical importance -- by bringing in peasant leaders into the party, the PRI beheaded future bursts of rebellion and reframed any victories achieved by autonomous organizing as concessions coming from the party. These organizations also provided ideological orientation, reshaping the parochial or regionalist viewpoints of its members to fit into a discourse of a national *campesino* class. Ultimately, these organizations absorbed conflict, by allowing for disputes over resource allocation or between leaders to be handled at a localized level as opposed to confronting the party or the state directly. In the same line, they aggregated and shaped localized, sometimes conflicting, demands, that would otherwise overwhelm institutions, and narrowed the space of legitimate interlocutors.

According to the argument developed in this paper, I expect that areas of PRI electoral strength (Veracruz and Tabasco) are also areas with a particularly strong organizational presence, while regions in which the party struggled were areas of

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[25] The chronology of incorporation is particularly complex. There are parallel processes taking place: on the one hand, peasant organizations already formed independently of the party are gradually joining its ranks; on the other hand, the party is actively creating peasant organizations. The CNC exemplifies this complexity since it is both meant as an umbrella organization (channeling existing unions into one confederation), while also having the power to create new organizations.

relatively weak organizational presence. This given the role organizations had in acting as a mediating mechanism between party and mass. Figure 5 (see below) shows the regions where membership in peasant organizations was highest by 1946 (weighted by the rural population in each state)[26]. The organizations comprise all unions and leagues, as well as production and credit cooperatives[27]. Although the available data offers limited possibilities for a nuanced analysis (landless peasant unions and small-holders leagues are lumped together, for example), it captures the broad landscape of agrarian civil society.

Figure 5 (also Table A7 in appendix) shows that *the area of the Gulf coast is the area of highest peasant organizational membership, while the central states are the ones with the lowest membership rates*. The data presented here is consistent with the indicator of electoral mobilization presented above. While Veracruz and Tabasco were part of the region with the highest membership ratio, states like Morelos and Michoacan were part of the region with the lowest membership ratio. The PRI was stronger where peasant organizations were stronger. Correspondingly, the regional variation in peasant membership is similar to the regional differences in cohesion/erosion presented in Figure 1, in a way consistent with the general hypothesis of this paper. In summary, the data suggests that party mobilization was strongest in places with higher levels of erosion and higher presence of peasant organizations.

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[26] Data adapted from Direccion General de Estadistica (1950b). Unfortunately this data is not disaggregated by state, it is presented by region. The weight is an average of the rural population in each state in a region taken from Direccion General de Estadistica (1950c).

[27] Not to be confused with ejidos worked under the collective labor system, which, as opposed to cooperatives, were mostly devoted to subsistence farming.

FIG. 5 MEMBERSHIP LEVELS IN PEASANT ORGANIZATIONS IN 1948

Sources: Direccion General de Estadistica (1950b).

The Role of Organizations

The presence of a civil societal realm benefited mass party consolidation in a variety of ways. As indicated above, it provided a vehicle for electoral mobilization. Indeed, an early 1940s report from Michoacan, a state with relatively low levels of membership stated that "it is noteworthy that *only the peasants who are members of a*

league took active part in the local elections, presenting their candidates and supporting them in the polls (AGN DGIPS box 51, emphasis mine)." That is, organizational presence was central to party electoral mobilization.

Yet, unions and organizations played an even broader role in mass party emergence than that of electoral middlemen. The nationalist revolutionary rhetoric made its way to peasants through these organizations. By the late 1930s all sorts of organizations were being formed under the auspices of the party: the "Juventud Agrarista" promoted sports teams in the ejidos for "the moral and spiritual improvement of the peasantry (*El Nacional* 1937a);" the "Social Action Committee" of the party gave "orientation to form Ligas Femeninas de Accion Social" to "elevate the moral condition of the peasant woman, of her children and men, following the ideological actions of the president of the Republic (*El Nacional* 1937b)." In place were so-called "cultural tours" and "missions" where students of urban backgrounds and party activists linked up with agrarian unionists and rural schoolteachers to disseminate propaganda to far reaching places. A report of the activities of one of these cultural missions in Morelos in 1937 included "informing [peasants] about the socialist school system…the formation of sports committees, information about alcoholism, diet, and the advantages of cooperatives (AGN PRES LC doc. 533.3/1)." This mission carried a movie projector, radio transmitter, and 5000 copies of "cultural propaganda:" "revolutionary children's stories, facts and opinions about sexual education, peasant unification, the development of labor law in Mexico, and how a union is organized and its functioning (ibid)." The participation of rural school teachers, and the almost casual mix of overtly political content with, say, health and sports, might have been important in casting the linkage between the party and the individual with an aura of neutrality. The report (ibid) continues:

> [W]e put together a sports club and gave them a football, which served as encouragement and also [as a way] to reorganize [them]; we noticed the existing divisions there between political factions, so to our speeches we added the urgent necessity to erase those antagonisms that push peoples to a backward state, and to march in one sole front towards progress in all respects.

The participants in the example above did not necessarily experience initial party incorporation as a formal political relationship; indeed, political reorganization, however timidly introduced here, was powerful in that it was presented as a sort of obvious step linked to general 'modernization' – 'one sole front towards progress.'

Organizations were also important in developing and coopting grass roots leaders. According to a 1932 plan, cultural missions were also to form what was called "rural organization agents," who in addition to learning agronomy, the handling of field machinery, and public speaking, would take courses in "social-economic orientation (knowledge about the economic and social problems faced by the peasantry)," and "propaganda methods." As the plan conceived it:

The agent is the social leader who breaks the inertia of the peasant mass, he is the enthusiastic man who devoid of self-interest, in the spirit of service, is knowledgeable of his peers and of their needs…and feels perfectly identified with and loyal to the interests and ideals of life in the countryside….the peasant origin of the candidates [to become agents] must be confirmed, they must be selected carefully and systematically, and must be given an adequate technical and social education…the leader that has undergone this, will in turn select, as part of his work of penetration in strategic places and for concrete goals, other secondary leaders amongst the peasants who are the most progressive and with the most vision (AGN PRES).

This plan for a preemptive absorption of incipient leaders illustrated here was important also in so far as it trained peasants in an activism compatible with party organization.

The intervention of peasant unions and other organizations did not work to preclude conflict but served to absorb and administer it. Many reports indicate that the CNC could intercede on behalf of an ejido in a land dispute in, say, a local court as it had the connections and know-how for maneuvering the bureaucracy, the legal language, and the paperwork. Unions and organizations tied to the party funneled political activity in a *manageable* format. This process had a role in limiting the space of legitimate activism to the confines of the party.

Politics in the Absence of Civil Society: Agrarismo in Cohesive Morelos and Michoacan

Having illustrated the regional patterns in associational strength, it is important to give a sense of how associational absorption looked on the ground and why it was critical for party formation. How does political organizing look in the absence of a civil societal realm of unions and organizations? Take for example the trajectory of the agrarista movement in Michoacan and Morelos – states with higher levels of cohesion. The reformist impulse of, at least, certain sectors of the Mexican state and party was aided by a grass-roots agrarian movement that pushed for land redistribution from below (Silva Herzog 1964). The different manifestations of this complex movement are known as "agrarismo." *Agraristas* used a range of tactics that exemplify the ambivalence of an "institutional revolutionary" party in the making: along with rogue land invasions which the state would then be pushed to legitimize, they simultaneously aided the consolidation of the party which coopted its leaders and rhetoric, and reframed agrarista triumphs as those of the party (Pena and Morales 1989:9-10). Agrarismo was present in all of the states studied here, but as I will illustrate, it looked very different in each region.

The regional differences seen at the level of electoral mobilization are also clear when looking at the broader landscape of political activity. The agrarista movement was a grass roots movement pushing for land rights, it was present in all of the states studied here, but as I will illustrate, it looked very different in each region. These differences

are indicative as well of the variation in party formation and correspond to the patterns of erosion and cohesion outlined above.

Agrarismo in Michoacan developed as a fragmented movement, "a myriad of village and subregional assemblages that for the most part acted independently of one another" (Boyer 2003: 114). Attempts at agrarista unification at the state level failed (ibid). In Michoacan, agrarismo was sporadic, and in many places, peasants resented some of its main tenets at the national level: they often rejected the anti-Catholic educational programs and new productive techniques promoted by agrarista activists as more efficient (Butler 2007: 52). In Morelos, agrarismo was also disjointed and very independent from the state (Knight 1986: 186). Indeed, significant peasant guerrilla uprisings were a fixture in Morelos all through the period of formation of the PRI (the Jaramillistas in the 1940s where arguably the most sustained [Padilla 2008]).

Northern Michoacan was a hotbed for the peasant anti-government uprising known as the Cristiada during the late 1920s and 1930s. This uprising has often been characterized as a counter-revolutionary reaction given its overtly clerical discourse (the revolutionary government was emphatically anti-Catholic). But scholars agree that the Cristero fighters were, to an important degree, peasant villagers who interpreted land reform as a state incursion into their way of life (Meyer 1994; Purnell 1999) and shared some essential concerns with radical left-wing agraristas, such as the issue of local autonomy (Meyer 1994: 375-386). Explanations for the regional dimension of the uprising have looked at the institutional strength of the Catholic Church in the area, and local histories of agrarian conflict, but ultimately, the sustained character of the tension has been linked to the survival of a significant amount of traditional communities with their own political and economic institutions (Purnell 1999: 22).

A report from a military general in charge of pacifying areas of Morelos in 1934 points to the particularity of the region:

> [G]iven the knowledge and experience I have acquired about rebel groups in the area and of the inhabitants' idiosyncrasies and ideology, my opinion is this: that it is proverbial that in the state of Morelos -- at least in the mountainous region -- people lack culture, and due to an itch for adventure, atavistic in them, they join any disorderly group, no matter what flag they follow…the rebels [propose] a 'corrected' plan of Ayala[28] in Anenecuilco as a way to justify their vandalism, taking advantage of any present-day excuse, such as clamoring for freedom of religion and the abolition of the socialist school system[29] (AGN PRES LC EM doc. D/041).

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[28] The Plan de Ayala was the political program of Emiliano Zapata during the revolutionary upheaval in the early 20th century: the essence of the Plan was the return of village fields lost during land grabs.

[29] The "socialist school system" – essentially an anti-clerical stance -- was a major part of president Lazaro Cardenas' political program.

What is striking here is the general's inability to understand why the rebellion is taking place: the insularity of the region forces the outside observer to explain a rejection of state (and party) as an 'atavistic itch for adventure proverbial in the area.' Agrarismo in cohesive regions was highly localized, a disjointed assemblage of groups acting independently of one another, and very anti-statist.

Civil Societal Politics: Agrarismo in Veracruz

Compare the character of agrarismo in Michoacan and Morelos with that of Veracruz. In many ways, the project for a nation-wide confederation of agrarian unions and leagues that would be materialized in the late 30s and prove crucial for party formation – as will be clear in the following chapter -- began in Veracruz (Falcon 1979; Salamini 1971). There the Liga Nacional Campesina Ursulo Galvan (LNC) began efforts in 1924 towards state-wide unification; the LNC gradually gained influence outside Veracruz as well. The Urusulo Galvan League had played a key role in the guerrilla disarmament process that took place during the 1930s in Veracruz. They had a very different relationship to the state than what we saw in cohesive regions. As an informant's report from a state-wide agrarian convention in 1933 stated:

> They [LNC leaders] showed me letters from the country's president, saying that they were going to cooperate with the federal army in disarming guerrillas in the state of Veracruz…that they recognized that the country has entered in a new phase of peace and that the federal forces are the only ones in charge of keeping safety (ibid).

Interestingly enough, the peasant leaders were not entirely in agreement with these actions, but still decided to cooperate:

> [Peasant leaders said that] federal forces are insufficient for the countryside…this is why they [the peasants] approached the president, to express their point of view, and they were told that only those guerrillas that had committed crimes were going to be disarmed, and they were surprised that all guerrillas were disarmed just a few days later…but they accepted the orders without protest and [said] that whenever the government needs them, in case of an uprising, they will be there bearing arms as they have done before (AGN DGIPS box 65).

The decision here to contain their dissent – perhaps as a calculation of possible gains in the future – differs from the experiences in Michoacan and Morelos discussed above.

Initially, the League possessed absolute independence from the party (Falcon 1979: 674), but over the course of a decade it grew increasingly intertwined with it: fielding candidates, mobilizing turnout, getting at least some demands satisfied -- progressives who liked to get things done to put in the language of contemporary politics. Its organizational structure was to be the model if not direct precedent of the peasant unions attached to the PRI.

The relationship between the League and the party is illustrated by the following report from a party agent in 1939:

> I visited the league's president…he told me that [their last meeting] had been a success in regards to the issues discussed, none of which was about local or general politics and that [staffers from different internal party candidates] approached them and all were told that they could be present in the meeting and take notes and see that they were only going to deal with issues affecting workers and not any political issues (AGN DGIPS box 65).

Here we see a recasting of the role of the Ursulo Galvan League as an apolitical organization, with a narrow interest-based focus; this redrawing of the parameters of political activity provided the PRI with an almost ready-made organizational infrastructure waiting for their political direction. In Veracruz we see the beginning stages of an organizational structure that allows for mass party formation. Two forms of relationship with the party are suggested in the preceding discussion, in Veracruz one of hegemonic incorporation – where peasant sectors are, gradually, formalizing arrangements of interest-negotiation, simultaneously facilitating mass party formation – and in Morelos and Michoacan one of alliances, which offer fragile grounds for party organization. These two modes of political activity correspond to the structure of agrarian property. Having illustrated how erosion and associational absorption were related, let us move now to the third sphere of politics where we see a relationship between erosion and party organization. How did actors make sense of it? How did erosion figure into party strategy?

Erosion and Party Strategy

The dissolution of village identity and solidarity, of traditional authority – underpinned by the destruction of communal property – permitted a reorganization of peasants on the basis of a national program. Arguably, the very appearance of the *campesino* as an interest group (Boyer 2003) is linked to the decline of traditional village structure. This condition enabled unions and organizations to articulate the demands of this sector in a way compatible with the party and the revolutionary state more broadly.

There is some evidence that the CNC was aware of the political benefits of erosion: a government informant on the ground in indigenous Yaqui territory in Sonora in 1948, reported about the CNC's attempt to incorporate sixteen ejidos not yet under its control. These ejidos were worked collectively, but as the report pointed out: "not all ejidatarios agree in working the land collectively and there are those whom incited by elements from the CNC wish to get an individual parcel (AGN PRES MA)." This created two conflicting camps within the ejidatarios, the "colectivistas" and the "individualistas." The "individualistas" were supported by the CNC. As another informant reported: "about two or three weeks ago, CNC delegates came to agitate the peasants promising that under the individualist or parcel system, they could obtain 20 hectares for each ejidatario (ibid)." The CNC's push for individual parceling as a political strategy is telling – CNC delegates were seasoned activists who had identified the effect of erosion on political organization.

The system of individual parcels had been a political issue beforehand. A report from the Liga Agrarias'1933 state-wide convention in Veracruz, shows an internal split precisely over the "problema parcelario [the parcel problem] (AGN DGIPS box 65)." One side considered it "detrimental for the organized peasant…since that system comes to disintegrate cooperativism" – the other side, a faction linked to the party refuted the point and explained to the assembly that parceling land "lead to the peasant's economic liberation" and advised peasants to ignore "the speeches of false leaders who say otherwise, as they are following personalistic goals, and creating difficulties for the Federal government." Here again we see a party-linked organization (in this case a faction within a broader group) pushing for erosion. The passage suggests also that this push was interpreted by opponents as having consequences for the political organization of the peasantry.

Similarly the people in charge of the cultural missions described above were aware of the political-organizational obstacles posed by cohesive communities, albeit through the Euro-centric developmentalist prejudice of the times, these communities were thought of as "indian."[30] A 1932 plan for an extension of these missions laments their limitations in reach and reports the creation of a "Indian Research Committee" that would aim to "get a deep knowledge of the characteristics of their social organisms: family, tribe, community, and to make use of the systems of government that might predominate in certain [peoples] that live at the margins of the country's political life." Interestingly enough, this committee was to be set up in Michoacan, a particularly cohesive region, as illustrated above. The report presents an analysis, however limited, of the obstacles to political organization posed by a cohesive community.

CONCLUSION

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[30] It is in fact inaccurate to associate indian communities with 'cohesion.' As Kouri (2004) has shown, indian elites were direct brokers of land privatization projects.

In regions where the PRI was effectively a mass party, it managed to incorporate sectors in a strict sense: it established mechanisms of interests aggregation and negotiation via formal organizational structures explicitly linked to the party. In these areas, organizations were active *not just* during electoral season, giving the party a fundamental extra-parliamentary function. In areas where the party did not achieve mass party status, organizations functioned sporadically and radically disconnected from their base. I contend that these differences can be described as instances of hegemonic incorporation and alliances. In this chapter, I showed how these differences correspond to patterns in agrarian property holding.

I illustrated the connection between erosion and party formation along three dimensions of political activity: 1) electoral mobilization: showing that cohesive regions where places where the PRI struggled electorally and vice-versa, eroded regions where places of PRI strength. I described how electoral mobilization looked on the ground in the two regions: in cohesive states like Morelos, the PRI had difficulty mobilizing turn-out, and dealt with outright contempt for their politicians, while an eroded state like Veracruz saw successful mobilization at the polls, and visible gains obtained through party activism. 2) I showed how erosion corresponded to levels organizational absorption. The agrarista movement cohesive Morelos and Michoacan developed in a fragmented form, rejecting some of the tenets of the movement at a national level -- significant guerrilla uprisings were a fixture there. In eroded regions, such as Veracruz, agrarismo takes the form of the LNC -- the model of future collaboration with party and state -- a group that plays a key role in the disarmament process in the region, and that narrows down its political activity to that of an interest group versus a political organization. Finally, 3) I pointed to evidence that party operatives were aware of the political organizational benefit of erosion.

The approach to party formation presented here differs from previous understandings because it does not conceive of political organization as an act of representation of pre-existing constituencies or after-effects of state development – the states sampled had an overwhelming peasant population and identical bureaucratic edifices and yet there is still significant variation in party formation. Instead of thinking of the party as epiphenomenal, it takes party agency to articulate constituencies (via absorption) as crucial in the explanation, but it also identifies structural openings and constraints to this agency. Erosion facilitates party formation. The reason why it does so is because it facilitates the emergence and construction of an inter-mediate associational sphere that can be captured, incorporated – absorbed -- by the nascent party, securing its status as a mass party.

CHAPTER 3
THE FAILURE OF PARTY FORMATION IN BOLIVIA

INTRODUCTION

In 1952, the *Movimiento Nacional Revolucionario* (MNR) came to power in Bolivia, after a haphazard electoral process controlled by an entrenched oligarchical bloc of hacienda owners and mining industry barons, resulted in conflict that escalated into urban violence and significant uprisings in the countryside. The MNR's leadership was composed mostly of an urban middle class reformist intelligentsia, but the strong presence of the peasantry in the revolutionary coalition veered their program in a more radical direction. The MNR government instituted universal suffrage, nationalized the mining industry, and undertook significant land reform (redistributing almost a third of the land). By the 1960 elections, however, the MNR had split into three competing factions. In 1964, a military coup – with much of peasants' support –succeeded in deposing the party (Albo 2008; Gordillo 2000).

Why did Bolivia's *Movimiento Nacional Revolucionario* fail in building a mass party? The MNR came to the helm leading a revolution not unlike the Mexican one; indeed, the party explicitly sought to reproduce the experience of the Mexican PRI (Malloy and Gamarra 1988: 208) -- this, in the context of expanding political rights, with a vast peasant population available for mobilization. The guiding claim of this dissertation is that the collapse of 'pre'-capitalist tenure arrangements is a precondition for party formation. The dissolution of village identity and solidarity, of traditional authority – underpinned by the destruction of communal property – permits a reorganization of peasants in a way compatible with the party-form. The collapse of pre-capitalist tenure structure enables the emergence of a civil societal realm: an intermediate organizational sphere of peasant unions and agrarian leagues. This realm offers a stable structure of interest aggregation and is therefore conductive to mass party formation. The very appearance of the *peasant* as an interest group can be linked to the decline of traditional village structure. This condition enables the articulation of demands in a way compatible with the party and the revolutionary state more broadly.

The objective of this chapter is to illustrate how the relative success of the MNR in certain areas of Bolivia, and its absolute failure in others, relates to the weakness or strength of communal forms. Like in Mexico, the party was stronger where capitalist dislocation was deeper. The internal comparison in Mexico, emphasized the relationship between erosion and party organization, presenting two poles of a spectrum between hegemonic incorporation and alliances. Here, I focus on the effect of cohesion, highlighting two poles as well: between (unstable) alliances and total breakdown.

In Bolivia, the strength of communal property forms enabled *alliances* between party and peasantry but prevented their incorporation *under* a party project, instead joining in as 'partners' – willing and able to break away from this partnership as they saw fit. As this chapter illustrates, in the Cochabamba valley, the region with less communal property holding, the MNR developed close links to existing and emerging peasant unions. These unions articulated demands compatible with party organization: more programmatic in nature, and premised on the logic of state developmental capitalism. This feature facilitated party mobilization allowing it to broker between state and unions and craft a national agenda. Yet, these unions offered support to the party but never accepted full incorporation. In the Altiplano region, where most collectively held land was concentrated, the MNR failed in establishing a firm relationship with peasant leadership. The demands and political tactics of the peasants in this region were incompatible with stable party organization: they were of a highly localized nature, and premised on the logic of subsistence agriculture. This feature complicated party mobilization, few unions formed in the area, preventing the MNR from brokering mid- and long-term interests between peasants and state, and making the party irrelevant for accessing the sporadic goods trickling down from the state directly. Ultimately, absent a structure of interest aggregation, the party entirely lost the support the Altiplano peasants had given it during the insurrectionary phase.

TENURE ARRANGEMENTS

In the 1950s, Bolivia was primarily an agrarian country, with over 70% of its population devoted to working the land. Four main tenure arrangements where present in the immediate pre-revolutionary period: small individual landholding, capitalist haciendas employing wage labor, feudal haciendas with live-in 'colonos', and communal property holdings (Carter 1964:9; Dunkerley 1985: 20; Kohl 1970: 42). According to the 1950 *Censo Agricola Agropecuario*, close to a third of the land was partitioned in small holdings operated by the owner; 38% of land was under an hacienda system; and close to a quarter (22%) of the land nation-wide was held communally. Communal villages (known as "ayllus") accounted for 26% of the total agricultural lands in the country.

As tables 3-5 illustrate, the main differences in land tenure are found between two regions [31]: The area know as the valleys (comprising the departments of Cochabamba, Chuquisaca, and Tarija) concentrated small free-holdings and haciendas. Although the 1950 *Censo,* does not differentiate between types of haciendas, it is of note that large estates held 57% of the land in the valleys; *only 3% of the land was held communally*. The pattern is reversed in the Altiplano, the region (comprising the departments of La Paz, Oruro, and Potosi), which concentrated collectively held villages as well as feudal estates. In the Altiplano, *53% of the land was owned collectively* and 34% was under hacienda ownership. Out of the 3779 *ayllus* in the country, 3267 were located in the Altiplano; almost 90% of the *ayllu* land in the country was to be found in this region (Ministerio de Asuntos Campesinos [MAC] 1978:96).

Table 3. Percentage of hectares by tenure arrangement in 1950.

	Altiplano	Valleys
Small holding	7%	28%
Haciendas (both with colonos and jornaleros)	**34%**	**57%**
Renters	5%	9%
Communal holdings	**53%**	**3%**
Other	1%	3%

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[31] The census divides the country in three geographical regions: the "valles," the "altiplano," and the "llanos." This last area comprised of the departments of Santa Cruz, Beni and Pando is not dealt with here. Beni, and Pando where extremely under populated and Santa Cruz had very few haciendas (9% of its territory) or communal villages (1%).

Table 4. Land tenure in the Valleys region.

Valley Department	% of hacienda hectares	% of communally held hectares
Chuquisaca	57.5%	2.8%
Cochabamba	80%	2.3%
Tarija	9.5%	4.2%

Table 5. Land tenure in the Altiplano region.

Altiplano Department	% of hacienda hectares	% of communally held hectares
La Paz	44.6%	40.55%
Oruro	12.3%	86%
Potosi	28.2%	46.7%

As mentioned above, the 1950 census does not provide information on a critical element: the relative distribution of different hacienda types. However, case studies commissioned by the Agrarian Reform Agency at the time strongly suggest that the capitalist hacienda system was more prevalent in the Valleys compared to the Altiplano, and vice-versa, the feudal hacienda was more of a fixture of the Altiplano than the Valleys.

The commercial character of agriculture in Cochabamba is emphasized for example, in one case study of six sub-regions in the area. It contends that the Cochabamba valley "is in a way atypical…[high] land prices, [and] production per hectare…have no parallel in Bolivia (Servicio Nacional de Reforma Agraria [SNRA] 1970:25)." As the report explains, even before the 1950s, the area "had a tendency however small to step out of the traditional agricultural system, specially in what concerns the intensification of crops and the abandonment of the *colonato* system (ibid: 26)." And concludes that "the orientation to the market in this area is greater than other places where studies have been undertaken, even if there are still some remnants of traditional subsistence agriculture (ibid: 89-90)." The report explains as well that in the

Cochabamba region, the only product that was obtained by barter in this period was salt, brought by Potosi peasants and that "practically 100% of transactions undertaken by the Cochabamban peasants are done with cash (SNRA 1970:90)."

Addressing the issue of wage-labor in the region, the report concludes that "the labor market in the region has few obstacles, people get hired at market price and the journeyman [*jornalero*] has freedom to seek work with few exceptions (ibid)." Indeed, another report, this one to the Ministry of Peasant Affairs, states that the highest agricultural wages paid in Bolivia correspond to the Cochabamba valley, where "they pay a day's wage of $.8 without the right to any other benefit, not even overnight stay or job stability (Ministerio de Asuntos Campesinos 1978: 72)." In the Altiplano however, a day's wage did not exceed $.25, "in some cases with the additional benefit of food or ration of coca leaf or alcohol (ibid)." In other words, the hacienda system in the Cochabamba valley seemed to take the form of a capitalist enterprise, dependent on increasingly proletarianized wage-labor and commercially oriented production.

In the Altiplano, the hacienda system took a feudal form – with resident *colonos*. The *colonato* system exploited subordinates by imposing work requisites in the hacendado's lands in exchange for the right to work a smaller plot for self-subsistence. As the Ministry's report notes about the pre-revolutionary period, "there is evidence that entire haciendas with colonos were bought and sold (ibid: 4)." A case study of the region describes the hacienda of Camajhuacha in northern Altiplano: "the work regime is that of the colonato, that is, it is compulsory for the 50 heads of family, to the benefit of the hacendado, without any compensation other than the right to use a parcel (ibid: 59)." Another case study concludes that in the particular Altiplano sub-region that is the focus of the report "no salaries were ever paid…the only existing labor regime was the colonato (ibid: 64)." Judging by the available evidence, the character of the hacienda prevalent in the region seems diametrically different from that in Cochabamba. In the Altiplano, the hacienda system restricted formally free labor and depended mostly on direct extra-economic exploitation of the 'resident' peasants.

Some differences in terms of cultural practices are also revealing about the commercial logic predominant in the Cochabamba valley. A report of the Agrarian Reform Agency for example, found that "conspicuous ceremonial consumption," described as the buying of status within the community by paying and organizing celebrations and obtaining religious indulgencies, was on the decline in the area, constituting about 2.6% of families average expenses (MAC 1978: 101). "In the Cochabamba valley, we found that in general magical-religious practices did not have the importance accorded to them in other areas of Bolivia," the report states, a characteristic that, "reinforces the hypothesis that agriculture in the area can be considered as transitioning from traditional to market oriented (MAC 1978:99)."

A noteworthy point in this discussion of regional differences is the fact that the levels of indigenous populations – mostly Quechua and Aymara – did not vary greatly between the Altiplano and Cochabamba. As table 6 illustrates, 75% of the population in Cochabamba itself was indigenous, compared to 67% in La Paz or 77% in Potosi. As a region, the Valleys had an average of 62% of people of indigenous origin (Tarija is an

anomaly with 40% -- excluding it, the region has an average of 73%), while the Altiplano had a higher average of 75%. Whatever differences existed between the regions, ethno-racial demographics are not one of them.

Table 6. Indigenous population

Percentage of Indigenous Population by Department, 1950
Chuquisaca 71%
La Paz 67%
Cochabamba 75%
Oruro 81%
Potosi 77%
Tarija 40%
Santa Cruz 17%
Beni 12%
Pando 1.6%

The relevance of the colonato hacienda system for the discussion to follow resides in the fact that the arrangement, compared to the capitalist hacienda, actually permitted the traditional peasant village to preserve much of its social and political organization. A staple of the system was an absentee landowner (the gentry relocated to urban centers). "Jilakatas" (also known as "mallku" or "caciques") – traditional authority figures – were in fact recruited by landowners as administrators and middlemen. The system of government corresponding to communal property holding was in this sense preserved and somewhat reinforced, albeit distorted to accommodate the *patron*'s interests.

The drafters of the agrarian reform law noted the importance of the phenomena described above, and thought it advantageous to their program. As they explained: "since the hacienda community is characterized for having constituted a production unit, with a habitual discipline for collective labor…the hacienda community had the possibility of preserving the cooperative system of production observed in the hacienda, but now to the benefit of the community itself (*El Diario* 1953b)." If the landed classes

had been able to benefit from the existence of cohesive communities, the MNR in power could count on them as well. Later I will show how the village preserved under the repressive husk of the *colonato* system would prove detrimental to party organizing.

The traditional political-organizational arrangements were evidently even stronger in communally held villages, mostly devoted to production for self-consumption and local markets. As a case study (ISM 1969:262) of the San Miguel village in the Altiplano described it:

> The authorities in contrast to those in towns, are not merely functionaries sent from on high to a community wherein they have but superficial relations with the people and a highly restricted formal authority over them. The authorities of the canton are all communards [*comunarios*]. Most communards will at some time be in authority, all take part in the election of canton authorities, and all are responsive to the authority of these officials. There are no policemen or soldiers in San Miguel. No official carries a gun.

The argument I am pursuing in this chapter is that party formation is connected to tenure arrangements. This section showed the regional variation in property forms and their corresponding socio-political dimensions. The relative strength of the communal village in the Altiplano, both as a free-holding village or subsumed in a *colonato*, and its relative weakness in the valleys, specially Cochabamba, manifested in the rise of capitalist haciendas dependent on wage-labor, would have significant consequences for subsequent party organization. As the next section will illustrate, the main factor facilitating or complicating party formation was the emergence of a realm of peasant unions and agrarian leagues. Tenure mattered then, due to its effect on the party's capacity to construct, shape, and absorbed this civil societal realm.

THE MNR AND THE SINDICATOS

From the moment the MNR took power, it sought to create peasant unions and incorporate existing ones. The aim was to use "*sindicatos*" – as they were widely known – as a connecting vector to the peasant masses and as an instrument to undertake a subsequent land reform process. Incorporating *sindicatos* was crucial for the transformation of MNR into a veritable mass party. And, as was revealed during the 1964 peasant-supported military coup that put an end to the party's stay in power, its very survival as an organization depended on their capacity to become such a party.

These unions did have a key role in the land redistribution program implemented by the MNR in power. As a report from the National Agrarian Reform Agency states: "the process of reform is channeled through the sindicato and it is the union leaders who were vested with power in the countryside, sometimes constituting the only formal organization (SNRA 1970:57)." Among other things, *sindicatos* were in charge of

promoting and filing claims for land grants, interceding between peasants and the state. A report from the Ministry of Peasant Affairs explains: "The sindicato is the main impulse behind [land] expropriations. The general procedure undertaken by union centrals and federations in Bolivia consists in disseminating information within the peasants about the new rights secured by agrarian legislation (MAC 1978:47)." And beyond that, in fact, *sindicatos* were given an official category enabling them to participate in judicial processes. As the report continues: "union organizers and regional leaders were frequently the ones arranging for judicial hearings, the secretary general in each sindicato acted like a plaintiff (ibid)." In 1956, unions made voting obligatory, charging fines to those who failed to go to the polls. Maintaining a close relationship to these unions was crucial for the MNR. In the decade it stayed in power, it proactively sought out to incorporate them, obtaining only limited success.

In the following sections I will show that the relative success the MNR did manage to acquire, however fleetingly, follows the same regional dimensions specified above. Party strength was concentrated in the Cochabamba valley, while the Altiplano posed a heavy challenge for party incursion. In the Cochabamba valley the MNR established a functional alliance with existing and emerging sindicatos; this alliance proved crucial in maintaining power as we will see, but was ultimately unstable and eventually broke down. In the Altiplano region, the party struggled to secure a firm foothold – partly because of the absence of sindicatos and the MNR's inability, despite repeated attempts, to foster unionization.

Sindicato Politics in the Cochabamba Valley

The Valleys region was the area in the country where peasant union activity was strongest. A government report contends that "as early as 1953, the campesinos on the more central haciendas organized in sindicatos and this process spread through the provinces." The report from the early 1960s relates that "there are about 150 peasant sindicatos in the region, grouped into 20 subcentrales linked to a single central. Each sindicato has its secretary of agriculture, secretary of justice, of education, and so on (ISM: 188)." A fact that becomes telling in light of this discussion is that the first peasant union in the country was formed precisely in Cochabamba in 1936 (Balderrama 1976). It seems then, that the region was propitious for this sort of organization.

The dislocation provoked by capitalist encroachment in the region could be thought of as an obstacle to organizational building. As a report from the Ministry of Peasant Affairs points out: "the composition of the leaders in formal organizations [in Cochabamba] tends to be heterogeneous, due to the common fact that in these communities a series of rural sub-groups coexist, given an individual's prior position in the land tenure system (renters, journeymen, colonos, etc.) and the type of residence." But the emergence of strong union activity in Cochabamba gives strong support to an underlining claim in this dissertation: that the collapse of pre-capitalist arrangements facilitates a civil societal realm. As the above quote suggests, it is in this context that the

possibility and necessity of articulating different particularistic interests can give way to intermediate organizations.

Building Party-Union Alliances

The initial stages of the MNR's organizing efforts seemed relatively successful in the region. In 1953, for example, it established a semi-formal agreement with a series of unions in which they agreed, in their words, to "collaborate amply in electoral campaigns, offering the maximum support of its members with the purpose of having an effect on the pro MNR vote (*El Diario* 1953c)." Of course, this agreement entailed something in return:

> Once the triumph is obtained, which we think is a sure thing, we ask for your preferential attention on the following points:
> a) The creation of a bank to finance growers and cattle ranchers.
> b) Scholarships for peasant students in all universities in the country and if possible in foreign ones.
> c) Creation of an organ of the press and radio transmission to disseminate the culture of the indigenous race in Bolivia, in the Aymara and Quechua languages (ibid).

The alliance between the MNR and the organized peasantry paid off in a variety of ways. Perhaps the clearest contribution of unions was the buffering of conflict – central to a process of pacification and rechanneling of potentially destabilizing disruptions into institutional waters. Several newspaper articles point to this effect:

> Relations between landowners and peasants are completely cold and the climate of insurrection is growing. In this city [Cochabamba], some days ago, peasants entered Sinforiano Rivas' [union leader] office furious, dragging him out by hitting him, demanding results. Once the nerves had calmed, together with Rivas, they went to the prefectural office and had an interview with the authorities and they asked for their intervention. The prefect talked to them and things calmed off (ibid 1953d)."

Another article (*El Diario* 1953e) reports that Rojas spoke to a trainload of peasants coming from the valley provinces and "expressed that nationalist peasants do not need to brandish axes to show their support to the government." As sporadic events of violence took place in Cochabamba in early 1953, yet another union leader condemned the events: "in my capacity as militant in the party, whose political line repudiates vandalism, the events in Vila and the attitude taken by the peasant comrades, have no legal or rational basis (ibid 1953f)." Or, take the following incident reported in another newspaper article:

> The existence of an indigenous movement closing in on the city was known…knowing this, the Llallagua union, together with an MNR commando, agreed to send out a group to pacify the nerves…the group was not only able to make the peasants desist from their uprising but managed also to arrest the main suspects (ibid 1953g).

The pacification efforts undertake by unions in alliance with the party were literal. Their efforts were aimed at smoothing the edges of political activity as part of their bargain with the party. The deradicalization led by unions is evident in the following newspaper report: "The union informed that after their formation, the district under its jurisdiction is in absolute calm, and that peasants are working the fields in a normal way, which does not mean they have given landowners *any signs of hospitality* (*El Diario 1953*h, my emphasis)." The subdued language –signs of hospitality were probably of no concern for landowners – points to the moderating effect of these organizations.

Returning to the question of peasant demands that opened this section, it is interesting to analyze the scores of formal petitions sent to the Ministry of Agriculture via the MNR. They petitioned, for example, to get funding for a regional congress of peasant federations, or to get the party to "coordinate with the National Office of Agrarian Reform in the designation of judges handling land tenure cases" or to push for an improvement in "the coordination between the state's Council of Agrarian Cooperatives and the members of the co-ops." The party could work to make their demands legible to the state: it helped unions develop a petition for the creation of a network of agrarian technical schools devoted to teaching "new productive techniques." In another instance, for example, the MNR framed a townships need for a bridge as an economic issue: "[without the bridge] every year we see with sadness how our efforts are reduced to nothing, unable to commercialize our products, we are left demoralized."

Indeed, perhaps the central feature of the demands of the Cochabamba peasants was how entirely compatible they were with a state capitalist developmental framework. Early in the MNR government, they petitioned for subsidies for the use of electricity in production. Requesting tools and machinery seemed to be common: "irrigation pumps and machinery to open several water channels to benefit communities," "full set of tractor and tools;" similarly, requests for credit loans from the *Banco Agricola* were recurrent. And some pushed for aid from the Ministry of Agriculture to start exporting goods: "the low price of agricultural products in a country like ours that does not export, indicates a saturation of the internal market, and even though this situation provides a certain stimulus to consumer demand, it actually produces a reduction in future investment in crops." The market-oriented production interests of the Cochabamba peasantry facilitated party mobilization allowing it to broker between state and unions and articulate the peasantry as a class with a national agenda.

Alliance Breakdown

The relationship between the Cochabamba peasantry and the MNR was that of an alliance, *not of incorporation to the party.* Peasant unions stated an explicit support of the MNR government as representing their interests in this particular juncture but rejecting any efforts by party agents to become organic members of the MNR. The peasant militias coming from the Cochabamba valley were crucial in defending the revolutionary government in at least two moments: They fought against the reactionary forces coming from the state of Santa Cruz, where the oligarchy had concentrated under the banner of the *Falange Boliviana*. The militias also clashed against a miners' insurrection that was seriously shaking up the MNR government. But accounts (ABNB WGA) of peasant militias' behavior during the takeover of Santa Cruz that crushed the reactionary uprising, paint a chaotic picture: reports coming from the general in charge (himself not of campesino origin) are filled with complaints about the troops' absolute lack of obedience to his orders in the battlefield:

> Some of us officials had thought it not convenient to go into the city, given that the peasants had a predisposed attitude for confrontation given the previous revolutionary outbreaks… as we entered they started shooting up at the sky, especially with automatic weapons. We asked them to stop, but they did not listen to us…After our first roundabout in the city, the peasant leaders expressed their desire to march around the city yet again (ibid).

While Cochabamba leaders clearly saw the importance of defeating the Santa Cruz uprising, valley peasant militias thought of themselves as separate from the MNR government. As the general reports, a peasant leader warned "Falangistas should be thankful that *this time* we came to Santa Cruz under a military command (my emphasis)." The relationship between party and peasants here is one of temporary cooperation; they are not subsumed under party structure. Indeed, as a party leader concluded after reading the general's report: "it is necessary to achieve one sole political direction in the countryside, because this and other instances show us that the stability of the party is in grave danger." Ultimately, his analysis would prove right: the alliances built between party and peasantry were too tenuous to facilitate mass party formation in the long run.

Peasant leaders from the region occasionally held high-ranking positions in the state's Agrarian Reform Agency, and the Peasant Affairs Office. In fact, one of these leaders, Jose Rojas, rose to become the head of Peasant Affairs for some period in the mid-50s. The story around this appointment is particularly revealing in several respects. Cochabamba's union leadership was heavily competitive. Two parallel federations emerged. Sinforiano Rivas (discussed above) represented a moderate tendency (which coincided with that of the government); Jose Rojas represented a radical wing, calling for direct action in the take over of haciendas and the formation of collective farms. Rojas expressed support for the government's line only after a period of incarceration.

He was rewarded with a position as executive president of Peasant Affairs (while Rivas was named "secretary general") (MAC 1978:25).

The attempted cooptation failed, however. In a show of minor party allegiance, Jose Rojas eventually resigned as head of Peasant Affairs, arguing that he was being blocked from undertaking several projects[32]. Rojas disagreed in particular with subsequent efforts to disarm peasant unions. As he put it in his letter of resignation in 1959: "to disarm the peasant militias that constituted the guaranty of stability for the MNR and the neutralization of army forces…is gravely lamentable." The party had failed in developing loyalty even from top officials with presumably an interest in preserving their position. Rojas was, simply put, a union leader, not a party member. His resignation dealt a blow to the legitimacy of the MNR government in the eyes of various *sindicatos*.

Peasants then were never fully incorporated into the party. Cesar Ayavari, a high ranking official in the Agrarian Reform Agency, recounted that: "Within the MNR itself, the peasants formed their own political vanguards…they sought to self-identify so as not to become the tail end of urban political groups and they strengthened their union organizations as an expression of their class interests (Ayaviri 1972:9)." This change in the balance of the relationship with peasants was in fact typified in the party's own statutes. Whereas article 11 of the 1954 statutes stipulated that "unions depended on [party] cells within each work site," in the 1960 revision, "cells are constituted *within* syndical organizations." By the end of the decade it seems, the party had effectively capitulated to the unions.

However, a letter from the Cochabamba prefect to the Minister of Peasant Affairs foreshadows the issue as early as 1952:

> After I became in charge of the prefecture I became aware that there was an active peasant unionization plan, acting without any connection to the MNR department leaders…the government of the MNR needs the positive political action of the peasant unions, not the simple expansion of the peasant union bases...the organizing and union activity is 90% outside of the immediate control of the MNR...meanwhile, the union federation has become oblivious, voting to deny legal actions or judgments against its leaders whom it will defend by any available means, including mass action…this has created confusion in the peasantry regarding discipline and heeding of the line set forth by the revolution.

In the valleys region, particularly in Cochabamba, in the context of agrarian commercialism and weak communal holdings, peasant unions emerged strongly. The MNR's strategy of building alliances was relatively fruitful here. Unions staved off conflict, routed peasant politics through institutional means, and were central to the

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[32] It is hard to imagine a peasant leader in Mexico resigning from such a position for this reason.

undertaking of land reform. But the party was never able to subsume them under its leadership – the relationship was that of an alliance between partners, willing and able to break away when they saw fit.

Communal Politics in the Altiplano

The features of peasant political activity described above were not present in the Altiplano region. This absence is even more important considering that the Altiplano concentrated the largest amount of peasants. However unstable the alliance between the Cochabamba peasants and the MNR was, it was still better for the party than what was happening in the Altiplano. There, the MNR was able to develop only the most basic contact. Even more importantly, union activity itself was very weak in the Altiplano. One on-the-ground report commissioned by the Ministry of Agriculture in the Altiplano during that time concluded that "practically no free community has adopted the syndicate system" (Carter 1964: 60). This might seem perplexing considering that members of peasant unions as we have seen could field leaders into high-ranking positions, and reach state representatives more readily. Another report contends that in Altiplano communities "formal groups and organizations are few and tend to be unstable. National political parties become active only with elections, but at other times are very nebulous organizations (ISM: 59)." The absence of this intermediate realm of unions and organizations would shape the political action of peasants in ways that would prove crucial in curtailing the MNR's ability to secure a presence in the region.

Failed Attempts

The party – seeing the need to foster union activity – worked to establish *sindicatos* in the region. This top-down approach would prove unsuccessful. The efforts were received with little enthusiasm. The following example from a report to the Agrarian Reform Agency is telling:

> A commission composed of the special *delegates on loan* to the Ministry of Peasant Affair from the peasant federation of La Paz arrived in the Otavi region. They were responsible for the formation of the first groups of sindicatos in the region in April 1, 1953 – four months before the [agrarian] reform. In the case of Ayoma Baja, this hacienda together with its neighbors, were called to a meeting at a central location and the sindicato formed (SNRA 1970: 63, my emphasis).

A commission of outsiders parachuting in could do little to instill party allegiance in the area. As a peasant from the area recounted: "When they organized us, they told us that peasants should believe in President Paz Estenssoro, who was the leader of the revolution and leader of the MNR and that we should all belong to that party (SNRA 1970:64)." The union lasted for only a year.

In an even more desperate case, an Agrarian Reform Agency reports that "the MNR, worried about the situation [lack of union activity], sent miners to introduce a radicalized leadership structure, obtaining success only in a few cases (SNRA 1970a: 45)." Another report details the same event:

> [T]he secretaries of peasant relations in these mining sindicatos, had as their job to inform the peasants about the role of the sindicato and to teach them their rights. Some of these men came to the provincial towns of Potosi and they in turn were able to convert some of the local cholos [indigenous men]. The point is there was a surplus of miners, and they came over to the agrarian sector (SNRA 1970).

The party was attempting to jump-start union activism proactively with little success. On-the-ground reports suggest that the unions that did exist were in name only. Even more interestingly for our purposes, unions in the region often identified an entire township. "Sindicatos" here were essentially a rebranding of existing communal organizations. The traditional hierarchies of local village governments were held more or less intact; 'union' became just another name for the town, not, say, an organization of private citizens voluntarily joining to defend their class interests. In this context, the boundaries between sindicato and village government were blurry. For example, a case study undertaken by the Ministry of Peasant Affairs reported that:

> The union is dividing vacant lots and supervising their transfer and registering them in their own books, instead of registering them in the town government's registry. In Concepcion and Pasto Pata, the union decided to expel members from the community altogether on several occasions (MAC 1978:124).

The *sindicato* in these cases then was not in fact an intermediary organization – it was the local 'state' itself. A letter from one such "sindicatos" in the Altiplano township of Cajiata to MNR leadership is telling in this respect:

> We have unanimously agreed to support the MNR…but we want to ask the powers of state, if within this regime that has liberated us from the slavery we were in, if we can still permit the naming of Jilakatas [traditional authorities]? We believe this designation is from a previous epoch, when we were governed by the oligarchy. Today we think sir, that given the existence of sindicatos and their leaderships, we think those leaderships should substitute what we used to call Jilakatas.

What is striking in the paragraph above is on the one hand the peasant leaders' attempt to accommodate party organization, grasping that the new regime entailed at least a new vocabulary, but ultimately remaining firm on maintaining the underlying organizational structure of their communities.

Here a manual produced by the Peasant Affairs Office in the late 60s is worth quoting in detail. Presented as a "manual that gathers everything that a peasant leader needs to know," it explains:

> Since its origins, sindicalismo has tended to identify with its own community. It has never presented itself as a "union in the community" but rather as "the community's union." The entire community gets organized, and it is obligated to do so…The sindicato is a more modern version of the original community…This identification between sindicato and community has two consequences: first it reflects a strong sense of solidarity. You cannot expect that a member of the community will not belong to the sindicato…But this can lead to misunderstandings if you take the name "peasant union" for a given. *Most of the times, under that name you find a traditional community…The distinctive feature of a union is to be a group organized to pressure for their socio-economic interests. That characteristic is often absent here. One consequence of this is that the sindicato falls for certain traps of traditional organization as is ill equipped for an innovative dynamic.*

While the manual does not specify the traps of traditional organization it refers to, it is telling that what is missing is 'the distinctive feature of a union,' namely its interest-group quality. Another report to the Ministry of Peasant Affairs illustrates a similar point. Conflict within a communal village had prompted the emergence of something called a Junta Vecinal -- "an organization that has a closer resemblance to a campesino sindicato. In addition to a president, a vice president, and a secretary-general, there are secretaries of specific activities, justice sports, public works, agriculture, cattle." They had held a couple of meetings but attendance was spotty. Four months later, there was no sign that the junta was having any impact on the community – "the affairs of the community are the responsibility of the traditional authorities…the junta is mainly distinguished from the traditional authorities in having declared that it favors more and faster action on already recognized community objectives." "The junta is really a redundant organization," the report concluded (ISM 1969: 275-276).

In the Altiplano, compared to the Cochabamba valley, union activity was sparse. When it did take place it was a top-down process, carried out relatively unsuccessfully by outsiders. The socio-political structure underpinned by communal holdings and preserved within the feudal hacienda posed a problem for civil societal emergence. As the head of the National Council of Agrarian Reform put it: "The communities of the Altiplano preserve their traditions and internal administration, but they are closed of, sealed from any new idea affecting their culture (Balderrama 1976: 14)," concluding that "to say that the union system has modified traditional structures is arguable (ibid: 71)."

Politics Without Unions

In Cochabamba we saw the power of unions to institutionalize conflict and pacify an insurgent peasantry. In the absence of unions, Altiplano politics took a very different form. The highland Altiplano departments were the areas where violence was greatest during the revolutionary upheaval (Kohl 1970: 50). Similarly, post-1952 petitions to the Ministry of Peasant Affairs coming from this area, tend to be from frightened landowners, as the following examples illustrate:

> "…we are the object of abuse by part of our communitarian neighbors, whom guided by caudillos, following their semi-savage characteristics, disturb the peaceful possession of property…"

> "…they steal our cattle using their force en masse of over 50 or 100 of them…"

> "…they have ordered the destruction of corn crops and it all has ended with the takeover of my property…"

> "…the peasants that live in the surrounding areas to the highlands of La Paz, in a show of no shame whatsoever, have taken possession of the hillsides, without having undertaken any formal petition to the municipality…"

> "…Our hacienda was looted cruelly, mowed down mercilessly, no attention was paid even to our families…"

A newspaper article reports: "More than 2000 armed peasants looted everything they found, burnt 11 houses that were reduced to ashes, and proceeded to appropriate more than 1000 hectares of land (*El Diario* 1952c)." In the absence of organizations to buffer and counter the radical tactics, direct action became the prevalent mode of political activity.

Similarly, in the absence of unions, the efforts by the party to create rapport with the peasantry directly, failed. As one party operative reported after a meeting with leaders in the area:

> As soon as the meeting began they showed extreme intransigence and they detonated some dynamite nearby with the intent to scare us, and when we tried to act with some energy they closed off the circle wielding machetes.

A report to the Ministry of Agriculture relayed another incident, this time concerning a judge appointed by the MNR:

> After kicking the agrarian judge out of his office, they put him on a donkey and pushed him through the multitude and used the balcony in the main plaza to rail against the national revolution.

Or, more to the point, in response to violent upheaval in a township:

> The Party's commission went there and gave the peasants instructions asking them to calm down, and explained extensively all about the agrarian reform, the educational one, universal suffrage, political reform, and other triumphs for the peasantry. After we left, calm reined for only about two weeks and yet again instances of crime were registered: 40 houses burnt down, 100 llamas and 4 donkeys stolen, 10 people dead.

On one occasion, peasant groups in the area even held-up the country's president at a road block for nearly 7 hours; before letting him go he was robbed of his personal belongings. In the scores of petitions for state resources received by the Ministry of Agriculture or the Peasant Affairs Office and other agrarian commissions, few come from this region. This is not to say that these communities were not in need of resources, or embattled with landowners – they were, but in the absence of a realm of intermediary organizations they evidently made use of very different tactics than those of the Cochabamba peasantry. Without the groundwork undertaken by unions, or their brokering and legitimating of outside interlocutors, the MNR's efforts to create a relationship with the peasant masses directly fell on unfertile, often hostile, grounds.

Perhaps, ultimately, the agrarian radicalness of the Altiplano peasants stemmed from a different logic than that of Cochabambans: the preservation of communal property forms. The demands that emerged from this context could be articulated with party organization only very limitedly. The MNR could intercede every so often, but given the highly localized nature of the demands, could not build the sort of stable mechanism of interest aggregation that would call for party 'representation.'

When Altiplano peasants did seek demands from an entity outside of their communities (party or state), it was in the form of narrow patronage claims, often in kind: a township would petition for *tocuyo* (a type of fabric), or a certain amount of sugar, for example. School materials were a popular request. Sometimes the petitions coming from groups in the area were extremely specific: help rebuilding a house that was burnt down or aid to purchase furniture for example.

In fact, most petitions from the Altiplano sought to break connections with the state (and hence the party). The state was asked to intervene but only to "remove unwanted local authorities," or to "guaranty protection to leaders that have been threatened by landowners." Unlike the Valley unions who formed peasant militias that kept the military in check and staved off a coup, Altiplano peasants wanted militias to "guard their communities at night" in order to prevent the re-entrenchment of the outside. They were against taxes: "taxes on land should be charged only to those who have received it via agrarian reform, not for the communities that have possessed it

since their forefathers." In this sense, there was little by way of a 'positive' program to be pursued with the help of the party. They were embattled with expansionist landowners -- this is why they aided the MNR during the revolution -- and could offer at least tacit support as long as the government kept land-grabbing in check, but the possibilities for articulating this with a national program were scarce.

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Observers at the time were aware of the problems associated with organizing in the Altiplano. "The dilemma confronted by unions is extremely complex and varies according to demographic pressures, the number of young people without land, the alternative jobs available close by, and the traditional values of the community," stated one governmental report (MAC 1978:124). Another report lamented what it saw as characteristics of the region:

> The most important characteristic about Potosi [in the Altiplano] during this period is that – unlike…Cochabamba, and Chuquisaca -- the federation of peasants exercised very little influence over the process of reform. Whereas in these other zones active sindicato members prodded the local sindicatos, began the demands and many times, were the legal plaintiffs or initiators of the suit against the patron, doing everything in their power to influence the decision of agrarian judges, the union centrals of Potosi and the departmental federation only informed the peasants the need to form unions, nothing more (SNRA 1970: 60-61).

A particularly interesting element here is the level of awareness of the organizational problems posed by different agrarian structures. Consider as well the following example, where a party official reflects on the failed role of the Ministry of Agriculture:

> The ministry aims at the incorporation of peasant masses into economical, political, and social life. But the edification of democracy over surviving feudal structures in the countryside can only take place by overcoming the backwardness of the peasants, held in that way by the latifundia governments.

Indeed the party and government fretted the lack of links they had been able to establish with the Altiplano region quite explicitly. A report from a MNR operative to the Minister of Agriculture in 1958 concludes:

> Can we say that the credit system has promoted agricultural development in the most backward sectors such as the Altiplano? Has it responded to the urgent need to commercialize agriculture? With all sincerity, it has not. The credit system is only reaching already commercialized agriculture. *The*

political effect has been that we have scarce contact with the Altiplano (my emphasis).

In the Altiplano region, where unionization was weak, politics took on an extra-institutional, radical edge. Without the intermediary role of the *sindicatos*, the MNR had little chance to secure a hold in the area. The strength of communal property arrangements blocked entirely the possibility of a mass party.

CONCLUSION

A passage from a report by the Ministry of Peasant Affairs, eloquently captures a process I have argued helps explain mass party formation:

As new towns emerge, their social organization and configuration begins to be modified adopting a complexity not found in the communities. These new changes include new formal and informal groups, as well as a sindicato. These groups are, for example, the parents' association, the junta of school aid, helping administer the school, the neighborhood association, football and basketball clubs, women's groups, and of course, the regular authorities: secretary general of the union, school principal, police man, municipal agent overlooking the market, the civil registry office…and various commercial groups, participating in the development of projects for the new town (MAC 1978: 145).

Why does the collapse of communal structure matter? What intervening mechanisms does it facilitate? Erosion of communal property regimes and organization of production changed rural peoples' sense of themselves in relation to their communities, their work, in ways that made it easier for them to ally or participate in unions, leagues, commercial coopts. These unions and organizations – part of a civil societal realm -- were aggregating the demands of this sector in a way compatible with the party and the developmentalist state more broadly. The interests negotiated might take the form of a more protracted programmatic agenda; postponing immediate rewards for mid-term or long-term goals. This condition enabled the party to articulate its interests with them and absorb these groups. This civil societal structure of interest aggregation is conductive to party incorporation. This associational structure could not exist in the context of highly localized interests with no market orientation, where the biggest demand that could be made to the state was its retraction. Erosion of communal property does not automatically lead to the existence of a civil society. It is its condition of possibility. And in so far as it is, it also a condition of possibility for the mass party.

The objective of this chapter was to show how different forms of agrarian land tenure had an effect on party organization in post-revolutionary Bolivia. Would not cohesive communities with established hierarchies be easier to incorporate into a party – especially ones that enthusiastically joined the revolution? Here I showed the

opposite: In the Cochabamba valley, the region with less communal property holding, the MNR developed close links to existing and emerging peasant unions. These unions articulated demands compatible with party organization: these were more programmatic in nature, and premised on the logic of state developmental capitalism. This feature facilitated party mobilization allowing it to broker between state and unions and craft a national agenda. Yet, these unions offered support to the party but never accepted full incorporation. Compared to Mexico, the process of capitalist dislocation was, simply, relatively weaker. In the Bolivian Altiplano, where most collectively held land was concentrated, the MNR failed in establishing a relationship with peasant leadership. The demands and political tactics of the peasants in this region were incompatible with stable party organization: they were of a highly localized nature, and premised on the logic of subsistence agriculture and a narrow patronage system. This feature complicated party mobilization, few unions formed in the area, preventing the MNR from brokering mid- and long-term interests between peasants and state, and making the party irrelevant for accessing the sporadic goods trickling down from the state directly. Ultimately, absent a structure of interest aggregation, the party entirely lost the support the Altiplano peasants had given it during the insurrectionary phase.

CHAPTER 4
CONCLUSION

Marx and Weber saw parties as the key political organization of 'modernity.' The centrality of parties to their overall theories has often been overlooked. They made sense of them in the context of late 19th century Europe entered a stage of capitalist expansion and development of a modern bureaucratic state (Mudge and Chen 2014). The approaches to explaining party emergence that have developed since have been marked by this point of origin. A representational approach has seen parties as reflections of pre-existing latent social divisions, mainly class (Engels [1895]; Marx 1978 [1848], similarly Kirchheimer 1966; Lipset and Rokkan 1967; Neuman 1956:403; *more recently* Katz and Mair 1995). A state-modernization approach has developed Weber's view that changes in the institutional framework of the state introduce incentives for party building (Michels 1949 [1911]: 21-41; Ostrogroski 1964 [1902]: 1; Weber 1946 [1919]: 102; a similar take on this point is found later in Duverger 1962; Sartori 1976: 18, 36; *more recently* Slez and Martin 2007: 65). These approaches cannot account for variation between cases like Mexico's PRI and Bolivia's MNR with similar state arrangements and similar sectors available for mobilization. Yet, there remains a general dearth of sociological understanding of party formation.

The PRI and the MNR had similar starting points, but very different outcomes. Interestingly the literature on the subject suffers from a lack of comparative analysis, to the point that both the success of the PRI and the failure of the MNR have been explained in identical terms. That is, the Mexican party's integrative capacity – bringing together a myriad of disparate and contradictory groups under one organizational umbrella -- is the common explanation for its ascendance and consolidation. At the same time, the Bolivian party's failure is attributed to its pursuit of an integrational project – wedging together groups too contradictory to remain in a stable coalition. Capacity for incorporation, establishing "paradoxical" (Middlebrook 1995) or "contradictory" alliances (Collier 1992), then is casted as the explanation for the PRI's success; while the "uneasy alliance" (Ladman 1982: 46) and "inherent contradictions" in the MNR coalition (Blassier 1968: 227; Malloy 1970: 120; Mitchell 1977:78; Bethell 1998: 318) caused its downfall. The mirroring phenomena in the scholarship regarding the explanation for each case is noteworthy given the disparate outcomes in the cases – signaling the importance of undertaking comparative analysis. It also revelatory: 'capacity for incorporation' is a *description* of the outcome that must be explained. Why

was the PRI able to incorporate social sectors, and why was the MNR unable to do so? *This* question calls forth the need for a theory of party formation.

To do so, I first developed a contrast between two modes of political activity: hegemonic incorporation and alliances. These modes differ along two dimensions: First, there is a difference in the sorts of interests negotiated. In a hegemonic relationship, subordinated sectors have programmatic, and mid and long-term interests and demands. In practice this means they will be willing and able to postpone rewards. Alliances pursue narrower patronage claims, and their survival is contingent on relatively immediate fulfillment. Second, these qualitative differences in interests entail different forms of conflict. In a hegemonic relationship, absorbed groups sacrifice their independence to the party; conflict takes place within it but not against it. In an alliance, groups maintain their capacity to break away and engage in anti-systemic (anti-party system) contestation. In short, hegemony entails the institutionalization of the capacity for party leadership to articulate their particularistic interests as universal ones (as those of the subordinated sectors) (Gramsci 1971: 182); alliances are momentary coalitions of particularistic interests. The first relationship offers a stable structure of interest aggregation and is therefore conductive to mass party formation, while the second is inherently unstable and complicates mass party formation.

A Gramscian theory of party formation suggests that hegemonic mass parties require the presence of a civil societal realm upon which to act, as a condition of possibility for their emergence as such. In the absence of this civil societal realm, the party is devoid of access to accumulated organizational resources, and unable to coordinate its interests with those of its putative constituency in a way sustainable in the long run. Gramsci (1971:152-153) contends that for "a party to exist…three fundamental elements have to converge:" 1) A "mass element" which is composed of ordinary people that provide discipline and loyalty. This mass is not a pre-constituted group, rather "they are a force in so far as there is somebody to centralize, organize and discipline them," in the absence of which "they would scatter into an impotent diaspora and vanish into nothing (ibid: 152);" 2) A "cohesive element" –a leadership structure that centralizes, provides direction, and renders effective a complex of forces; 3) finally, and most importantly for the present discussion, "an intermediate element" which "articulates the first element with the second and maintains contact between them, not only physically but also morally and intellectually." Hegemonic mass parties then are not direct reflections of the mass element but require a civil societal sphere as a mediating mechanism. Returning to the previous discussion, it could be said that in the absence of this intermediate element the party cadre can relate to the mass as a dictator (*imposing* its interests via force) or, at best, in the form of an alliance (temporarily and narrowly coordinating differentiated interests).

But how is the absorption of a civil societal realm possible in the first place? Moore's (1967: 415) central question is whether there are "structural differences in agrarian societies that might in some cases favor subsequent development toward parliamentary democracy while other starting points would make this achievement difficult or rule it out altogether?" The resolution of agrarian class struggle was key in

the development of liberal democracy: for example, enclosures – the destruction of traditional agrarian structures -- left no massive reservoir of autonomous peasants to serve reactionary ends of the landed upper classes, or to serve as a base for peasant revolutions, yielding dictatorships of right and left respectively (ibid: 426). Moore's work points to the importance of land tenure arrangements as a central variable in the understanding of political mobilization (Migdal 1974; Skocpol 1979; Paige 1975; Scott 1976; Wolf 1969). The question becomes whether there are structural differences in agrarian societies that favor the development of mass parties by facilitating the construction and absorption of civil society?

In the "18th Brumaire," Marx (1994) identified a relationship between traditional agrarian structures and blocked party formation similar to the one presented here. However, his *explanation* for this correlation was limited – relying on a reflective approach he contended that since class formation preceded party formation, an isolated peasantry constituted only a semi-formed class and was hence incapable of political self-organization. Gramsci and Moore help us make sense of the relationship identified by Marx differently. The demise of 'pre'-capitalist social arrangements, the elimination of corporate solidarity, opens up the *possibility* for the articulation of political claims that transcend the immediate community, and that are in this sense compatible, for example, with political organizations with national – or, say, class-based – programs. It is not that a party reflects a ready-formed social group but that the possibility for the party form itself as a political organizational arrangement emerges historically in the wake of feudal collapse.

Synthetizing Gramsci and Moore to understand mass party formation yields a two-pronged hypothesis: party incorporation requires the absorption of a civil society, which in turn is facilitated where erosion of traditional agrarian structures is present. The *structurated constituency* approach to party formation presented here differs from previous understandings because it does not conceive of political organization as an act of representation of pre-existing constituencies or after-effects of state development. Instead, it places party agency at the center while at the same time identifying structural openings and constraints for this agency. A party's absorption and construction of civil societal organizations is critical to its successful emergence as a mass party, but the level of absorption varies depending on the level of cohesion/erosion of traditional structures.

I used the term "erosion" and "cohesion" as a short-hand for the absence or permanence of "pre-"capitalist land tenure structures: communal landholding coupled with traditional politico-organizational arrangements (Moore 1967; Paige 1975; Scott 1976). I argued that erosion facilitates party formation. The reason why it does so is because it facilitates the emergence and construction of an inter-mediate associational sphere that can be captured, incorporated – absorbed -- by the nascent party, securing its status as a mass party. Both representational and state-centered approaches would in fact expect erosion to be detrimental to party formation. Class disintegration would not be conducive to political organization. The absence of firmly established local brokers could complicate state – and therefore party – building since brokers provide

information and strike deals. Here I argue the opposite: *erosion facilitated the emergence of the PRI, and cohesion blocked the emergence of the MNR*. Within Mexico, the PRI undertook hegemonic incorporation and hence secure it status as a mass party in relatively more eroded regions, and achieved alliances in more cohesive ones. In Bolivia – more cohesive than Mexico in the overall scheme – the MNR's attempt at hegemonic incorporation gained some traction only in the most eroded regions, although it was not able to forge anything more than alliances; in the most cohesive regions, the relationship between the party and the peasantry was disastrous.

The PRI had one of the longest stays in power in a semi-competitive regime (Magaloni 2006). The peasantry was the backbone of the party (Ames 1970; Brandenburg 1956; Klesner 1993; Reyna and Weinert 1977) – constituting the vast majority of the population until the 1950s. Yet, while its power eventually expanded to nation-wide proportions, regions of contestation and tenuous strength existed (Aviña 2014; Fallaw 2001; Gilbert and Nugent 1994; Gillingham and Smith 2014; Padilla 2008; Rubin 1997; Salinas 2014; Smith 2009). Why did the PRI in Mexico incorporate the peasantry in some regions but not others after the revolutionary upheaval of the early twentieth century? That is, why did it emerge as a mass party in some regions but not in others? My findings indicate that the party's absorption and construction of a civil societal realm of agrarian unions in the Gulf coast region of Mexico was facilitated by the relative erosion of the cohesiveness of traditional peasant villages in Mexico. The relative strength of traditional villages in the Central Pacific area enabled *alliances* between the party and the peasantry but prevented incorporation *in the period studied* (1929-1946).

The collapse of the traditional peasant village in Mexico had been undergoing for almost a century prior to the 1920s. Post-revolutionary land reform did not remedy this deterioration – in a way it re-enforced this by allowing individually worked parcels. Yet, regional variation in the levels of erosion of peasant villages was present at least up to the middle of the twentieth century. Looking at the states with a concentration of peasants, in this paper I identified the Gulf states as being the most eroded, while the Central Pacific states as being the most cohesive based on four variables: the amount of privatized land by 1909, the number of new rural townships created post-1930, the amount of lands worked collectively, and the percentage of family members working the land without a salary.

Why did the PRI emerge as a mass party in some regions but not in others? I showed the connection between erosion and party formation in three realms of political activity. First in terms of electoral mobilization: I showed that cohesive regions where places where the PRI struggled electorally and vice-versa (how well it did in eroded regions). I illustrated how electoral mobilization looked on the ground in these two regions: in cohesive states like Morelos, the PRI had difficulty mobilizing turn-out, dealt with outright contempt for their politicians, while an eroded region like Veracruz saw successful mobilization at the polls, visible gains obtained through party activism.

Second, I showed how erosion mattered for organizational absorption: cohesive regions had less organizational membership rates, there the agrarista movement

developed in a fragmented form, rejecting some of the tenets of the movement at a national level -- significant guerrilla uprisings were a fixture there. In eroded regions, such as Veracruz, with the highest unionization rates, we see the surge of groups like the LNC which was the model of future collaboration with party and state, a group that narrows down it's political activity to that of an interest group versus a political organization, that plays a key role in the disarmament process in the region. Finally, I pointed to evidence that party activists were in fact aware of the organizational benefits of erosion when pushing peasants to choose the individual parceling system.

When the party was pushing forth parceling, when it was channeling the LNC to become a-political, when it was making gains through constant activism, it was not mapping unto a pre-existing social group, it was shaping a constituency, shaping a political actor not reflecting one. And, of course, institutional re-structuring was not enough to get the party going in places where it encountered a disjointed, highly localized agrarista movement, when it was unable to mobilize people to the polls in cohesive regions. And the party was not an after-effect of changes in the formal electoral process. Suffrage expansion might have created the incentive to incorporate broader sectors of society, but there were limitations and openings that preceded, or were independent of, the process of state formation. A representational approach and state-centered approach would actually expect cohesion to be an advantage for the party and erosion an obstacle, making it harder to establish relationships with leaders, to coordinate and discipline atomized citizens. Instead I show the party emerging where there's a form of disintegration – where there's a sack of potatoes. The dissolution of village identity and solidarity, of traditional authority – underpinned by the destruction of communal property – permitted a reorganization of peasants on the basis of a national party program.

In Bolivia, like in Mexico, the party was stronger where capitalist dislocation was deeper. The internal comparison in Mexico, emphasized the relationship between erosion and party organization, presenting two poles of a spectrum between hegemonic incorporation and alliances. In studying the MNR I focused on the effect of cohesion, highlighting two poles as well: between (unstable) alliances and total breakdown.

Would not cohesive communities with established hierarchies be easier to incorporate into a party – especially ones that enthusiastically joined the revolution? Here, again, I showed the opposite. In Bolivia, the strength of communal property forms enabled *alliances* between party and peasantry but prevented their incorporation *under* a party project, instead joining in as 'partners' – willing and able to break away from this partnership as they saw fit. As the chapter illustrated, in the Cochabamba valley, the region with less communal property holding, the MNR developed close links to existing and emerging peasant unions. These unions articulated demands compatible with party organization: more programmatic in nature, and premised on the logic of state developmental capitalism. This feature facilitated party mobilization allowing it to broker between state and unions and craft a national agenda. Yet, these unions offered support to the party but never accepted full incorporation. In the Altiplano region, where most collectively held land was concentrated, the MNR failed in establishing a

firm relationship with peasant leadership. The demands and political tactics of the peasants in this region were incompatible with stable party organization: they were of a highly localized nature, and premised on the logic of subsistence agriculture. This feature complicated party mobilization, few unions formed in the area, preventing the MNR from brokering mid- and long-term interests between peasants and state, and making the party irrelevant for accessing the sporadic goods trickling down from the state directly. Ultimately, absent a structure of interest aggregation, the party entirely lost the support the Altiplano peasants had given it during the insurrectionary phase.

Compared to Mexico, the process of capitalist dislocation was, simply, relatively weaker. In the Bolivian Altiplano, where most collectively held land was concentrated, the MNR failed in establishing a relationship with peasant leadership. The demands and political tactics of the peasants in this region were incompatible with stable party organization: they were of a highly localized nature, and premised on the logic of subsistence agriculture and a narrow patronage system. This feature complicated party mobilization, few unions formed in the area, preventing the MNR from brokering mid- and long-term interests between peasants and state, and making the party irrelevant for accessing the sporadic goods trickling down from the state directly. Ultimately, absent a structure of interest aggregation, the party entirely lost the support the Altiplano peasants had given it during the insurrectionary phase.

Arguably, the very appearance of the *campesino* as an interest group is linked to the decline of traditional village structure. That is: structural conditions made articulation more likely in some kinds of places than others. Why does erosion matter? What intervening mechanisms does it facilitate: erosion of communal property regimes and organization of production changed rural peoples' sense of themselves in relation to their communities, their work, in ways that made it easier for them to ally or participate in unions, leagues, commercial coopts. These unions and organizations were aggregating the demands of this sector in a way compatible with the party and the developmentalist state more broadly. The interests negotiated might take the form of a more protracted programmatic agenda; postponing immediate rewards for mid-term or long-term goals. This condition enabled the party to articulate its interests with them and absorb these groups. The civil societal structure of interest aggregation is conductive to party incorporation. This associational structure could not exist in the context of highly localized interests with no market orientation, where the biggest demand that could be made to the state was its retraction. Erosion does not automatically lead to the existence of a civil society. It is its condition of possibility. And in so far as it is, it also a condition of possibility for the mass party.

TOWARDS A NEW SOCIOLOGY OF PARTIES

My work pushes for a revitalization of the sociological study of parties, filling a critical gap in political and historical sociology that has been increasingly noted (De Leon, Desai, Tugal 2009; Mudge and Chen 2014). The concerns of comparative-historical sociology in the past decades (state formation, revolution, the welfare state)

are deeply state-centered (Evans, Rueschemeyer, and Skocpol 1985; Mann 1986; Skocpol 1979; Tilly 1992); political sociology studying mobilization has mostly focused on social movements within civil society (McAdam 1985; Offe 1985; Tilly 1978). Parties are ambiguous entities, being both public institutions and voluntary associations. Perhaps because they do not fit neatly in either the rubric of the state or civil society; their role has been obscured in both of these subfields. A sociology of parties can yield new answers to classic questions in these sub-disciplines: how do political identities form? What is the relationship between class structure and political representation? Why do our democratic values sit in constant tension with our forms of political organization?

I showed the power of the party -- not to be the vessel of a pre-constituted group – but to shape political identities; and -- at the same time – located structural openings and closures to the capacity for organizations to produce constituencies. I proposed a framework that can carry over to other studies of party emergence: that party formation should be studied as a process of absorption of intermediary associations, and that in turn this process is facilitated within particular structural economic conditions and not others.

The dissertation builds on the recent work on parties in two interrelated ways: *first* it offers a framework for understanding mass party formation, a notion so far absent from this literature. This dissertation suggests that mass party formation should be studied as a process of absorption of intermediary associations, and that in turn this process is facilitated within particular structural economic conditions. In the context of the case of the PRI in Mexico, the party transitioned from an elite party to a mass party by absorbing peasant associations and that this process was facilitated by the destruction of traditional agrarian structures. In this sense, I offer a theory of party formation that can be applied in future studies seeking to understand similar processes.

Second, the article critically engages the notion of party articulation advanced in recent literature on parties (De Leon, Desai, and Tugal 2009, 2015). The new wave of sociology of parties has developed as a reaction to positions that see parties merely as reflections of pre-constituted social divisions. The notion of articulation becomes central here as a way of pointing attention to a party's agency in shaping social cleavages. Yet, this model assumes the party as already in existence and capable of mobilizing sectors of society. I seek to specify conditions under which a party can effectively undertake an articulatory role. A theory of party formation becomes important here -- understanding the conditions under which a party emerges helps avoid the risk of lapsing into a voluntarist or circular account of party agency.

In my view, a sociology of parties must see the party not as epiphenomena -- the after-effect of state building or group-formation – but as an organization with agency to articulate social divisions. At the same time, this agency must itself be explicated by relating it to a structural context. This is so for an epistemological reason: structures are paradoxically evident only once there is an attempt to transcend them (Sartre 1967). My work reflects this approach by emphasizing how the PRI's absorption of a civil societal realm, and the MNR's failure to do so, was in turn facilitated within

particular agrarian structures. Future work on parties should seek to study in other geographical contexts the concrete hypothesis proposed in this paper that mass party emergence is related to the demise of traditional agrarian structures and its relationship to civil societal absorption, as well as the more general notion of structural determinants of party agency.

Extending the Analysis

The period covered in Mexico ends in 1950, when the PRI emerged as a mass party; this was also a period when the peasantry constituted the vast majority of the population. But this situation changed by the 1970s. Future work could trace the initial gap in the PRI's absorption of urban civil society, as well as the subsequent uneven closure of this gap. In line with the general argument expounded above, the morphing relationship between party and civil society post-1970s can be analyzed in connection to changes in class and property structure: the growth of urban centers and eventual rise of informal labor. This approach better accounts both for the party's *partial* decline in power that culminated in the loss of the presidency in 2000, *and* its subsequent 'return' in 2012.

At the same time, the *Movimiento Al Socialismo* (MAS) in contemporary Bolivia under Evo Morales has consolidated as a hegemonic mass party. This is particularly noteworthy after a fifty-year period of political instability post-revolution. Another line of inquiry could examine similarly the relationship between the MAS, civil society, and transformations in property structure (decline in communal property and subsequent migration to urban centers), in the period leading up to the party's surge.

Extending beyond the cases in this dissertation, another important research area that could benefit from the study of parties developed here is the wave of Left-leaning governments in South America that began in 1998 and continues to the present. Very much along the lines of the notions of representation critiqued above, the Left-shift has been explained as either a voters' backlash against neoliberal policies of the 1990s, or as the result of a wave of democratization that took place in predominantly poor countries (which granted nascent Left parties the advantage of a 'natural' base). Yet, two important problems emerge: first, how to explain countries that experienced a wave of democratization around the same period, had large sectors of the population living in poverty, and had undergone unpopular neoliberal reforms, but did not witness the rise of a strong Left party? The critical case here is Mexico. Second, how to explain differences in government styles that exist amongst the Left-turn countries? Despite that the consolidation of strong mass mobilizing organizations is one of the clear results of the Left-turn particularly in Brazil, Venezuela, and Bolivia, the political-organizational aspect of the shift remains understudied; accounting for this aspect can shed significant light on the questions posed.

Recurrent talk of the withering away of parties, or the impossibility of party organization in contemporary capitalism in which strong class identities have become obsolete, finds itself in constant dead ends every time new parties take center stage.

Ultimately, the fundamental nature of the party-form must not be forgotten: to produce constituencies in the context of processes of social erosion. In the context of a capitalist economy and a centralized state, parties are here to stay. The study of party formation remains, therefore, a crucial task.

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Appendix

Table 1. Collective Ejido Labor 1950.
Source: Censo Ejidal Agricola y Ganadero (Direccion General de Estadistica 1950).

States	Collectively Worked ha.	Total ha.	Weighed (collectively worker/total) ha.
Queretaro	3	139423	0.00
Hidalgo	183	311554	0.00
Mexico	481	218149	0.00
Tabasco	488	147575	0.00
Tlaxcala	499	110025	0.00
Quintana Roo	270	53716	0.01
Oaxaca	4771	397661	0.01
Veracruz	9975	594583	0.02
Michoacan	12492	642439	0.02
Zacatecas	10347	429794	0.02
Puebla	10597	414980	0.03
San Luis Potosi	9631	344909	0.03
Morelos	3626	117912	0.03
Guerrero	12881	384639	0.03
Sinaloa	11760	303556	0.04
Chiapas	22360	439378	0.05
Durango	21497	344706	0.06
			Mean: .02 Median: .02 S.D.: .02

Table 2. New Ejido Townships post 1930.
Source: Archivo General Agrario (2000).

States	New Ejido Townships (N.E.T)	Total State Km²	Weighed (N.E.T./total Km²)
Guerrero	4	64458	0.0001
Queretaro	1	11480	0.0001
Mexico	3	21444	0.0001
Hidalgo	7	20870	0.0003
Morelos	2	4964	0.0004
Quintana Roo	22	50952	0.0004
Michoacan	30	60093	0.0005
Oaxaca	48	94211	0.0005
Durango	91	123520	0.0007
Zacatecas	64	72813	0.0009
Puebla	30	33997	0.0009
Tabasco	30	25337	0.0012
Chiapas	152	74415	0.0020
San Luis Potosi	157	63241	0.0025
Sinaloa	158	58488	0.0027
Veracruz	263	71896	0.0037
Tlaxcala	35	4027	0.0087
			Mean: .0015 **Median: .0007** S.D.: .0021

Table 3. Privatized Land 1850-1909.
Source: Wilkie (1998).

States	Percentage of land (Km ²) privatized
Morelos	0.0
Puebla	0.2
Guerrero	0.3
Michoacan	0.5
Mexico	0.8
Quintana Roo	1.0
Tlaxcala	1.9
Zacatecas	3.0
San Luis Potosi	3.1
Queretaro	4.0
Hidalgo	4.0
Oaxaca	4.7
Veracruz	6.2
Durango	15.8
Sinaloa	37.4
Chiapas	47.4
Tabasco	58.4
	Mean: 11.1
	Median: 3.1
	S.D.: 18.2

Table 4. Unpaid Family Labor 1950.
Censo Ejidal Agricola y Ganadero (Direccion General de Estadistica 1950).

States	Family members over 15 yrs. old who work without a salary	Total Population over 15	Weighted (unpaid family members/ population)
Oaxaca	19658	835249	0.02
Tabasco	6574	194371	0.03
Sinaloa	15403	357750	0.04
Queretaro	7656	162937	0.05
San Luis Potosi	24984	487652	0.05
Veracruz	63491	1168968	0.05
Puebla	52183	949409	0.06
Zacatecas	26659	367664	0.07
Michoacan	60296	806763	0.08
Quintana Roo	1138	14846	0.08
Tlaxcala	12639	162709	0.08
Morelos	13856	163587	0.09
Chiapas	44983	497308	0.09
Hidalgo	44257	479261	0.09
Guerrero	51594	517646	0.10
Mexico	86467	791791	0.11
Durango	39995	355394	0.11
			Mean: .070 Median: .075 S.D.: .026

Table 5. Erosion Coefficient

States	Collective Labor	New Ejido Townships	Privatized Land	Family Labor	Erosion Coefficient
Morelos	0	0	0	0	0
Guerrero	0	0	0	0	0
Michoacan	.5	0	0	0	.5
Mexico	1	0	0	0	1
Q. Roo	1	0	0	0	1
Hidalgo	1	0	1	0	2
Puebla	0	1	0	1	2
Chiapas	0	1	1	0	2
Tlaxcala	1	1	0	0	2
Zacatecas	.5	1	0	.5	2
Durango	0	.5	1	0	1.5
S. L. Potosi	0	1	.5	1	2.5
Queretaro	1	0	1	1	3
Oaxaca	1	0	1	1	3
Sinaloa	0	1	1	1	3
Veracruz	.5	1	1	1	3.5
Tabasco	1	1	1	1	4

Note: Each state was coded in binary form, depending on whether it fell below or above average on each of the variables: Above average land privatization = 1; above average number of new rural townships= 1; below average collective work = 1; below average family work = 1. Below average land privatization = 0; below average number of new rural townships = 0; above average collective work = 0; above average family work = 0. When standard deviation was above the mean, I used the median instead. Then, I tallied the overall sums (see tables 1-5 in appendix); for example, a state got a "4" if it had above average numbers on each of the four variables, "3" if it scored above average in three of the variables, etcetera. The states that scored "3.5" or more were categorized as "eroded;" the states that scored ".5" or less were categorized as "cohesive;" the states that scored either a "1," "2" or "3" were categorized as "average."

Table 6. 1946 Electoral Mobilization Coefficient.
Sources: Adapted from Ramirez (1977) and Direccion General de Estadistica (1950c).

States	Pro-PRI vote	Turnout	Coefficient
Morelos	57	6.6	0
Michoacan	67	9.2	0
Durango	65	8.5	0
Zacatecas	68	13.2	1
Oaxaca	90	8.0	2
Tlaxcala	81	13.1	2
S. L. Potosi	80	13.9	3
Puebla	82	12.6	3
Guerrero	85	10.0	3
Chiapas	87	14.3	4
Mexico	84	17.3	4
Queretaro	84	16.4	4
Sinaloa	90	16.0	4
Hidalgo	90	19.2	5
Tabasco	96	17.0	5
Q. Roo	91	21.0	5
Veracruz	91	17.7	5
	Mean: 81.6 S.D./2: 5.5	Mean: 13.8 S.D./2: 2.2	

 Note: I coded states into four categories of mobilizational strength: 3=over one standard deviation above the mean; 2=within one standard deviation above the mean; 1=within one standard deviation below the mean; 0=under one standard deviation below the mean. None of the states scored a "6;" when tallying both pro-PRI vote *and* turnout. The highest scoring states (which scored a "5") fell into the category "strong mobilization;" states scoring "0" fell into "weak mobilization." States with mixed results (for example, above average pro-PRI vote but below average turnout) fell into "average mobilization."

Table 7. Membership in Peasant Unions 1946.
Sources: Direccion General de Estadistica (1950b; 1950c).

Regions	Peasant Union Members	Economically Active Population	Weighted (membership/econ. active pop.)
Center: Aguascalientes Guanajuato Hidalgo Jalisco Estado de Mexico Michoacan Morelos Puebla Queretaro Tlaxcala	11284	3028355	0.0037
North: Chihuahua Coahuila Durango Nuevo Leon San Luis Potosi Tamaulipas Zacatecas	10871	1458155	0.0075
South Pacific: Chiapas Colima Guerrero Oaxaca	20386	914272	0.0223
North Pacific: Baja California Baja California Sur Nayarit Sinaloa Sonora	16501	466194	0.0354
Gulf: Campeche Quintana Roo Tabasco Veracruz Yucatan	64491	841913	0.0766

Note: To the best of my knowledge, data disaggregated by state is not available.