

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS, PARTIES, AND THE LEFT IN LATIN AMERICA: THE  
BOLIVIAN MAS (MOVEMENT TOWARD SOCIALISM) IN COMPARATIVE  
PERSPECTIVE

Santiago Anria

A dissertation submitted to the faculty of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of Political Science of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Chapel Hill  
2015

Approved by:

Evelyne Huber

Graeme Robertson

Lars Schoultz

John D. Stephens

Milada Anna Vachudova

© 2015  
Santiago Anria  
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

## ABSTRACT

Santiago Anria: Social Movements, Parties, and the Left in Latin America: The Bolivian MAS (Movement Toward Socialism) in Comparative Perspective  
(Under the Direction of Evelyne Huber)

There have been several important cases of movement-based parties that rose rapidly in popularity and were able to attain national power in new democracies. Existing theories predict these parties will become increasingly top-down organizations designed to preserve and enhance the power of party elites, a trend that is usually aggravated when parties govern nationally. The Bolivian MAS deviates from this conventional wisdom, as it has followed a remarkably different organizational trajectory that has facilitated grassroots impact and constrained elite control. Through a within-case comparative examination of the MAS, this study identifies necessary conditions and explains mechanisms facilitating this outcome in the crucial areas of candidate selection and national policy-making. The study finds that a set of historical legacies traceable to a party's origins and structural elements associated with the density of civil society heavily affect power distributions within governing movement-based parties. Both elements can facilitate the emergence of opposition among allied groups that can check power from within and keep open channels for agenda setting from below. The realization of this potential, as this study argues, depends heavily on the organizational strength, unity, and mobilization capacity of allied groups in civil society. The analysis reveals that movement-based parties are remarkably flexible organizations whose boundaries with allied groups in civil society tend to be fluid and empirically blurred. The empirical basis for this argument derives, first, from a wealth of

qualitative data collected in Bolivia, where I conducted twelve months of fieldwork in different regions of the country. During that time, I conducted over 170 in-depth interviews with party elites at the national, state, and municipal levels, as well as with a wide variety of civil society actors, including union leaders, activists, opposition politicians, and others. Second, cross-national comparisons with the experiences of the Brazilian Workers' Party (PT) and the Uruguayan Broad Front (FA) improve the overall evidentiary base of this study. They also help to further support the theoretical claims about the importance of historical and structural factors for shaping the degree of power concentration in movement-based parties.

To Anne

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In researching and writing this dissertation, I have been fortunate to receive help from many individuals and institutions. My research has benefited greatly from the generous advice of the extraordinary members of my committee, as well as other informal advisors. I am above all grateful to my mentor and dissertation advisor, Evelyne Huber, who has been a continual source of support, encouragement, and calm. Evelyne, who shares my concern for the organization of left parties and the empowerment of popular sectors, has not only been a key influence for this research, but her guidance has been fundamental. Her willingness to read critically and comment on every piece of my work has contributed immeasurably to improvements in my theoretical development, my ability to think about the “big picture,” and to frame my research effectively for readers with little knowledge of my area of interest. Although she has set the bar very high, I hope that one day I can be the type of mentor to others that Evelyne has been for me.

I also owe a debt of gratitude to the rest of my committee members. Graeme Robertson has closely watched my research evolve over the past six years and has provided extensive advice throughout that time. Milada Vachudova has been a sage reader and, like Graeme, has helped me to think about the broader comparative implications of my research. By often asking the “why should I care” question, both have helped me present the findings of this research in a way that is more accessible to a non-Latin Americanist audience. If I have not achieved that, it is by no means their fault (they tried!). Lars Schoultz has not only made this dissertation more readable in English, but his insights largely improved my own conclusions; he has also been extremely generous with his time and genuinely concerned about my general wellbeing. John

Stephens offered constructive criticism and important advice at key moments of the writing process, and I appreciate his willingness to ask the difficult questions. I learned a great deal—and possibly lost some hair too—in trying to answer those questions. Other professors at UNC helped with the development of this dissertation in important ways. In particular, Cecilia Martínez-Gallardo and Jonathan Hartlyn offered tough criticism and pushed me to develop sharper arguments in specific chapters, and just talking with them about my research has been profoundly stimulating.

I also owe a great deal to informal advisors outside of UNC. Eric Hershberg, at American University, deserves a special mention. His advice, support, and friendship over the course of almost nine years have been invaluable. Most importantly, this dissertation would not exist without a suggestion he made in a graduate seminar, back in Simon Fraser University in 2007, to pay close attention to dynamics of social and political change in the Andes, particularly in Bolivia. Since then, Eric has remained a great friend and critical reader of my work. His insights can be found throughout the dissertation. In addition, the time I spent at the Center for Latin American and Latino Studies, which Eric directs at American University, was especially productive during the writing stage, and I am thankful to him and to the wonderful staff there for welcoming me and providing an ideal working environment in the summer of 2014. I am also grateful to Judy Rein for her friendship and the valuable feedback and editorial suggestions she has offered over the course of many years. Max Cameron, at the University of British Columbia, has also offered constant encouragement, intellectual support, and advice on specific chapters. His enthusiastic teaching, patient mentoring, and practical wisdom have had an enormous impact on my intellectual development.

My years at UNC have been particularly stimulating due to my graduate student friends and colleagues. During my first year I was fortunate to meet Russell Bither-Terry, Juan Bogliaccini, Lucía Genta, Sara Niedzwiecki, and Jeff Erbig, who have become amongst my dearest and closest friends. They have provided a much-needed emotional cushion during this long adventure and have served as major sources of inspiration over the course of many years. I am also thankful to other graduate student colleagues who have provided challenging criticism, support, and generous comments over the course of several years, and with whom I have had stimulating conversations about comparative politics: Kiran Auerbach, Kevin Brondum, Amanda Cook, Federico Fuchs, Claire Greenstein, Cole Harvey, Nick Howard, Hanna Kleider, John Lovett, Tamar Malloy Elizabeth Menninga, Paula Mukherjee, Bilyana Petrova, Zoila Ponce de León, Casey Stegman, and Ali Stoyan. I am especially grateful to Russell for the time he took to provide editorial assistance and to help me develop the maps in chapters 2 and 3. I am also particularly thankful to Claire and Casey, who generously read, provided feedback, and edited several of the longest chapters; as I leave UNC, I am very happy to see them flourishing. The staff in the Department of Political Science at UNC has also made this project possible. In particular, I would like to thank Shannon Eubanks, Susan Heske, Carol Nichols, Chris Reynolds, Dana Sadek, and Cynthia Tang.

I am particularly grateful to former UNC students for reading major portions of this dissertation, as well as for their advice since my early days in graduate school: Merike Blofield, Agustina Giraudy, Jenny Pribble, and Juan Pablo Luna. All of them have been major sources of inspiration while I developed this project from the very beginning, and they have helped me in many ways—from reading chapters to helping me prepare funding applications, and much more. Among the larger community of scholars, Rob Albro, Jennifer Cyr, Tulia Falleti, Herbert



Kitschelt, Al Montero, Ken Roberts, María Paula Saffón, David Samuels, Eduardo Silva, Jason Tockman, and Alberto Vergara offered valuable comments, feedback, and other kinds of assistance. I am especially grateful to Jason for his help over the years, for his assistance during my field research, and for his continuous friendship. He provided countless contacts in La Paz and Cochabamba, as well as enthusiastic support since we were classmates at Simon Fraser University. Most important, his academic work has motivated me to study the MAS. Jennifer, a friend and co-author, also deserves special credit; she has read major parts of this dissertation and has given me extremely detailed, and often very challenging, feedback on several chapters.

In Bolivia, I was fortunate to receive a warm welcome from academics, politicians, and friends. I would first like to thank Judith Hoffmann and Sebastián Michel for providing a home away from home. I will never forget the Saturday lunches and heated discussions at their house, as well as how much we enjoyed watching *The Strongest* soccer games. In La Paz, I especially appreciate the support of Moira Zuazo at the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) Foundation, Fernando García Yapur at the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Ricardo Aguilar at *La Razón*, and Fernando Molina at the Fundación Vicente Pazos Kanki—all of whom provided crucial guidance at early stages of my fieldwork. Manuel Canelas, Nelson Carvajal, Walter Chávez, Adolfo Mendoza, Manuel Mercado, Rebeca Peralta, Patricia Rocha, and Juan Carlos Pinto helped me ensure my fieldwork was a successful experience. I am thankful for their friendship. In Cochabamba, I greatly appreciate the support of Fernando Mayorga at the Universidad Mayor de San Simón's Centro de Estudios Superiores Universitarios (CESU), Jorge Komadina, José de la Fuente, and María Teresa Zegada. I also thank René Recacochea and his family for their kindness and friendship, and for helping ensure that my time in Cochabamba was a success. In Santa Cruz, I am especially grateful to Gabriela Montaña, Hugo Siles, and Henry

Zeballos, who assisted with my research in several ways, and provided crucial insight into Santa Cruz politics.

The number of Bolivian scholars, journalists, and politicians who assisted with my research is so large that it is impossible to mention all of them without the risk of forgetting some. And since I would rather not run that risk, I will thank them collectively. Every person who participated in this study, or with whom I discussed my dissertation, profoundly influenced my understanding of the MAS. For that I am profoundly and forever grateful. Although most of them will not read this dissertation, this research would not have been possible without their valuable input. Thank you.

The field research was also only possible thanks to the generous funding I received, including a Mellon Endowment Dissertation Fellowship through UNC's Institute for the Study of the Americas, and an Off-Campus Dissertation Research Fellowship granted by the Graduate School at UNC. While these two funding sources allowed me to cover expenses and travel costs to Bolivia, a Dissertation Completion Fellowship from the Graduate School at UNC made it possible to focus exclusively on dissertation writing during the 2013-2014 academic year.

I am of course forever grateful to my family and friends. My family in Argentina has offered continuous understanding and support. They have always encouraged me to pursue my goals and they have always been there in the good and in the difficult times. This project could not have been completed without them. My youngest sister, Clara Anria, deserves special credit as she provided crucial help with several chapters; she took on the very time consuming task of preparing the list of abbreviations and she also compiled the data with which the electoral maps were created. I am also thankful to my friends Ignacio Jardón and Matías Puente who, despite the distance and my long periods of poor communication, have remained my closest allies. One day

we will go back together to El Chaltén, I promise. My family in the US has been equally supportive, and both George and Susanna DeCecco have read and kindly edited parts of this dissertation. Most important, however, they have seen this project develop since its very inception, and they have been supportive in countless ways.

More than anybody else, Anne DeCecco, my wife, made the research and the writing of this project possible. Pursuing my academic goals meant living in several countries, adapting to new places, and sometimes living far apart. Her commitment to this project and her unwavering belief in me have helped keep this project afloat much more than she knows. Anne was always there for me, and, together with our steadfast chihuahua Pancho, accompanied me through my—admittedly many—ups and downs. My gratitude to her is immense. With much love, I dedicate this work to her.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES .....	xv
LIST OF FIGURES .....	xvi
LIST OF MAPS .....	xvii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	xviii
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	1
Substantive Relevance .....	4
Theoretical Relevance.....	6
Movement-Based Parties .....	7
Existing Literature: Contributions and Limitations .....	9
Studying Power Concentration .....	13
Historical and Structural Explanations .....	17
Methodological Approach .....	30
Contributions.....	37
Plan of the Study.....	45
CHAPTER 2: ORIGINS AND ASCENDANCE TO POWER .....	49
Factors Contributing to the Formation and Ascendance to Power of the MAS .....	64
The MAS in Two Cities: La Paz and El Alto .....	72
Social Organizations and the Party.....	80
Morales’s MAS in Power (2006-Present).....	92
Conclusion .....	101

CHAPTER 3: CANDIDATE SELECTION WITHIN THE MAS .....	103
Why Candidate Selection Matters .....	104
Explaining Within-Party Variation in Candidate Selection.....	107
Research Design.....	112
Empirical Setting .....	120
Uninominal Candidates.....	121
Plurinominal Candidates.....	128
Additional Evidence: Local Authorities .....	135
Conclusion .....	143
CHAPTER 4: NATIONAL POLICY-MAKING .....	146
Why and How We Should Study Policy-Making.....	147
The Case of the MAS.....	153
Agenda Setting.....	159
The Importance of Different Constellations of Power.....	178
Negative Capacities and Veto Coalitions .....	181
Conclusion .....	192
CHAPTER 5: THE MAS IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE.....	195
The MAS in Comparative Perspective .....	197
The Workers' Party.....	198
The Broad Front.....	214
Comparing the Cases .....	227
Conclusion .....	239
CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION .....	241
Generalizability of the Findings.....	244

Significance of the Findings .....	248
Issues for Further Research.....	253
APPENDIX A: LIST OF CITED INTERVIEWS .....	263
REFERENCES .....	270

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1. Population of La Paz and El Alto .....	73
Table 2.2. Voting in La Paz and El Alto, General Elections, 1989–2009 (percent).....	75
Table 2.3. Voting in La Paz and El Alto, Municipal Elections, 1989–2010 (percent).....	76
Table 3.1. Number of Interviews with MAS Deputies and Senators in 2010-2015 Congress, by Department.....	117
Table 3.2. Subnational Comparative Cases .....	136
Table 5.1 Dimensions for Comparison Across Cases.....	231
Table 5.2. Importance of unions among left partisans (percent of left partisans participating in meetings of unions).....	236
Table 5.3. Importance of community-based organizations among left partisans (percent of left partisans participating) .....	237

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1. Summary of Main Argument.....	18
Figure 3.1. Basic Organizational Structure of Bolivia’s Peasant Unions.....	124
Figure 4.1. Likely Decision-making Scenarios.....	184



## LIST OF MAPS

Map 2.1. 1997 Presidential Election IU Vote (Rural and Urban).....	53
Map 2.2. 2002 Presidential Election MAS Vote (Rural and Urban) .....	54
Map 2.3. 2005 Presidential Election MAS Vote (Rural and Urban) .....	55
Map 2.4. 2009 Presidential Election MAS Vote (Rural and Urban) .....	56
Map 2.5. 1995 Municipal Election IU Vote (Rural and Urban) .....	57
Map 2.6. 1999 Municipal Election MAS Vote (Rural and Urban).....	58
Map 2.7. 2004 Municipal Election MAS Vote (Rural and Urban).....	59
Map 2.8. 2010 Municipal Election MAS Vote (Rural and Urban).....	60
Map 3.1. Fieldwork Sites for Legislative Candidate Selection .....	118
Map 3.2. Fieldwork Sites for Local Level Candidate Selection .....	136

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AD	Democratic Action (Acción Democrática – Venezuela)
ADN	Nationalist Democratic Action (Acción Democrática Nacionalista)
ANC	African National Congress – South Africa
ASIP	Popular and Solidarity Alliance (Alianza Popular Solidaria)
AU	Uruguay Assembly (Asamblea Uruguay)
BCB	Bolivian Central Bank (Banco Central Boliviano)
CEDIB	Bolivia’s Center for Documentation and Information (Centro de Documentación e Información Bolivia)
CEJIS	Center for Juridical, Institutional and Social Studies (Centro de Estudios Jurídicos e Investigación Social)
CIDOB	Confederation of Bolivian Indigenous Peoples (Confederación de Pueblos Indígenas de Bolivia)
CIPCA	Center for Research and Promotion of the Peasantry (Centro de Investigación y Promoción del Campesinado)
CNMCIQB-BS	“Bartolina Sisa” National Confederation of Campesino, Indigenous, and Native Women of Bolivia (Confederación Nacional de Mujeres Campesinas Indígenas Originarias de Bolivia “Bartolina Sisa”)
COB	Bolivian Workers’ Central (Central Obrera Boliviana)
CON	Regular National Congress (Congreso Nacional Ordinario)
CONALCAM	National Coordinator for Change (Coordinadora Nacional para el Cambio)
CONAMAQ	National Council of Ayllus and Marcas of Qullasuyu (Consejo Nacional de Ayllus y Markas del Qullasuyu)
CONDEPA	Conscience of the Fatherland (Conciencia de Patria)
COR	Regional Labor Federation (Central Obrera Regional)
CSCIB	Syndicalist Confederation of Intercultural Communities of Bolivia (Confederación Sindical de Comunidades Interculturales de Bolivia)

CSUTCB	Unique Confederation of Rural Laborers of Bolivia (Confederación Sindical Única de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia)
CUT	Unified Workers' Central (Central Única dos Trabalhadores)
EP	Progressive Encounter (Encuentro Progresista – Uruguay)
FA	Broad Front (Frente Amplio – Uruguay)
FEJUVE	Federation of Neighborhood Boards (Federación de Juntas Vecinales)
FENCOMIN	National Federation of Mining Cooperatives (Federación Nacional de Cooperativas Mineras de Bolivia)
FESUCARUSO	Unique Federation of Peasant Communities in the Urban and Semi-Urban Radius of El Alto (Federación Única de Comunidades Campesinas del Radio Urbano y Sub Urbano de El Alto)
FETCT	Special Federation of Peasant Workers of the Tropics of Cochabamba (Federación Especial de Trabajadores Campesinos del Trópico de Cochabamba)
FEYCH	Special Federation of the Yungas of the Chapare (Federación Especial Yungas del Chapare)
FMLN	Salvadorian Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (Frente Farabundo Martí para la Liberación Nacional)
FSNL	Nicaraguan Sandinista National Liberation Front (Frente Sandinista de Liberación Nacional)
FSTMB	Union Federation of Bolivian Mineworkers (Federación Sindical de Trabajadores Mineros de Bolivia)
IPSP	Political Instrument of the Sovereignty of the Peoples (Instrumento Poítico por la Soberanía de los Pueblos)
ISI	Import Substitution Industrialization
IU	United Left (Izquierda Unida)
LAPOP	Latin American Public Opinion Project
LCR	Radical Cause (La Causa R – Venezuela)
LPP	Law of Popular Participation (Ley de Participación Popular)

M-19	19th of April Movement (Movimiento 19 de Abril – Colombia)
MAS	Movement Toward Socialism (Movimiento al Socialismo)
MIP	Pachakuti Indigenous Movement (Movimiento Indígena Pachakuti)
MIR	Revolutionary Left Movement (Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria)
MMP	Mixed-member Proportional Electoral Systems
MNR	Revolutionary Nationalist Movement (Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario)
MPP	Popular Participation Movement (Movimiento por la Participación Popular)
MPS	Movement for Sovereignty (Movimiento por la Soberanía)
MRTKL	Revolutionary Liberation Movement Tupaq Katari (Movimiento de Liberación Revolucionaria Tupaq Katari)
MSM	Movement Without Fear (Movimiento sin Miedo)
MST	Landless Movement (Movimento Sem Terra – Brazil)
NC	National Council (Plenario Nacional - Uruguay)
NFR	New Republican Force (Nueva Fuerza Republicana)
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NM	New Majority (Nueva Mayoría – Uruguay)
OTB	Territorial Grassroots Organizations (Organización Territorial de Base)
Pachakutik	Ecuadorian Pachakutik Plurinational Unity Movement - New Country (Movimiento de Unidad Plurinacional Pachakutik – Nuevo País)
PBC	Bolivian Communist Party (Partido Comunista Boliviano)
PC	Communist Party (Partido Comunista – Uruguay)
PED	Processo de Eleicoes Diretas (Direct Election Process)
PJ	Justicialist Party (Partido Justicialista – Argentina)

PODEMOS	Social and Democratic Power (Poder Democrático Social)
PRD	Party of the Democratic Revolution (Partido de la Revolución Democrática – Mexico)
PRI	Institutional Revolutionary Party (Partido Revolucionario Institucional – Mexico)
PS	Socialist Party (Partido Socialista – Chile)
PSDB	Brazilian Social Democracy Party (Partido da Social Democracia)
PSUV	United Socialist Party of Venezuela (Partido Socialista Unido de Venezuela)
PT	Workers’ Party (Partido dos Trabalhadores – Brazil)
TIPNIS	Isiboro Sécure National Park and Indigenous Territory (Territorio Indígena y Parque Nacional Isiboro-Sécure)
UCS	Civic Solidarity Union (Unión Cívica Solidaridad)
UDI	Chilean Independent Democratic Union Party
UJC	Cruceñista Youth Union (Unión Juvenil Cruceñista)
UN	National Unity (Unidad Nacional)
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNITAS	Union of Institutions of Social Work and Action (Unión Nacional de Instituciones para el Trabajo de Acción Social)

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Political parties have undergone deep changes in recent years. As mass party membership has increasingly become a relic of the past (Levitsky and Cameron 2003; Mainwaring and Zoco 2007; Van Biezen, Mair, and Poguntke 2012), political parties founded to sustain the support of a single charismatic leader have become more common – prominent examples include the United Socialist Party of Venezuela under Chávez (Ellner 2013), as well as the Italian *Forza Italia* and the *Popolo Della Libertá* under Berlusconi (McDonnell 2013). In these parties, the locus of organizational power is squarely at the top. By contrast, other newer parties, such as the Green “movement parties” in Europe, reject personalism in the interest of boosting participation and resisting oligarchic pressures.<sup>1</sup> However, success in achieving and maintaining internal grassroots participation, particularly after assuming national governmental responsibilities, has generally proven to be elusive for political parties (Jachnow 2013).

New parties have been especially important in Latin America (Levitsky, Loxton, and Van Dyck n.d.). One of the most salient developments in the region is the recent emergence and ascendance to power of left parties that represent the interests of the politically and socially marginalized (Cleary 2006; Castañeda 2006; Cameron and Hershberg 2010; Weyland, Madrid,

---

<sup>1</sup> The term “movement party” comes from Kitschelt (2006: 280). For a review of these parties – particularly left-libertarian ecology parties – and their experience in government, see (Müller-Rommel 1989; Müller-Rommel and Poguntke 2002).

and Hunter 2010; Levitsky and Roberts 2011; Queirolo 2013).<sup>2</sup> Usually described as movement-based parties (Van Cott 2005: 39; Hochstetler 2013: 242), they draw their organizational strength from connections to grassroots social movements, such as the Brazilian PT (Workers' Party), the Uruguayan FA (Broad Front), the Colombian 19<sup>th</sup> of April Movement (M-19), the Nicaraguan FSNL (Sandinista National Liberation Front), the Salvadorian FMLN (Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front), the Venezuelan LCR (*La Causa R*), and the Bolivian MAS (Movement Toward Socialism). Movement-based parties are not just a Latin American phenomenon; they are also emerging in Africa (LeBas 2011), the Middle East (Roy 2013), Western Europe (Mair 2013), Eastern Europe (Glenn 2003), and even North America (Schwartz 2006).<sup>3</sup> Despite their increasing importance and rise in popularity (Leon 2013: 5, 158-159), we know little about how these parties work. Research has tended to focus on the origins of movement-based parties (e.g. Kitschelt 1989a; Keck 1992; Bruhn 1997; Goldstone 2003; Chandra 2004; Van Cott 2005; Madrid 2012), meaning that the internal politics of these parties remain both under-examined and under-theorized.

In Latin America, the ascension of movement-based parties to national-level power generated some optimism about the prospects for building internally democratic organizations that encourage organized civil society to participate both widely and substantively in making collective decisions (Van Cott 2008; Handlin and Collier 2011; Goldfrank 2011; Madrid 2012; De la Torre 2013). Extending direct grassroots participation, which has been associated with the

---

<sup>2</sup> In this study, “left” parties are parties committed to the values of equality and solidarity (Huber and Stephens 2012: 28). Strategically, these parties seek to use state power to “protect individuals from market failures, reduce socio-economic inequality, and strengthen underprivileged sectors” (Levitsky and Roberts 2011: 5).

<sup>3</sup> On the recent emergence of Podemos (“We Can,” in English) in Spain, see Alonso and Rovira Kaltwasser (2015); on the emergence and recent rise to power of Syriza in Greece, see Stavrakakis (2015).

post-Cold War notion of “deepening” democracy, is a historic goal of the political left in Latin America (Roberts 1998: 3). Scholars such as Levitsky and Roberts (2011: 13) and Pribble (2013: 178) have shown that new left parties and political movements in power in Latin America vary in the extent to which their internal structures disperse authority, but more fundamental questions remain unanswered: How do these parties and political movements work internally? How democratic are they? What are their relations to grassroots allies in civil society? And what causes these movements and parties to exhibit such a wide variation in the manner in which they concentrate and disperse political power?

These questions have a long tradition in political and sociological thought. They had great relevance to Moisei Ostrogorki’s (1964 [1902]) classic theoretical work on democracy and the dangers of oligarchic tendencies within political parties in *Democracy and the Organization of Political Parties*, Max Weber’s (1946) writings on parties in *Politics as a Vocation*, and Robert Michels’s research on parties and oligarchy theory in *Political Parties* (1962 [1911]). The short version of Michels’s theory predicts the inevitable rise of elite-dominated hierarchical structures that concentrate power and de-emphasize bottom-up participation in processes of social choice.<sup>4</sup> Michels’s oligarchy theory is of special interest here because most influential analyses of party organization either explicitly confront or arrive at this same conclusion.<sup>5</sup>

Framed as a “fundamental sociological law of political parties,” it denies the very possibility of

---

<sup>4</sup> To avoid misunderstandings, I distinguish between a “short” and a “long” version of Michels’s oligarchy theory. While the former is about the *centralization of authority* and the progressive decrease of opportunities for participation in decision-making by the grassroots, the latter is about the growing *difference between the preferences* of the office-seeking leadership and those of the rank and file, and about a prevalence of decisions made in favor of the self-regarding political interests of the leaders. For a discussion on the multiple understandings of, and ambiguities in, Michels’s work, see Linz (2006: 37–45); also Kitschelt (1989b).

<sup>5</sup> The works of Michels (1962 [1911]), Duverger (1954), McKenzie (1955), Kirchheimer (1966), Katz and Mair (1995), and Panebianco (1988) are examples of this trend.



democratic modes of governance within parties – particularly as they contest elections, institutionalize their structures, and access state power.<sup>6</sup> Although the idea of internal party democracy is the subject of an age-old debate, it has regained increasing attention in the comparative study of political parties (Hazan and Rahat 2010; Cross and Katz 2013; Cross and Pilet 2013; Mudge and Chen 2014), partly in response to the almost-universal crises of representation and the decline of mass party membership. Thus, the broader theoretical question that I seek to address in this study – the conditions under which political parties can escape a seemingly inevitable oligarchical fate – is both a classic question of political sociology and a pressing issue of practical relevance in contemporary societies.

### **Substantive Relevance**

Parties are crucial, if not indispensable, for democracy.<sup>7</sup> They do more than make democracy “workable” for voters and politicians.<sup>8</sup> Parties are key for political interest aggregation and for the translation of programs into policies. Their internal structures, moreover, have implications not only for the dynamics of inter-party competition, but also for shaping normatively important public policy outcomes. For example, the politics of redistribution can be better understood by looking at parties’ organizational attributes, since more internally democratic parties generally push policy in a bolder, more redistributive, and universalistic

---

<sup>6</sup> This is captured in the statement: “it is organization which gives birth to the dominion of the elected over the electors, of the mandatories over the mandators, of the delegates over the delegators. Who says organization says oligarchy” (Michels 1962 [1911]: 365).

<sup>7</sup> As Schattschneider (1942: 1) writes, “modern democracy is *unthinkable* save in terms of political parties” (emphasis added).

<sup>8</sup> “[D]emocracy,” writes Aldrich (1995), “is *unworkable* save in terms of parties” (3—emphasis added).

direction.<sup>9</sup> Thus, there is a potentially high payoff for research on the sources of variation in the internal distribution of power within and between parties.<sup>10</sup>

The question of whether, to what extent, and how parties can defy the trend toward oligarchization is not just an interesting academic exercise; it has important practical consequences. As multiple studies document, when democratic participation within governing parties is deficient, the voices of citizens or even of the party's own constituents may not be heard, thereby hindering the average citizen's participation in political life while enhancing the discretion of leaders and party elites. When governing parties are more open, by contrast, they may generate opportunities and incentives for the political empowerment of traditionally marginalized groups and citizens, which then boosts the input that these marginalized groups have in organized politics.<sup>11</sup> Arguments about party democracy are, in effect, arguments about "democratizing" or "deepening" democracy.<sup>12</sup> The goal of this study is not to refute Michels's "iron law" of oligarchy or prove that it does not apply everywhere. Rather, the goal is to use original, systematic evidence to explain the conditions and mechanisms under which broader and substantive grassroots participation can be promoted within contemporary governing parties that

---

<sup>9</sup> For excellent analyses, see Pribble (2013) and Huber and Stephens (2012).

<sup>10</sup> See Mudge and Chen's (2014: 320) call for research on this question.

<sup>11</sup> Thus, in parallel to *workplace* democracy (Pateman 1970; Huber 1980), party democracy can promote the involvement of groups and individuals in the making of collective decisions that affect their social life. It can achieve so not only by promoting their participation, but also by extending substantive decision-making authority and influence.

<sup>12</sup> While the term "democratizing democracy" is taken from Santos (2005), the idea of "deepening democracy" is taken from Roberts (1998). Both terms are similar; they presuppose a move from a "shallow" formal democracy to a more "participatory" mode of democracy—one that expands the opportunities for popular sectors to exert meaningful influence on the political process (Huber, Rueschemeyer, and Stephens 1997). In this view, democracy is not just about its formal institutions, but rather it also has to do with increased empowerment of its citizens, especially the most subordinate groups in society.

have a grassroots social movement base.<sup>13</sup> To date, the scholarly literature gives very little theoretical guidance to assist with the empirical exploration of this puzzle.

### **Theoretical Relevance**

In addition to substantive and practical relevance, this study helps address significant gaps in the scholarly literature of comparative politics. Understanding the internal life of an increasingly common phenomenon like movement-based parties adds to one of the most strikingly under-developed and fragmented literatures in comparative politics: the debate about what happens inside the “black box” of parties (Levitsky 2001). Political parties remain weakly organized in much of the developing world (Cyr 2012), but the era of party-building is far from over (Tavits 2013), and movement-based parties are well-equipped to build strong organizations (Levitsky, Loxton, and Van Dyck n.d.). Some of these parties are clearly better than others at generating opportunities for grassroots influence, yet the literature has relatively few insights to help explain this puzzle.

The current study provides a much-needed addition to the study of the internal life of movement-based parties. It not only attempts to demonstrate the relevance of civil society strength for the internal life of such parties, but it also contributes to understanding the broader theoretical question about what causes the patterns of intra-party power distribution to vary so widely. In the remainder of this introduction, I propose an original approach that stresses the effects that historical and structural factors have in affecting internal party governance, and then I emphasize how these factors generate pressures against the oligarchization of movement-based parties. I start by giving a more precise definition for the concept of movement-based parties,

---

<sup>13</sup> My approach is thus akin to the one followed by Lipset, Trow, and Coleman (Lipset, Coleman, and Trow 1977 [1956]: 13) in their seminal study of the conditions affecting *union* democracy.

and then I review the most relevant existing literature. After discussing the literature's key contributions and limitations, I present my theory's arguments and causal mechanisms. I then outline the case selection and methodological approach and discuss the theoretical contributions of this study. I conclude by providing a roadmap for the rest of the study.

### **Movement-Based Parties**

Movement-based parties are parties with a core constituency of *grassroots social movements*.<sup>14</sup> This definition parallels Levitsky's (2003: 4) definition of labor-based parties, with social movements rather than organized labor as the core constituency. Movement-based parties are also different from Kitschelt's (2006) analytical characterization of "movement parties," which are almost always the electoral vehicles of a social movement mobilized around a single issue (Kitschelt 2006: 283). By contrast, *movement-based* parties are broader alliances of various movements and, as such, they are better prepared to incorporate a broader set of issues, actors, and demands. In contemporary Latin America, examples of these parties include the Brazilian Workers' Party (PT), the Ecuadorian Pachakutik Plurinational Unity Movement – New Country (Pachakutik), the Uruguayan Broad Front (FA), the Mexican Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD), and the Venezuelan Radical Cause (LCR). Outside Latin America, contemporary examples of movement-based parties include, but are not limited to, the African National Congress (ANC) in South Africa, Hamas in Gaza, Hezbollah in Lebanon, and the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, as well as historical cases such as *Solidarność* (Solidarity) in Poland.<sup>15</sup>

---

<sup>14</sup> The term "core constituency" comes from Gibson (1992; 1996). It refers to specific sectors of society that provide financial resources, policy-making support, and guidance to a given political party. In the case of movement-based parties, movements also provide mobilizational power.

<sup>15</sup> The mid-nineteenth-century French Republican Party is another key historical movement-based party that has received some attention in the social-movement literature. See Aminzade (1995).

Movement-based parties follow what Roberts (1998: 75) calls the “organic” model of party development, in that they are organizationally hybrid: they engage in extra-institutional social mobilization and also compete for office.<sup>16</sup> Members and leaders who run for electoral office tend to be “drawn directly from social movements rather than from the ranks of a separate, professional political caste” (Roberts 1998: 75). While these parties may vary in terms of ideology, they almost always share a rejection of hierarchical control as well as an explicit commitment to maximizing democratic participation at the grassroots level (Carty 2013).

Movement-based parties are often seen as “transitional phenomena” (Kitschelt 2006: 288), but the “transitioning into what” question is not settled. One salient argument suggests that the highly participatory and “bottom-up” decision-making patterns that are generally present at early stages in the life of a movement-based party are viable for only a short time, as the logics of electoral competition and territorial representation will inevitably push parties to subordinate their mobilizational strategies to the imperatives of organization and the exercise of power. However, movement-based parties may not evolve in a unilinear way. It is also theoretically plausible that such parties follow contingent structural and strategic incentives that make it possible that they will return to the organizational patterns common in their early phases.<sup>17</sup> In short, there are no *a priori* reasons to assume that parties based on movements will inevitably, or by necessity, transition to a form of party that is hierarchical, exclusive, and centralized, following an “iron law” of organization.

Because movement-based parties are fundamentally moving targets whose organizational boundaries are empirically fuzzy, they offer unique opportunities to examine potential forms of

---

<sup>16</sup> De Leon (2014: 158) calls them “omnibus” parties, acknowledging that it is “difficult to discern where the party begins and where it ends.”

<sup>17</sup> For a parallel argument, see Kitschelt (2006: 286).

political organization that challenge conventional notions of how parties work internally.<sup>18</sup> Their genesis in grassroots mobilization and their hybrid nature may create favorable conditions for opposition among allied groups to check elites' power from within and to generate pressures from below in ways that constrain the decision-making power and autonomy of the party's top leadership. This dynamic has the effect of encouraging democratic control from below. Not every movement-based party develops such accountability structures, however. As I argue in the present study, the realization of this potential depends heavily on the organizational strength, unity, and mobilizational capacity of allied movements.

### **Existing Literature: Contributions and Limitations**

The question of whether tendencies toward power concentration can be mitigated has been key in political sociology analyses of parties. Building on Michels's "iron law," a large body of literature holds that the logics of organization and the exercise of power will inevitably lead to hierarchy and to the decreasing power of the grassroots activists in internal party affairs. These studies, of which Duverger (1954), Kirchheimer (1966), and Panebianco (1988) are amongst the best-known proponents, conceive of parties as dynamic, evolving units. These studies portray parties as evolutionary undertakings; in other words, this type of literature assumes that while parties might emerge as representatives of grassroots movements and develop strong linkages with civic associations and corporate interests, age and maturation will cause parties to gradually detach from their grassroots allies.

Several factors are said to push parties' internal structures in the direction of power concentration. One central explanation is psychological; it assumes that the preference structures

---

<sup>18</sup> The challenge is to identify patterns that are sustainable both in the short and in the long run.

of the party leadership change over time, as elites' enthusiasm for listening to the "bases" tends to gradually go away.<sup>19</sup> The leadership will sooner or later abandon the interests of their grassroots allies in favor of privileging the logics of electoral competition and political power, meaning that the leadership will sideline the grassroots from internal decision-making processes. Another explanation is functional. When parties become increasingly preoccupied with mainstream electoral competition and adopt "catch all" strategies of recruitment, they need to distance themselves from their original constituencies, and this move pushes their structures in the direction of power concentration (Kirchheimer 1966: 193). Similarly, for Panebianco (1988: 264-267), parties might start their lives as "mass-bureaucratic" organizations, but they will sooner or later move toward becoming "electoral-professional" organizations controlled by an entrenched minority.

More recent research on parties in advanced industrialized countries has generated important explanations for the ways in which power within parties tends to become increasingly concentrated when parties win elections and hold public office (Katz and Mair 1995: 13). These studies advance a Michelsian-Weberian argument claiming that as parties become closer to the state, they tend to become separated from their allies in civil society. Western European parties, Katz and Mair argue (2009: 753), "increasingly function like cartels, employing the resources of the state to limit political competition and ensure their own electoral success." For these authors, the key factors leading to this outcome are a series of social and political transformations. The growing importance of the mass media, for instance (and the rising costs of political campaigns), push party leaders to rely less on their constituents and more on public financial subsidies (Katz and Mair 2009: 754). By depending on state-based funding rather than on membership

---

<sup>19</sup> This assumption is present in the works of Michels (1962 [1911]) and Panebianco (1988).

contributions, advocates of the cartel party thesis argue that such developments have brought about party professionalization, bureaucratization, and hierarchy. As De Leon (2014: 161) argues, this line of argumentation represents “yet another kind of Michelsian party oligarchy for the twenty-first century.” An observable implication of the cartel party thesis is a trend toward internal power concentration, which is, in turn, closely linked to a growing separation between parties and civil society allies. While using different parlance, scholars of social movements have reached similar conclusions. Schwartz (2006) argues that parties based on movements tend to lose their “movement” features as minorities within their structures gain control over party affairs and become preoccupied with the logics of political power and electoral competition.

The cartel party thesis has been sharply criticized,<sup>20</sup> particularly because the experience of Green parties in government has shown that some of these parties have avoided extensive hierarchical development and have maintained vibrant connections with their grassroots bases.<sup>21</sup> Additionally, the concept of cartelization does not translate well into non-European contexts. Whether the cartel party thesis, as formulated by Katz and Mair (1995; 2009), is empirically accurate or not is both a stimulating question and also an academic exercise of splitting hairs. With or without cartel parties, the trend toward internal power concentration in political parties is as pervasive in the real world of politics as it is hard to ignore for academics.

Latin American parties are no exception to this trend. Indeed, many scholars have shown that Latin American parties, including movement-based parties, have indeed followed the general trend toward internal power concentration. In general, this literature takes the form of in-depth case studies of major parties, and it is focused on explaining their internal dynamics in

---

<sup>20</sup> For critiques on the cartel party thesis, see Koole (1996) and Kitschelt (2000).

<sup>21</sup> See Frankland, Lucardie, and Rihoux (2008) for an assessment with mixed conclusions.



response to changing environmental conditions. Existing studies tend to focus on specific dimensions of internal party organization, such as adaptive capacity (Levitsky 2003; Roberts 1998), institutionalization (McGuire 1997), issues related to emergence and consolidation (Bruhn 1997), and factionalism (Coppedge 1994). While these studies do not focus on explaining patterns of internal power distributions, they provide powerful evidence in support of a trend toward oligarchization.<sup>22</sup> Hunter (2010) is a good example of one such study; her work focuses on how the Brazilian PT, which is another classic instance of a movement-based party in power, has lost a great deal of its initial bottom-up participatory thrust. As the author demonstrates, participation in electoral arenas caused the party to adapt partisan logic that crowded out or tended to suppress the movement logic of autonomous social mobilization. This behavior then enabled a widening gap between the PT and allied civil society organizations.<sup>23</sup> This example is representative of existing studies, which generally indicate that the tendency toward internal power concentration and oligarchization is pervasive. Such oligarchization begins before parties come to power and is aggravated when they switch from opposition to government.

Though these works make important contributions to the study of parties based upon movements, and although in many ways they serve as models for analyzing internal party dynamics, they do not engage systematically and comparatively with the questions of internal power distributions, nor do they investigate how parties relate to social movements and to the state when the former are in power.<sup>24</sup> This is an important gap that the present study seeks to

---

<sup>22</sup> More recent comparative works point in a similar direction. See, for instance, Nogueira-Budny's (2013) study of left party adaptation in Latin America.

<sup>23</sup> Hochstetler (2008) reaches a similar conclusion in her study of PT-civil society dilemmas in Lula's Brazil.

<sup>24</sup> An exception is Gómez Bruera (2013: Chapter 3). His focus, however, is on how the exercise of power has transformed the PT's agenda, not its internal structures.

redress. Why do some movement-based parties become top-down organizations, structured to enhance the power of the leadership and increasingly distanced from the grassroots, whereas others admit more influence from below and resist the trend toward oligarchization? What are the contexts or conditions under which this trend does not hold, and what mechanisms help impede it? As the present study shows, not only do movement-based parties vary considerably in terms how they are internally organized and how authority and power are allocated within them, but also they do not evolve in a uniform manner by following the path toward internal concentration of power and oligarchy. I explain the factors that account for this variation in the pages that follow.

### **Studying Power Concentration**

The central question driving this study is the degree to which strong civil society organizations at the grassroots level can wield control over national party affairs and elites within movement-based parties. To measure degrees of internal power concentration and grassroots control, I therefore study the balance of intra-party power in processes of candidate selection and in processes of national policy-making. These two dimensions attract perhaps the highest level of agreement as valid indicators of intra-party power distribution in the party literature, and they are arguably the two measures with the broadest scope for comparative analysis. Candidate selection is commonly regarded as *the* best measure for internal power distribution (Gallagher and Marsh 1988; Bille 2001; Hazan and Rahat 2010: 6-12; Field and Siavelis 2008: 620).<sup>25</sup> Power

---

<sup>25</sup> In an earlier contribution, Schattschneider (1942: 64) goes so far as to claim that “the nature of the nominating process determines the nature of the party; he who can make the nominations is the owner of the party. This is therefore one of the best points at which to observe the distribution of power within the party.”

concentration is high when the party's central leadership, or even a single individual, controls the selection process; it is low when allied grassroots groups control it.<sup>26</sup>

However, in contexts of high poverty and inequality, where issues like patronage and clientelism are generally widespread, candidate selection may not be, by itself, a robust enough proxy to measure internal grassroots control. In such contexts, grassroots organizations can wield control over selection, but they may be irrelevant in other party decisions, such as in the policy-making realm.<sup>27</sup> It is therefore crucial to examine whether greater grassroots control over the selection of candidates also translates into greater grassroots input into, and control over, party policy (Katz and Mair 1995: 10–11; Loxbo 2013). Taken together, in short, these two dimensions in the life of a party can tell us a great deal about how power is allocated internally and the extent to which civil society organizations at the grassroots are genuinely empowered in relation to party elites.

### **The MAS as a Movement-Based Party**

This study treats the Bolivian MAS (Movement Toward Socialism) as an example of a movement-based party in power and argues that it deviates from the existing wisdom about this type of parties: defying theoretical expectations, it has followed a remarkably different organizational trajectory that has facilitated grassroots impact and constrained elite control, even after assuming power at the national level.<sup>28</sup> This case is particularly important because

---

<sup>26</sup> Low degrees of power concentration thus imply the empowerment of the grassroots in relation to party elites.

<sup>27</sup> In other words, grassroots control of selection processes can be seen as an empirical manifestation of co-optation.

<sup>28</sup> This is the story of the MAS so far; I am not claiming that it will remain open to grassroots input in the future. It is likely that it will become increasingly centralized if it becomes a hegemonic power holder, like South Africa's ANC, but it is also theoretically plausible that if it loses power it will seek to revitalize

conventional accounts of movement-based parties focus on cases that develop a strong organizational infrastructure of collective action before assuming national power, such as the Brazilian PT (Samuels 2004; Hunter 2010; Ribeiro 2014). Consequently, previous studies' conclusions tend to stress the "normalization" of these parties and the difficulties of sustaining bottom-up participation when they govern at the national level.<sup>29</sup> Thus, as a deviant case, or as an "anomaly," the MAS can serve to advance and refine theories of party development by explaining organizational patterns that can empower the grassroots in relation to party elites.<sup>30</sup>

The MAS stands out for its genesis in a highly organized and disciplined social movement of *cocaleros* (coca producers). Founded in Bolivia's Chapare region in the mid-1990s, it became the country's largest party in less than a decade. Its leader, Evo Morales, won three presidential elections (2005, 2009, and 2014) with absolute majorities. The MAS is a different case from other movement-based parties in the region because it represents indigenous constituencies—in fact, even more unusually, it grew directly out of the mobilization of these constituencies. To state that the MAS represents indigenous constituencies is not to say that it is an "indigenous" party. Instead, we can conceive of the MAS as a party that presents itself using an ethnic discourse but that also tries to appeal to a wider constituency by blending class and ethnic elements in a manner that tolerates ethnic diversity.<sup>31</sup>

---

linkages with the grassroots. The broader point is that, theoretically, there are no good reasons to assume a priori that movement-based parties like the MAS will develop in a uniform manner, as the existing literature predicts.

<sup>29</sup> The term "normalization" is taken from Hunter (2007).

<sup>30</sup> On the importance of "deviant" cases in comparative politics, see Lijphart (1971: 692). These cases, in short, can contribute to theory building by challenging and extending established propositions. The term "anomaly" is taken from Keck's (1992) study of the origins of the Brazilian PT.

<sup>31</sup> Madrid (2008) uses the term ethnopopulism to describe the MAS. Ethnopopulist parties are "inclusive ethnically based parties that adopt classical populist electoral strategies" (Madrid 2008: 475). These parties present themselves with an ethnic discourse but try to appeal to a wider constituency. The

As an organization, the MAS emerged from the belief of *cocaleros* and other peasant groups that they should have a “political instrument” to contest elections on their own, rather than in alliance with the existing parties.<sup>32</sup> The resulting instrument, a loosely organized party, engaged in electoral politics at the local level, making rapid gains, specifically in the Chapare region. Early electoral successes in the Chapare helped to consolidate coca growers as the leading group within the party’s central leadership. The party’s rapid ascension to power, in turn, occurred through the construction of an unusually strong rural-urban coalition crafted via different linkages between the MAS and organized popular constituencies. This development took place in the midst of a severe social crisis that shook the country between 2000 and 2005 (Anria 2013, 26–28). Ever since assuming power, the MAS has been characterized by its high degrees of pragmatism—in its rhetoric, its policies, and its alliance-building approach (Harten 2011; Gray Molina 2013; Farthing and Kohl 2014; Anria and Cyr 2015). This pragmatism has made the MAS elusive to simple classifications, and consequently many scholars have avoided such efforts.

Despite this pragmatism, the MAS maintains a grassroots social movement core. The organizations that founded the MAS, and particularly the *cocaleros*, still constitute its “core constituency.” According to Gibson (1996: 7), a party’s core constituency provides crucial financial resources, policy-making support, and mobilizational capacity, shaping the party’s identity to a large extent. The weight of such groups in internal party affairs is unrivaled in the case of the MAS, as they have played a central role in setting priorities, agenda items, and

---

difference between these and exclusionary indigenous-based parties is that the latter cannot make broad appeals beyond a specific and territorially defined ethnic group. Examples of these are the Pachakuti Indigenous Movement (MIP) and the Revolutionary Liberation Movement Tupac Katari (MRTKL).

<sup>32</sup> The “political instrument”—as the MAS is still referred to by its founders—was created around the idea of achieving the “self-representation” of popular groups.

political action. In sum, then, the party's genesis as a political organization was undoubtedly from the bottom up, making the MAS a clear case of an organization that followed the "organic model" of party development described by Roberts (1998: 75). This foundational element, together with the fact that the MAS has retained a core constituency of grassroots social movements even after gaining state power, makes the MAS a clear example of a movement-based party. While the party as a bureaucratic organization remains relatively weak 20 years after its emergence, its main source of organizational power derives from its close ties to a wide array of rural and urban-popular movements and associations, which provide a formidable mass base and coalition of support. Today, 10 years after it gained power for the first time, the MAS remains the only truly national party in Bolivia and is that country's undisputed governing party.

### **Historical and Structural Explanations**

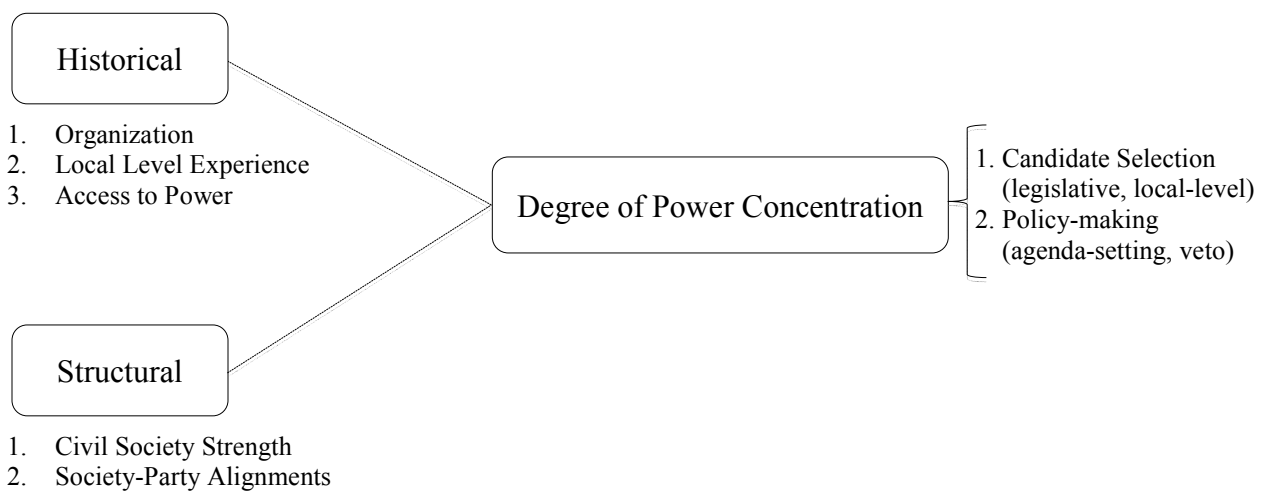
My explanation of the conditions under which movement-based parties can remain open and internally responsive is based on a combination of historical and structural factors. Historical factors comprise party organizational attributes embedded in the party's "genetic model" (Panebianco 1988: 50), as well as the party's accumulated experience before capturing executive power at the national level, both of which create legacies with enduring effects. Structural factors, in turn, refer to elements broadly associated with the strength, density, and cohesion of civil society. As the empirical literature shows, strongly organized societies serve as a potential power base for political parties.<sup>33</sup> They can also shape internal party governance in ways that generate pressures from below and constrain the ability of party's central leadership to exercise

---

<sup>33</sup> At the most basic level, allies in civil society, including labor unions, peasant leagues, neighborhood associations, and others, help parties win elections. When parties are in power, allied groups in civil society can also provide mobilizational power.

power. In short, both historical and structural factors create distinctive incentives for and constraints on party building and the promotion of internal grassroots participation in the political process when parties govern at the national level. Figure 1.1. provides a summary and illustration of the main arguments explaining the factors shaping the degree of internal power concentration.

Figure 1.1. Summary of Main Argument



### ***Historical Factors***

The first historical factor is genetic.<sup>34</sup> As developed by Panebianco (1988: 50-53), the concept of a “genetic model” refers to the Weberian-inspired intuition that the founding

---

<sup>34</sup> The literature emphasizing the lasting consequences of a party’s origins has a long lineage that can be traced back to the classic works of Weber (1968 [1922]), Duverger (1954), Lipset and Rokkan (1967), and Panebianco (1988).

moments of institutions create enduring legacies.<sup>35</sup> This study borrows the idea that paths followed early in the life of parties are important, and it uses the term “genetic model” specifically in regard to the set of *internal organizational structures and patterns of behavior* adopted at a party’s origins. This genetic model creates lasting legacies that can facilitate or inhibit grassroots participation once parties assume national office.

Three elements regarding the genetic model deserve attention. Specifically, the concern is with: (1) the existence of organic ties with mass organizations and grassroots social movements, (2) the development of an elaborate bureaucratic structure, and (3) the internal centralization of power at the founding moment of a party. I conceptualize the existence of organic ties as the presence or absence of formal organizational connections with constituent social organizations, including, but not limited to, labor unions, peasant leagues, and urban popular associations like neighborhood associations. In turn, I conceptualize the development of an elaborate bureaucratic structure as the emphasis on constructing rules about membership and delegation of authority. According to Max Weber (1968 [1922]), the logic of bureaucratization breeds hierarchy and specialization. It works to ensure that the internal lives of parties are run by the party leadership and a professional staff, with the grassroots playing a marginal role in internal processes such as candidate nomination (1968 [1922]: 1129) and the drafting of party programs (1968 [1922]: 1396). Rules about membership and delegation of authority can generate power concentration, as exhibited in the example of the Brazilian Workers’ Party (PT), but it is also theoretically possible that, if circumstances are conducive, such rules can contribute to prevent hierarchical control.<sup>36</sup>

---

<sup>35</sup> In Panebianco’s work, a party’s “genetic model” is defined by three factors traceable to a party’s founding moment: its initial territorial strategy, the presence (or absence) of an external sponsoring group, and the role of charisma in the formative phase.

<sup>36</sup> Much of this is related to the type of electoral rules within parties, as will be seen in Chapter 5.



Finally, I conceptualize the centralization of political authority as the degree to which internal decision-making rules and mechanisms obstruct or allow for internal grassroots participation. At one extreme, high levels of centralization are associated with limited grassroots input in the making of decisions; at the other extreme, low levels of centralization generally involve more opportunities for grassroots input.

The founding moment of a party has several long-lasting effects. For one, organizational patterns and practices adopted early on, as defined by the three elements just outlined, can shape the degree of power concentration within parties later in time. This study demonstrates that the close links with grassroots social movements and popular organizations developed by the MAS in its formative years left an indelible mark on the party and affected its behavior once in power. The MAS emerged out of the autonomous mobilization of social movements, and, ever since its birth, it has been infused with a rich tradition of participatory politics found in local communities and popular organizations. As such, the party has promoted grassroots participation since its founding moment by engaging in regular consultations between the leadership and its grassroots base.

In the MAS's early days, low levels of organizational centralization promoted direct grassroots input in the making of collective decisions in what remained an essentially non-bureaucratic structure. On the one hand, the lack of an elaborate bureaucratic structure opened the way for a small but varied group of individuals to become the decision-makers by default,<sup>37</sup> but, even as the party gained national-level power, constituent social movements continued to exert pressure from below that counterbalanced these tendencies. In other words, the lack of an elaborate bureaucratic structure facilitated the emergence of opposition among allied groups that

---

<sup>37</sup> For a parallel argument, see Madrid (2012: 163)

checked power from within and kept open channels for agenda setting from below. Thus, gaining national-level power resulted in a recurrent tension between attempts to control grassroots participation from the top and efforts to maintain autonomy from below. Yet, despite the centralizing logic and pressures associated with governing a country, Bolivian social movements have maintained a degree of political autonomy from their allies in power, which has allowed them to pursue their agendas and priorities in spite of attempts to control them from the top. The explanation is genetic, referring to the party's foundational moment, and also historical, referring to its accumulated experience before coming to power.

The comparative literature on party change and strategy provides a useful point of departure for developing the claim about the importance of parties' experiences before assuming national power (Kirchheimer 1966; Przeworski and Sprague 1986; Wickham 2004). It links electoral participation, legislative activity, and governing experience at the subnational level to changes in the policy orientation of parties, particularly with regard to changes in the direction of programmatic moderation (Kitschelt 1994; Samuels 2004; Hunter 2007). Though much of this literature focuses on explaining changes in parties' ideological outlook as a result of the kinds of pressures associated with the dynamics of electoral competition, it also applies to organizational structures.

The context of social effervescence and political flux in which the MAS came to national power generated important, long-lasting legacies that shaped its organizational development and behavior as a governing party. For example, social movements in Bolivia remained vibrant once their allies captured the presidency because these same founding and allied social movements had just contributed to the overthrow of two prior unpopular governments and played a crucial

role propelling the party to national office.<sup>38</sup> From the perspective of the governing party, this civic engagement meant that the party could rely on continued mobilizational strategies both as a policy-making tool and in electoral campaigns. This enabled the party to overcome resistance from the guardians of the *ancien régime* and pass key legislation that, in an adverse context, would fundamentally re-shape Bolivian politics. It also meant that even after assuming office, the party retained many of the organizational characteristics of its associated social movements and deliberately resisted developing a bureaucratic organizational pattern. Although once in power the party leadership attempted to co-opt the leadership of organizational partners in civil society, grassroots leaders could not always guarantee the compliance of the rank and file with the government's policies. This situation led to challenges to the organizational legitimacy of the party in government.<sup>39</sup> It also contributed to keeping the party responsive to movements once in power and created pressures for power dispersion.

With the rise in popularity and ascent to power of the left in Latin America since 1998 (e.g. Cleary 2006; Castañeda 2006; Cameron and Hershberg 2010), some scholars have taken a similar approach to mine to understand what elements shape the policy orientation of different leftist governments (Weyland, Madrid, and Hunter 2010: 18–19). Levitsky and Roberts (2011), for instance, examine the effects of systemic incentives on governing strategy. They argue that contexts of widespread crisis encourage parties to pursue more “radical” political projects of

---

<sup>38</sup> They brought new issues to the agenda, imposed a mandate on Morales, and also challenged crucial government decisions

<sup>39</sup> As Kitschelt (1989a: 130) notes, “an organization enjoys legitimacy when its members accept its decisions as authoritative and final even if they personally disagree with them.” This presupposes a sense of “loyalty” to the organization—the acceptance of its decisions as authoritative even if they go against particular or more corporatist interests. Movement-based parties are particularly susceptible to suffering challenges to their organizational legitimacy, particularly as they grow and become more internally diverse.

state transformation when these parties assume national-level power. By contrast, the argument goes, contexts of institutional continuity might encourage governing parties to carry out more moderate reform agendas. While these are valid points, they do not translate *ipso facto* into arguments about internal party governance. In other words, policy or ideological changes do not, by necessity, dictate internal governance structures and practices. The effects of crises on parties are rarely uniform, as the comparative evidence presented in this study demonstrates. Crisis contexts may or may not encourage the party leadership to take moderate policy stances once in power; however, the responses to crises that affect internal party governance are—and should be treated as—analytically distinctive from external crises. Internal governance adaptations are almost always contingent on inherited *organizational* legacies. In short, rather than succumbing to the homogenizing effects of crises, parties’ responses to internal crises are highly influenced by their organizational legacies and by the conditions surrounding their access to power. It is here that historical legacies meet explanations based on broader structural constraints.

### ***Structural Factors***

Structural factors associated with the organizational strength of civil society are important in my explanatory framework. By “civil society,” I mean the totality of politically oriented associations that contribute to the self-organization of society, which can be the basis for collective action and political mobilization.<sup>40</sup> These associations include, but are not limited to, labor and peasant unions, neighborhood associations and mining cooperatives, and organizations representing the urban and rural poor, including the unemployed, artisans,

---

<sup>40</sup> This definition of civil society is a modification of Huber and Stephens’ (2012: 26) definition.

pensioners, advocacy groups, and street vendors, among others.<sup>41</sup> The focus of this study is on associations that facilitate the mobilization of the socioeconomic segment of society generally designated as “popular sectors” (Oxhorn 1998; Silva 2009; Rossi 2015). These associations, as has been firmly established in the empirical literature, provide different kinds of resources to political parties, which “enable them to be the primary connectors of state and society” (Vergara 2011: 74). Parties pursue connections to civic associations to expand territorially, recruit leaders, distribute the party’s program, collect local information, and so on. Whether on the left or on the right, parties have traditionally benefited electorally from their linkages to unions and other grassroots movements.

Early theoretical works,<sup>42</sup> as well as more recent empirical research on party building, have established that densely organized civil societies can serve as mobilizing structures for new movement-based parties.<sup>43</sup> The general expectation in that literature is that the organizational infrastructures of politically oriented associations or other collective actors<sup>44</sup> may contribute to building strong parties by reducing costs and coordination problems associated with those efforts (LeBas 2011). This “organizational inheritance” – as Levitsky, Loxton, and Van Dyck (n.d.) argue in a recent contribution – can provide invaluable resources to new political parties and

---

<sup>41</sup> This is clearly a restrictive definition of civil society. It focuses on associations that can provide resources to parties. It excludes groups such as sports leagues, choral societies, card-playing groups, etc., that can also contribute to strengthening civil society but may not necessarily play an important role shaping the internal politics of parties.

<sup>42</sup> See, particularly, the works of Duverger (1954), Huntington (1968), and Lipset and Rokkan (1967).

<sup>43</sup> On the importance of linkages between civic associations and parties for party building in Latin America, see (Collier and Collier 1991; Van Cott 2005; Vergara 2011; Levitsky, Loxton, and Van Dyck n.d.); on African parties, see LeBas (2011); on European parties, see Panebianco (1988), (Kitschelt 1989a; Kalyvas 1996), Bartolini (2000), Glenn (2003).

<sup>44</sup> These might include labor and agrarian unions, community associations, religious associations, indigenous movements, and other “new” grassroots movements.

contribute to their long-term empowerment. For these authors, new parties are more likely to take root, and also to persist over time, where politicians build upon the infrastructure of pre-existing organizations. Movement-based parties, even if initially loosely organized and held together, are well positioned to become strong parties in the long run because they draw on the resources of a multiplicity of civic associations that provide crucial assets for party building.

Existing studies highlight the theoretical importance of the organizational context in helping to explain the emergence and the strength of movement-based parties, as well as how that context contributes to electoral competition. In the present study, I take the idea that the existence of a dense organizational context matters, but I move beyond the party formation stage and beyond the competition aspect. I add the insight that variation in both the organizational strength and in the mobilizational capacity of civil society actors can also affect the internal governance structures of parties and their tendencies toward power concentration. Concretely, I argue that the presence of civil societies that are: (1) strongly organized, (2) united, and (3) highly mobilized can generate politically consequential pressures from below that can serve as limits on the autonomy and decision-making power of the party's top leadership. These pressures may also defy trends toward internal power concentration by helping to keep channels open for agenda setting from the bottom to the top, and thus they can contribute to keeping parties responsive to societal demands.

The above terms may require some further elaboration. For the purposes of this study, “strongly organized” civil societies are those with high organizational density, measured as the percentage of the population that are members of grassroots organizations. The term “united” in turn refers to affinity of purpose – that is, the ability of social and political actors to privilege common purpose over narrow organizational interests in order to agree on decisions affecting

common interests. Unity among organizations not only strengthens civil society, but it can also represent a counterweight to the centralizing tendencies of an allied party. “Highly mobilized” societies, finally, are those where the majority of the population is capable of self-organizing and articulating demands in the political arena via contentious bargaining. As stated previously, these different attributes shaping the nature and strength of civil society are power resources that can help resist a Michelsian shift in the character of an allied movement-based party.<sup>45</sup> The three attributes are not always clearly distinguishable, however. Theoretically and empirically, the effects of these attributes are intertwined.

The strength of civil society first contributes to resisting pressures toward internal concentration in the realm of candidate selection. Elite decision-making by the party leadership is less likely to take place in districts where civil society is strong and politically aligned with the MAS.<sup>46</sup> In such contexts, the grassroots organizations can effectively impose their choices for MAS candidates, constraining the autonomy of the party leadership. By contrast, in contexts where civil society is strong but aligned with an opposition party, oligarchic decision-making in the hands of a small party elite—and even in the hands of one single prominent leader—is much more likely to occur. The same is true in contexts where civil society is strong but aligned with multiple parties. Where strong organizations manage to coordinate and agree on a candidate, then they can wield power within the party and nominate their desired candidate. However, where there are strong organizations but no consensus among them, a situation I designate as “coordination failures,” the party leadership is likely to concentrate power and nominate desired

---

<sup>45</sup> They are power resources because groups in civil society, especially popular sectors, can use them to expand their substantive influence (Rueschemeyer, Huber, and Stephens 1992).

<sup>46</sup> The term “political alignments”—or to be “politically aligned”—refers to a shared understanding that both civil society organizations and the party belong to the same political camp (in other words, it is not about *formal* organizational ties).

candidates. Finally, contexts of weak civil society create organizational opportunities for power concentration in the hands of a few party elites, meaning that top-down elite choices tend to prevail.

Civil society strength also affects the degree of internal power concentration in the policy-making process. The explanation here is twofold. On the one hand, it focuses on what I term the “creative capacities” of organizational partners. This term refers to the ability of civil society organizations to put issues on the agenda and to use pressure to ensure governing parties respond by passing certain policies. As the present study demonstrates, the capacity of civil society organizations to generate decisions and policy proposals varies by area and is contingent on the relative power of groups pushing for reform, giving rise to patterns of interest articulation best described as “contentious bargaining.” Alongside the pressures in the direction of power centralization that are generally associated with the function of governing a country,<sup>47</sup> alternative patterns of policy-making can also be found in regard to different policy areas. In policy areas where large numbers of well-organized popular groups are directly and visibly affected in their productive roles there is generally more popular pressure for influencing these decisions, and the MAS has adopted agenda items, priorities, and actions at the behest of some of its stronger allied grassroots organizations. The pattern holds in explaining the development of agrarian and mining policies in contemporary Bolivia, where organizational partners of the party in government have been critically important for advancing their preferred policies. Indeed, it can be asserted that the greater the organizational strength and mobilizational capacity of allied groups, the greater the degree to which their participation in collective decision-making will translate into influence on desired policy outcomes, other things being equal.

---

<sup>47</sup> The MAS, of course, does not fully escape this pattern.



On the other hand, the explanation centers on what I term the “negative capacities” of allied grassroots actors. This concept refers to the veto and counter-mobilization power of organizational partners. These partners are usually individual or collective actors whose behavior can impose effective constraints on the authority and decision-making power of party leaders by blocking or modifying legislative proposals that are on the agenda. It is in this area that oligarchic decision-making is most constrained in the case of the Bolivian MAS. Organizational partners can place limits on the authority of the party leadership and keep the party responsive to particular societal demands. Not every group has the same capacity to pressure the governing party from below and block or modify policy proposals, however. A group’s success is contingent on the breadth of the veto coalition that mobilized popular actors manage to configure and on the group’s mobilizational capacity. In general, if a mobilized grassroots actor builds a broad-based veto coalition with multiple sectors of society, then the veto coalition is more likely to succeed in forcing policy change. At the other extreme, if a mobilized grassroots actor acts alone and cannot build a strong veto coalition, it is more likely that the party in office will defeat attempts from below to push policy change. Whether a policy initiative has the support of the party’s political core is also important, but the effects of this variable are conditioned by the strength of the veto coalition. In short, meaningful advances toward the mitigation of top-down elite choices within governing parties require mobilized pressures from below: the broader and better coordinated the pressures from below, the greater the chances of enhancing the governing party’s responsiveness to allied grassroots actors.

### ***Counterarguments***

Two reasonable critiques of my historical- and structural-centered explanation might be, firstly, that it fails to capture some of the nuanced ways in which domestic and international

economic pressures may contribute to facilitating or hindering internal grassroots participation, and, secondly, that it ignores leadership qualities that favor oligarchy. My argument does not discount economic or leadership factors, but it holds that historical and structural elements discussed above better explain the extent to which governing parties can defy the pro-oligarchy pressures that economic and leadership factors exert. Comparative evidence of other movement-based parties in power supports the explanatory power of the historical and structural dimensions developed above. Economic pressures do not explain why, when confronted with similar pressures, some parties remain open to input from below and more internally democratic. In Uruguay, for example, severe economic pressures in the aftermath of the Argentine collapse of 2001 set the policy agenda for the Broad Front (FA). Yet economic pressures did not push internal structures in the direction of centralization. Similarly, a context of crisis in Bolivia encouraged the MAS to continue its reliance on mobilizational strategies as a policy tool, a pattern that is embedded in the party's "genetic model." In both cases, organizational legacies outweighed external pressures.

Charismatic political leaders are widely seen as inimical to internal democracy. When parties do not manage to outgrow leaders – that is, when they do not "routinize" charisma – there is a sense that the leaders "own" the parties.<sup>48</sup> As Huber and Stephens (2012: 266) note, historically, dominant personalities "do not have a good track record when it comes to building strong political parties that would become organizational actors independent of their leaders." Latin American history offers several examples of political parties turning into personalistic vehicles for charismatic leaders who control much of the party's internal life from the top and

---

<sup>48</sup> On this, see Weber (1968 [1922]: 1121).

according to their own taste. Latin America is, in short, what I would term a “cemetery of oligarchies.”

Morales certainly qualifies as a charismatic leader, and this study underscores that Morales commands significant legitimacy and internal authority within the MAS. The centrality of his leadership cannot be overstated; he is the dominant figure who binds together a wide array of loosely connected grassroots movements and organizations. Yet, his word is not always the “last word,” and highly mobilized groups recurrently dispute his authority from below. As this study argues, the nature of the MAS’s internal organization places limits on centralized authority, as do the dynamics of popular mobilization that takes place in the streets. It is an empirical question as to whether the personalism of Morales’s leadership, and the fact that there are no obvious successors being cultivated, might lead to a growing power concentration in the party in an eventual next term in office, and the answer will depend heavily on the continuing strength of allied groups in civil society.

### **Methodological Approach**

I address the puzzle of what options movement-based parties have to mitigate the trend toward oligarchization by using a within-case research design for theory-building purposes. I proceed in two directions. Using the empirical case of the MAS, I first explore variation in patterns of candidate selection for national and local level elections, according to the strength of civil society, the nature of the political alignments between the MAS and civil society, and the electoral strength of the MAS in different areas of the country. Second, I explore variation in patterns of policy-making in different policy domains, according to the mobilizational power of civil society and the alignments between the MAS and both core and non-core groups. While other scholars have already offered qualitative descriptions of the diversity of the MAS’

decision-making mechanisms (e.g. Komadina and Geffroy 2007; Do Alto 2007; Zuazo 2008; Zuazo 2010; Do Alto and Stefanoni 2010; Harten 2011; Madrid 2012; Crabtree 2013), this study generates more robust evidence and a more systematic explanation for this diversity by focusing on explaining internal power distributions in candidate selection and policy-making.

The MAS is an anomaly, which, as has been noted, makes the case theoretically interesting and can help us understand non-anomaly cases as well. It has a dominant leader, Evo Morales, who concentrates a great deal of power in his own hands, but yet its internal mechanisms have given voice and influence to groups that were previously on the margins of political life. By maintaining a fair amount of its initial bottom-up participatory *élan*, the MAS has defied pressures toward oligarchization and has proven to be an organization not easily controlled from the top, even after assuming national-level power.<sup>49</sup> Thus there is much to be gained from an in-depth examination of the conditions and mechanisms under which elite control can be attenuated, if not avoided, in a scenario where high degrees of power concentration would be clearly expected. To accomplish such an examination, an in-depth case-study approach remains fundamental.<sup>50</sup> Although the case-study approach has its drawbacks, as all research methods do, such an approach is particularly strong at yielding internal validity and discovering causal mechanisms through process tracing.<sup>51</sup> And while case studies have recently been the target of harsh criticism, often on the faulty assumption that one case equates to one observation (King, Keohane, and Verba 1994), the case-study approach remains a crucial tool for

---

<sup>49</sup> An observation also noted elsewhere (see Anria 2013), and by other scholars (Crabtree 2013).

<sup>50</sup> Gerring (2007) defines the case study approach as “the intensive study of a single case where the purpose of that study is—at least in part—to shed light on a larger class of cases” (20). In other words, from case studies we can learn something about political phenomena that is well beyond the mere description of a particular case.

<sup>51</sup> On the issue of internal validity, see Adcock and Collier (2001).

understanding power relations among collective actors (in this study grassroots social movements and political parties) and the conditions of societal and political structures that may restrain elite behavior. Qualitative data, or causal process observations, are absolutely critical to capturing the internal dynamics and behavior of movement-based parties.<sup>52</sup>

To collect causal process observations, I carried out two rounds of field research in Bolivia, the first one between July and September 2008 and the second between August 2012 and May 2013.<sup>53</sup> During this time, I conducted more than 170 in-depth interviews with party elites at the national, state, and municipal levels, as well as with a wide variety of civil society actors, including union leaders, activists, journalists, and academics. These interviews provide the basis for my analysis of legislative candidate selection for national office, developed in Chapter 3, which focuses on the electoral process leading to the 2009 general election. This was a key moment for analyzing internal power distributions because the MAS was in its most expansive phase, and as a result, the lead-up to that election can be conceived of as a likely scenario for high degrees of power concentration. My analysis draws on systematic interviews with over 50 incumbent representatives from the departments of La Paz, Cochabamba, Oruro, and Santa Cruz.<sup>54</sup> These are the country's most populated departments, they form the "central axis" of the country, and they are the places where I carried out fieldwork.<sup>55</sup> While these four

---

<sup>52</sup> A causal process observation, CPO, is "an insight or piece of data that provides information about context, process, or mechanism, and that contributes distinctive leverage in causal inference" (Brady and Collier 2004: 2). These observations imply and require process tracing and within-case analysis. For an extensive discussion on CPOs' distinctive leverage in causal inference, see Mahoney (2010).

<sup>53</sup> The results of the first round of fieldwork have been published elsewhere (see Anria 2009; 2010; 2013).

<sup>54</sup> Departments in Bolivia (a unitary country) are the equivalent of states or provinces in federalist countries.

<sup>55</sup> However, the majority of my interviews with incumbent representatives were conducted in the country's administrative capital, La Paz.

departments do not constitute the entire country, the patterns observed there were also common elsewhere, as confirmed through interviews, secondary sources, and newspaper archives. All these “thick” data helped me to compare and contrast observations gathered in Bolivia’s major departments and to see how generalizable my findings are to other districts.

It is difficult, however, to paint a single picture of a complex governing organization when local contexts shape internal characteristics and behavior. This is particularly difficult to do in countries with large rural-urban divides, high levels of inequality, or other major sources of diversity. To create a more accurate account of the MAS, Chapter 3 also includes an analysis of candidate selection for local office, which focuses on the lead-up to the 2010 municipal elections. The analysis draws on in-depth interviews with over thirty elected officials at the local level, as well as unsuccessful aspirants and a variety of local party elites, regional brokers and notables, grassroots leaders, and activists. This research was conducted in five municipalities, three urban (La Paz, El Alto, and Santa Cruz) and two rural (Achacachi and Villa Tunari). I selected rural and urban municipalities with the following electoral configurations: the MAS as electorally dominant at all levels of competition (national and municipal), opposition parties dominant at all levels, and mixed or split (neither the MAS nor opposition parties clearly dominant).<sup>56</sup> Although the five municipalities are not representative of the country as a whole, they are included in this study to capture the diverse organizational patterns and practices that prevail within the MAS in both rural and urban settings. Subnational comparisons have important advantages. As Snyder (2001) points out, by “scaling down” the unit of analysis, sub-

---

<sup>56</sup> This allowed for an exploration of the organization of the MAS in its strongest area of support (Villa Tunari) and also in strongholds of the opposition (Santa Cruz).

national comparisons greatly expand the number of observations and help to uncover processes that are harder to observe at the country level.

Regarding my interviews, I employed a semi-structured format but also included a number of structured questions in order to be able to identify and compare patterns across regions.<sup>57</sup> Most of the interviews with incumbent representatives and local-level elected officials were recorded, and these were then transcribed and processed in NVivo to find patterns emerging from individual accounts. All interviews were conducted in Spanish.

My analysis of policy-making, which is developed in Chapter 4, also draws on a wealth of original interviews with a wide range of politicians (MAS leaders, representatives, bureaucrats, advisors) and civil society actors. The focus of the analysis is centered, on the one hand, on the degree of input of collective actors in the positive formulation of policies through internal party structures or through their representatives in Congress. Interviews with top-level party officials, incumbent representatives, and grassroots leaders, as well as participatory observations in party congresses, were central to developing this analysis. To evaluate degrees of grassroots impact on decision-making via their access to the executive branch, on the other hand, I relied on interviews with top- and mid-level officials in the ministries of Rural Development, Mining, and Economy, as well as in the Office of the Vice-Presidency. These interviews helped to compare and contrast different degrees of grassroots influence across government bureaucracies. This in-depth information collected through original interviews was supplemented with data from secondary sources and from newspaper archives. This additional printed data helped to establish general timelines for the policies under study and to cross check the accuracy

---

<sup>57</sup> Although I was always prepared with a series of questions and probes, interviews were often more open-ended than I anticipated – or even *wanted*. However, allowing participants to “tell their stories” allowed them to feel more comfortable to tell their side of the story, which yielded richer information.

of retrospective accounts from interviews. Finally, to examine the extent to which grassroots actors can impose effective constraints on the decision-making power of the top leadership via their veto or counter-mobilization power, I first selected some of the most crucial policies that faced resistance from below. These included instances where the national government was forced to reverse decisions as a result of bottom-up pressure, as well as other instances in which the leadership did not change the policy course in spite of the, often intense, challenges from below. Interviews with politicians and civil society actors allowed me to reconstruct the perceptions and calculations of key players during conflicts of high intensity. I supplemented this information with data from newspaper archives.<sup>58</sup>

A final component of my research strategy was to gather official documentation by the MAS. These documents provided useful information on the party's internal debates and helped identify relevant political actors within the organization. I also consulted a vast literature of published and unpublished works on the MAS, most of which is not available in English. I looked at local publications, as well as theses produced by students at leading universities in the country. Because Bolivia is sharply polarized between those who passionately support the MAS and those who are equally passionate in their opposition, it was crucial to obtain a wide variety of perspectives. I interviewed journalists and academics who are sympathetic to the MAS government, as well as those who are avid opponents, who shaped my understanding of the trajectory and organization of the MAS. Finally, fieldwork also included participatory

---

<sup>58</sup> To assist with this, I relied on reports compiled by Bolivia's Center for Documentation and Information (CEDIB) in Cochabamba. CEDIB has one of the largest newspaper archives in the country, and it allows researchers to compile reports based on searches by keyword. For each of the policies under consideration I prepared a compilation of their coverage in Bolivia's major newspapers. This allowed me to have access to every article mentioning the policies under consideration, to create timelines of events, and to identify key actors. I also relied on social conflict data generously provided by the *Fundación UNIR*.



observation in party congresses, which helped to understand how some of the party's decisions are made and communicated internally.

While the heavy lifting for causal inference derives from a within-case examination of the Bolivian MAS, this study also develops a comparison of the origins, evolution, and contemporary structure of the Brazilian PT and the Uruguayan FA. These comparisons help to further support the theoretical claims about the importance of historical and structural factors for shaping the degree of internal power concentration in movement-based parties. Like the MAS, both the PT and the FA share a common origin in grassroots movements, and all three came to national-level power for the first time during Latin America's left turn (in 2006, 2002, and 2005 respectively). Despite these similarities, they differ sharply in terms of the extent to which they have promoted and sustained internal grassroots participation once in power. To explain why they have followed different trajectories, a comparative historical analysis is fundamental. This method allows me to trace the origins and causes of political outcomes that are harder to observe in a single case. In order to collect causal process observations about these comparative cases, this analysis draws mainly on secondary sources and on the analysis of LAPOP survey data.<sup>59</sup> In each of the comparative cases, I begin the narrative by tracing the foundational moment of the party, the experiences in local-level government before gaining national-level power, and the mode of access to state power. The comparative analysis helps to detect factors preventing or facilitating oligarchy that would not be made immediately apparent by studying a single case

---

<sup>59</sup> Hosted in Vanderbilt University, LAPOP (Latin American Public Opinion Project) conducts surveys of public opinion in Latin America every two years. I used their data to examine the relationship between partisan engagement and participation in associational life, which in turn served as an indirect measure of the potential for support for mobilization that the three parties under consideration have, as well as of the kinds of pressures from below they might confront.

over a short period of time. In so doing, the comparative analysis helps improve the overall evidentiary base of this study and strengthens it theoretically.

A final word on the value of my methodological approach is in order. The choice of a case-study approach combined with comparative historical analysis was driven by the logic of the research question animating this study, not the other way around. The collection of causal process observations via qualitative techniques is crucial for unpacking the “black box” of movement-based parties and for uncovering processes that parties often prefer to keep behind the scenes. The internal life of parties and the political logic behind internal decisions can be fully grasped only with an in-depth knowledge of the cases and “a healthy dose of political sociology” (Smith et al. 2014; see Roberts' contribution, p. 18). An understanding of the conditions that can facilitate or help prevent the triumph of oligarchy within movement-based parties cannot be fully attained by relying on already existing party datasets.<sup>60</sup> Thus, my approach accepts the plea made by Murillo, Shrank, and Luna (see Smith et al. 2014) for the generation of more empirically grounded and context-sensitive theoretical work, and it also builds on a rich tradition of comparative historical and political sociology approaches to parties (Duverger 1954; Lipset and Rokkan 1967; Panebianco 1988; Kitschelt 1994; Levitsky 2003; Luna 2014). The result of this fieldwork-intensive study is a series of testable hypotheses which, built on the experiences and organizational development of Latin American movement-based parties, can be tested empirically elsewhere.

## **Contributions**

### ***A Contribution to the Literature on Party Organization***

---

<sup>60</sup> This is particularly true for Latin American parties, where the quality of the existing datasets is strikingly low.

In this study I seek to contribute to the larger study of party organization. The analysis stresses, first, that parties are neither unitary nor uniform actors under the tutelage of a unified leadership.<sup>61</sup> Second, it stresses that parties are not uniformly bureaucratic organizations; their operation and organizational form is dictated neither by their political institutional contexts nor simply by their ideological orientation.<sup>62</sup> Rather, parties (*a fortiori* movement-based parties) are highly flexible organizations; the boundaries between such parties and civil society allies tend to be fluid.<sup>63</sup> Some of them, as is the case with the Bolivian MAS, lack an elaborate bureaucratic structure, and they look and operate differently in different contexts, based on the kinds of connections they establish with civil society actors. They also invest differently in party structures across constituencies, from which they derive their organizational power.

Understanding this variation is of great theoretical importance. Other scholars have made similar arguments, recognizing that parties are complex systems that relate differently to different constituencies in multiple settings.<sup>64</sup> However, existing studies tend to focus on the linkages between parties and *voters* (Kitschelt 2000; Kitschelt et al. 2010; Luna 2010; Luna 2014), whereas the present study, by contrast, looks at how parties develop different linkages to

---

<sup>61</sup> Inspired by the work of Downs (1957), much of inter-party competition theory makes this simplifying assumption (Robertson 1976). The major tenets of this approach to parties are epitomized by Aldrich's (1995) argument that election-minded legislators create parties to solve collective action and social choice problems.

<sup>62</sup> Internal party structures are often viewed as reflections of formal institutional rules governing a polity (Harmel and Janda 1982; Carty 2004) or as reflections of party ideology (Bolleyer 2012).

<sup>63</sup> The boundaries between them are even more diffuse when movement-based parties are in power. It becomes increasingly harder to discern where the movement, the party, and the state start and where they end.

<sup>64</sup> Examining the dynamics of the PJ in Argentina and the PRI in Mexico, Gibson (1997) notes that populist parties in Latin America tend to have different rural and urban social constituencies and adopt different organizational logics in each environment. In Chile and Uruguay, Juan Pablo Luna (2014) notes that the same parties relate differently to their constituencies in some municipalities, and that campaigns at the national level are in some cases more programmatic whereas at the local level they can be more clientelistic.

their *organized constituencies*. Specifically, it examines how elements in the party's social and political structures create incentive structures that promote more or less grassroots participation in party affairs. Internal processes, like the selection of candidates, provide good examples of how parties operate differently depending on how the political space is structured across the territory. As this study demonstrates, examining how organizational dynamics vary across geographical constituencies provides the most analytical leverage on complex outcomes that reflect varying degrees of grassroots participation and internal power distribution. It is only when we examine these differences with some degree of systematization that the full complexity of movement-based parties becomes visible.

Other authors have made the argument that parties are not uniformly bureaucratic. Levitsky (2003), for instance, focused on organizational characteristics, such as informal and weakly institutionalized party structures, to explain coalitional and programmatic adaptation. In the present study, similar organizational features help to explain variation in degrees of grassroots participation and power distribution inside movement-based parties. The lack of an elaborate bureaucratic structure allows for the development of flexible organizations that stand in a fluid continuum between alternative forms of political mobilization (i.e. movement and party) without being reducible to either. Furthermore, it facilitates adaptation to varying political spaces and thus encourages truly eclectic organization-building dynamics. For example, movement-based parties are more likely to look and operate "like movements" in high-density organizational settings. In such contexts, they are less likely to invest resources in building an independent local party structure; instead, they are more likely to embed their structures on pre-existing networks and emphasize that the "bases" should exert control over the leadership. By contrast, in areas of low organizational density, they are more likely to operate in a top-down

manner, enhancing the discretion of the leadership and discouraging influence from below. In short, weak bureaucratization can work in two directions. It can promote the development of accountability structures and thus contribute to pushing internal structures in the direction of power dispersion, but it can also push the other way. These patterns are likely to vary according to how the political space is structured.

The lack of an elaborate bureaucratic structure can thus be seen as a source of organizational strength. It can enable parties to effectively adapt to varying local political spaces and to build a remarkably strong mass organization on the basis of establishing close connections with social movements and other popular organizations. In addition to delivering votes and facilitating the functions of territorial expansion, such groups contribute to recruiting leaders, activists, members, and candidates at all levels of competition. Moreover, when the party is in power, these groups help mobilize mass support in policy-making and provide linkages between state offices, grassroots movements, and citizens.

Understanding *how* movement-based parties like the MAS build organizational strength by tapping into the infrastructures of pre-existing groups is crucial for understanding their internal dynamics and behavior. Though the availability of pre-existing organizational networks has been used to explain variation in the emergence and strength of new parties, the present study adds nuance to these findings. It highlights how these different connections can shape patterns of grassroots participation and internal power distribution.\

### ***A Contribution to the Literature on the Latin American Left***

Studying the MAS can also help us gain a better understanding of the Latin American Left. The recent rise to power of left parties and political movements has led to analyses of their various origins, their performance in office, and the sources of their policy orientations once in

office. Thus, there is a voluminous literature on the topic of the Latin American Left. Building on different political and normative concerns, the existing literature tends to group together Bolivia, Venezuela, and Ecuador in the “radical” or “contestatory” strand of the left (Castañeda 2006; Weyland et al. 2010). In a classification of left parties that takes into account organizational factors, Levitsky and Roberts (2011) classify the MAS as an example of the “movement left,” for it is a *new* organization whose internal structures disperse power among grassroots actors and is therefore more likely to be held accountable by those grassroots actors. Despite this welcome correction and the abundance of works in this general area, the literature on the contemporary left remains insufficiently attentive to questions of internal party organization and its consequences, as evidenced by the scarcity of careful examinations of individual and comparative cases.<sup>65</sup>

By studying the MAS as a case of a movement-based party that has so far defied oligarchic pressures, this study generates new ideas about the conditions under which these parties can become organizational actors for the empowerment of popular groups. Several new left parties in the region have become personalistic tools for the self-regarding goals of a charismatic leader, as with the PSUV in Venezuela and Correa’s *Alianza País* in Ecuador. Although it might be argued that Morales shares similar impulses as Chávez and Correa, this study shows that he operates under a remarkably different organizational foundation that constrains his power and authority from below in ways that are not evident in Ecuador and Venezuela.<sup>66</sup> At this point, when we look at organizational factors, the MAS is quite similar to a broader universe of cases with which the party is rarely compared. For example, the Uruguayan

---

<sup>65</sup> For a notable exception, see Pribble (2013).

<sup>66</sup> A point also raised elsewhere (see Anria 2013).

FA, which is often classified as belonging to the “moderate” camp of the Latin American Left, is a good case to compare with the MAS. The FA’s origins are similar to those of the MAS, and it, too, developed an organization whose internal structures diffuse power and encourage grassroots input and mobilized participation in ways that constrain the party leadership in power. In turn, the Brazilian PT can be seen as a contrasting example, or as one whose developmental trajectory has moved increasingly in the direction of oligarchy. As this study argues, the factors that explain these diverging trajectories are both historical and structural: elements in their distinctive “genetic model,” their experiences before assuming governmental power, and structural conditions associated with the strength and density of civil society account for their diverging trajectories. These factors create distinctive incentives and constraints for the promotion of participation in the political process when parties govern nationally.

### *A Comprehensive Account of the MAS*

This study develops the first comprehensive and theoretically informed explanation of the Bolivian MAS at the national level.<sup>67</sup> It first traces its origins as a grassroots social movement and its electoral growth to then examine the challenges of transitioning from regime challenger into government. My analysis does not discount the influential role of the party’s charismatic leader, Evo Morales, but rather places more emphasis on the organizational level: it explains the complex and often contentious power relations between actors with different, yet overlapping,

---

<sup>67</sup> Unlike the Brazilian PT, which has been the subject of excellent comprehensive analyses of its formation, organization, and evolution as a national party (Meneguello 1989; Keck 1992; Ribeiro 2008; Amaral 2010; Hunter 2010), to date, and to my knowledge, there are no parallel “foundational” works on the MAS.

logics of political mobilization (i.e. social movements, the MAS as a party, and those in power), as well as explaining the structural constraints on the political choices of the leadership in office.

The MAS has been the subject of significant attention in the political science literature. Most of this literature concentrates on documenting its bottom-up genesis in Bolivia's rural *cocalero* movement (Stefanoni 2003), its transformation into an electoral vehicle (Van Cott 2005; Komadina and Geffroy 2007; Zuazo 2008), and its rise to power (Albro 2005; Stefanoni and Do Alto 2006; Silva 2009; Harten 2011; Madrid 2012). The literature also features studies evaluating the experience of the MAS and Evo Morales in power (Postero 2010; Pearce 2011; Webber 2011; Zegada et al. 2011; Crabtree 2013; Dunkerley 2013; Wolff 2013; Farthing and Kohl 2014), and biographies of Evo Morales documenting his humble origins, his trajectory as a social movement leader, and his road to becoming Latin America's first indigenous president (Subercaseaux and Sierra 2007; Sivak 2010). With a few exceptions,<sup>68</sup> not much attention has been given to how the MAS functions internally by providing theoretically informed analyses of its organization and detailed accounts of how it operates. This study redresses this shortcoming in the existing literature and provides crucial qualitative data on the civil society-party-state relations that exist in Bolivia, while also placing the findings in a broader comparative perspective.

### ***Implication for Understanding Broader Political Processes***

Analyzing the organization and behavior of the MAS as a governing entity – a striking development that put an end to white minority political control in Bolivia – serves as a heuristic

---

<sup>68</sup> Do Alto and Stefanoni (2010) and Crabtree (2013) are partial exceptions. Harten (2011) examines internal organizational issues but does not follow the transformations of the MAS in the face of the challenges of transitioning from regime challenger to governing entity. His focus is rather on the period leading to the ascent to power.



for theorizing about patterns of social and political change that have taken place in Bolivia and other Latin American democracies. The experience of the MAS has led to significant changes in the political arena, including wider regime stability, leadership accountability, representation of historically excluded and marginalized groups, and expansion of both individual and collective citizenship rights to indigenous peoples. Changes are particularly evident in this last area, as demonstrated by the increased power and access to the state of indigenous peoples and peasant-farming groups, by their massive inclusion in governing and in representative institutions at all levels, and by the many social policy reforms promoted by the government that benefit the underprivileged and ensure more equalizing access to state social services.

Thus, in addition to conceiving of movement-based parties like the MAS as simply electoral vehicles or as instruments for exercising rule, this study argues that we should theorize about them as promising channels for the incorporation into politics of popular groups that have been formerly at the margins of political life. The effectiveness of internal grassroots participation has been crucial for the successful incorporation into politics of traditionally excluded and marginalized social groups, in the Bolivian case indigenous and peasant groups, which “boosted [their] political participation and satisfaction with democracy” (Weyland et al. 2010: 142). Looking at the dynamics and dilemmas within movement-based parties in power can help us gain a better understanding of new patterns of representation and popular incorporation in post-neoliberal democracies, which occur through more fluid structures than in earlier periods of social incorporation that Collier and Collier (1991) described for Latin America in the late 1930s and 1940s.

It is through establishing connections with a movement-based party in power that previously excluded groups in Bolivia have muscled their way into organized politics. Thus,

through the prism of the MAS, and of movement-based parties more generally, this study invites us to rethink issues of incorporation and the mechanisms for the aggregation and representation of interests, thereby shedding significant light on emerging patterns of articulation of unions, left parties, and social movements and how these entities relate to the state in contemporary Latin American democracies. Movement-based parties, particularly when they exercise power, have the potential to expand the socio-political field and include the interests of excluded strata of society, thus providing crucial linkages between grassroots movements, state institutions, and citizens.

### **Plan of the Study**

The rest of the study is organized as follows. Chapter 2 proceeds to portray and analyze the MAS as a case of a movement-based party in power that has so far defied the trend toward oligarchization. It provides a history of the evolution of the MAS, from its origins in the coca-growing areas of the Chapare to its rapid expansion and rise to power. It also specifies the elements in the MAS's evolution that created lasting legacies in the life of the party. Chapter 2 discusses how the MAS, an organization that emerged in rural areas and whose core constituencies shaping its identity are the coca growers in those areas, expanded to Bolivia's largest cities and grew exponentially along the way. The story that unfolds is that of a remarkably hybrid organization that has developed unevenly across constituencies, thereby facilitating the emergence of accountability structures and constraints on Morales's authority that stem from its fluidity and lack of bureaucratization. That story can best be understood by taking a historical perspective. The chapter ends by discussing the governments of Morales and the MAS and looking at the internal transformations undergone by the MAS as a governing party.

Once in power, it has become increasingly heterogeneous in composition and this has sparked a series of internal conflicts.

The argument that strong civil societies matter for internal party politics is supported in Chapters 3 and 4. Chapter 3 presents evidence from candidate selection for both national and local office within the MAS. It demonstrates that in districts where civil society is strongly organized and united in support of the party, civil society can play an important role in resisting the trend toward oligarchization; where civil society is weak, top-down elite choices are more likely to prevail. Strong civil societies can also be aligned with an opposition party, however, or they can be aligned with multiple parties. In both of these cases, elite choices are likely to prevail.

Chapter 4 demonstrates that civil society strength also affects the degree of power concentration in the policy-making process. The chapter focuses, first, on the ability of civil society organizations to set agenda items, priorities, and party action and to use pressure to ensure the responsiveness of allied parties. It demonstrates that the capacity of allied groups to wield power in policy-making varies by policy area and is contingent on the relative power of groups pushing for reform.

Second, the chapter focuses on the veto and counter mobilization power of allied groups, or their ability to block or modify legislative proposals pushed forcefully by the central leadership. It is in this area that oligarchic decision-making is most constrained in the case of the Bolivian MAS. Allied groups can place limits on the authority of the party leadership and keep the party internally responsive to particular societal demands, thereby wielding control over party decision-making. The main story that emerges is that of policy-making under Bolivia's MAS as a highly *reactive* process – a contentious bargaining game between the party in power

and allied social movements. That story's most prominent aspects are well explained by looking at the strength and mobilization power of civil society actors. Not every group has the same capacity to pressure the governing party from below and block or modify policy proposals. Success is contingent on the breadth of the veto coalition that mobilized groups manage to configure.

Chapter 5 reflects back upon the theoretical issues raised in this study and places the study of the MAS in comparative and theoretical perspective. The chapter supports the explanatory power of the historical and structural explanations developed in the present study. It develops a systematic comparative analysis of the organizational trajectories of the Brazilian PT and the Uruguayan FA. Both parties emerged out of social movements and are currently in power at the national level, and yet they followed strikingly different paths.<sup>69</sup> While the PT in power appears to have experienced a Michelsian shift in its character, the MAS and the FA have remained more open and internally responsive to the grassroots, although in very different ways. Comparative evidence allows for identifying the roots of this variation. In reflecting on the similarities and differences between the MAS, the PT, and the FA, the key explanatory factors helping prevent or consolidate the triumph of oligarchy are to be found in organizational elements and practices traceable to the parties' origins and their experience prior to coming to power at the national level, as well as in structural elements associated with the strength of civil society.

Chapter 6 concludes this study. It begins by providing a summary and by discussing the significance of the findings. It then offers additional thoughts on the implications of my theory

---

<sup>69</sup> Like the MAS, both parties were also reelected to presidential terms in 2014.

and lays out directions for future research on movement-based parties and for the larger issue of political inclusion of popular groups in post-adjustment societies.

## CHAPTER 2: ORIGINS AND ASCENDANCE TO POWER OF A MOVEMENT-BASED PARTY

Parties are heavily affected by their origins and early development. Organizational strategies adopted during the formative phase of a party leave indelible marks on its life, as they condense early power struggles and lock in the development of the organization in a path-dependent process. Panebianco describes this in his “genetic model” of party development, saying:

[A party’s] organizational characteristics depend more upon its history, i.e. on how the organization originated and how it consolidated, than upon any other factor. The characteristics of a party’s origins are in fact capable of exerting a weight on its organizational structure even decades later. Every organization bears the mark of its formation, of the crucial political-administrative decisions made by its founders, the decisions that “molded” the organization (1988: 50).

This model is rather deterministic. It posits that almost every aspect of a contemporary party organization can be traced to “the crucial political choices made by its founding fathers, the first struggles for organizational control, and the way in which the party was formed” (Panebianco 1988: xiii). Yet, despite Panebianco’s determinism, his analysis is useful here because it brings to the fore the dimension of “organizational power,” which consists of “explaining the functioning and activities of organizations above all in terms of alliances and struggles for power amongst the different actors that comprise them” (Panebianco 1988: xii). His insight, in short, serves as a starting point for the analysis that follows.

This chapter traces the roots and access to power of the MAS in order to elucidate its organizational dynamics and party-building strategy. Originating in Bolivia's Chapare region in the mid-1990s, it expanded to Bolivia's largest cities and became the country's largest party in less than a decade, as its leader, Evo Morales, was elected to the presidency in 2005 and then reelected in 2009. The coca growers who formed the MAS still conceive of it as the "political instrument" of the oppressed.<sup>70</sup> As such, the party's genesis as a political organization was from the bottom up, making the MAS an example of a movement-based party. These parties are hybrid organizations: they engage in electoral politics and compete for office, and at the same time they engage in noninstitutional, contentious bargaining in the pursuit of programmatic goals. As Roberts (1998: 75) notes, the boundaries that separate the party and the movement are deliberately blurred.

The MAS has followed this development model. A sponsoring group, namely a rural social movement of *cocaleros*, generated its own political leadership, formed a political vehicle to compete in elections, and maintained some degree of autonomy and leadership accountability (Van Cott 2005). That the MAS represents an indigenous constituency—and particularly that it grew directly out of the autonomous social mobilization of these constituencies—makes it a different case from other movement-based parties in the region and beyond. To state that the MAS represents indigenous constituencies is not to say that it is an "indigenous" party, however. Instead, we can conceive of the MAS as a party that presents itself using an ethnic discourse but

---

<sup>70</sup> The "political instrument" was founded on the idea of "self-representation" of the masses (see García Linera, León, and Monje 2004). Political leaders of the MAS' organizational core reject the "party" designation because they associate parties with institutions that divide rather than unite popular forces. Leaders stress that they are spokespeople, or messengers, for their constituencies, as opposed to their representatives. That they do not intend to build a conventional party has much to do with this. Based on the idea of "self-representation" of the masses underpinning the MAS, the political core of the MAS has privileged the sustaining of political mobilization in relation to the institutionalization of the movement as a party.

tries to appeal to a wider constituency by blending class and ethnic elements in a manner that tolerates ethnic diversity.

The genesis of the MAS in Bolivia's *cocalero* movement has been the subject of attention in both the scholarly and nonscholarly literature (e.g. Van Cott 2005; Stefanoni and Do Alto 2006; Komadina and Geffroy 2007; Escóbar 2008). Existing studies of the MAS's dramatic ascent to power have focused on the "populist" leadership of Evo Morales and how he was able to woo indigenous and nonindigenous voters, who were disenchanted with the traditional political parties and the neoliberal policies these parties had implemented. Madrid (2012) has described Morales and the MAS's tactics as an example of "ethnopolitism," meaning that the movement relied on generic "indigenous" issues devoid of particular cultural referents to provide the basis for the construction of a polyclass coalition around a charismatic leader (Albro 2005a; Harten 2011). Yet, despite all the attention paid to Morales's leadership and his alleged "populist" strategies, much less attention has been paid to the movement at an organizational level. More specifically, the literature has largely overlooked how the MAS's growing electoral success has been contingent on the construction of an unusually strong rural-urban coalition that was built on the basis of different linkages between the MAS and organized constituencies in urban and rural areas. Maps 2.1 through 2.8 highlight this point; they show that the MAS grew electorally from a very geographically concentrated constituency in rural areas to the national

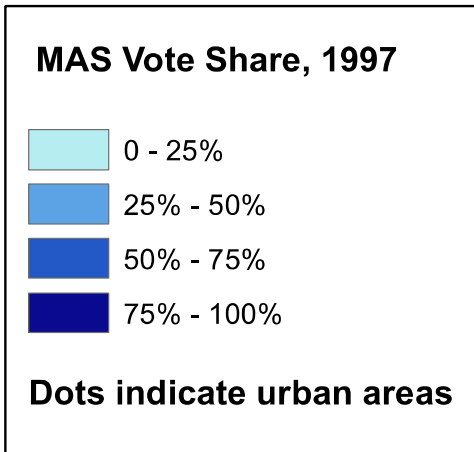
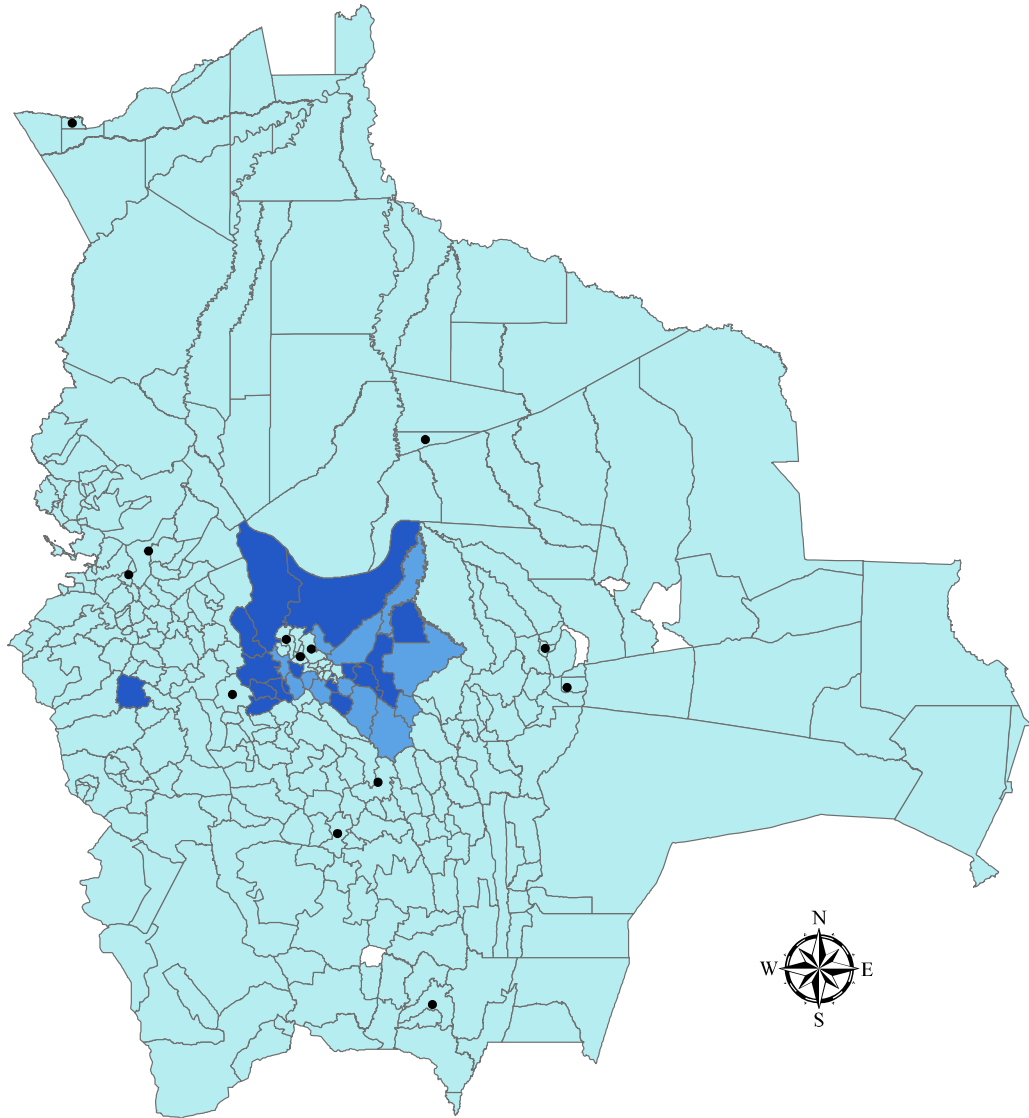


level, and that it did so in a very fast manner.<sup>71</sup> This chapter addresses this angle of the MAS's rise to power.

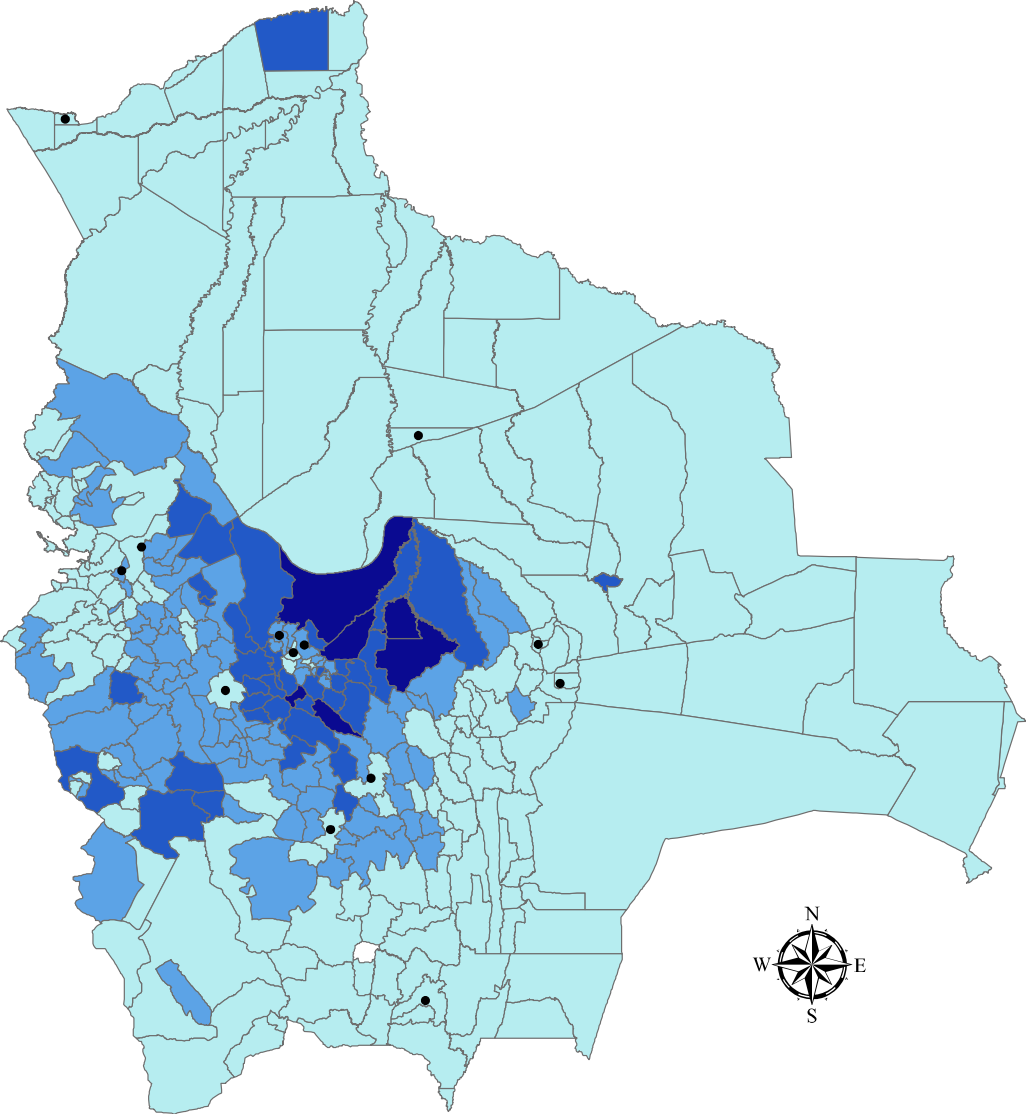
---

<sup>71</sup> These maps were built using ArcGIS 10.2 Mapping Software. They use municipal level data for both presidential elections and municipal elections between 1995 and 2010 (the period of time that the MAS has engaged in elections). The data were broken down by urban and rural municipalities. 13 municipalities were coded as urban. These include the capitals of Bolivia's 9 departments, in addition to El Alto and every other city with a population over 100,000. The remaining municipalities were coded as rural.

Map 2.1. 1997 Presidential Election IU Vote (Rural and Urban)



Map 2.2. 2002 Presidential Election MAS Vote (Rural and Urban)

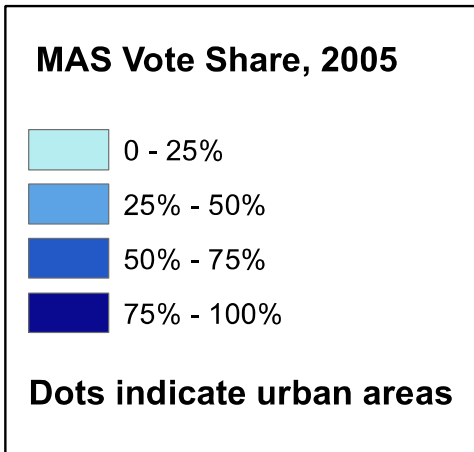
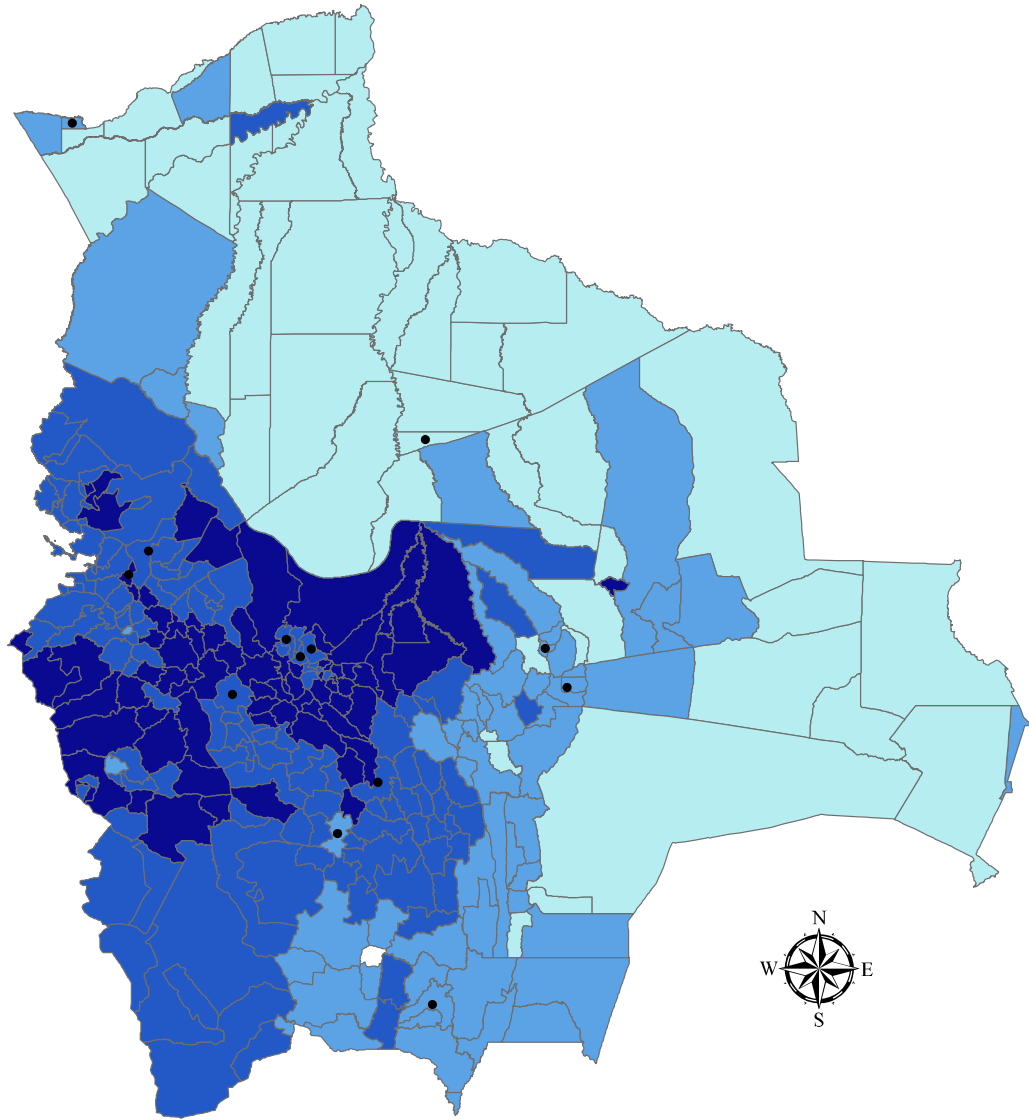


**MAS Vote Share, 2002**

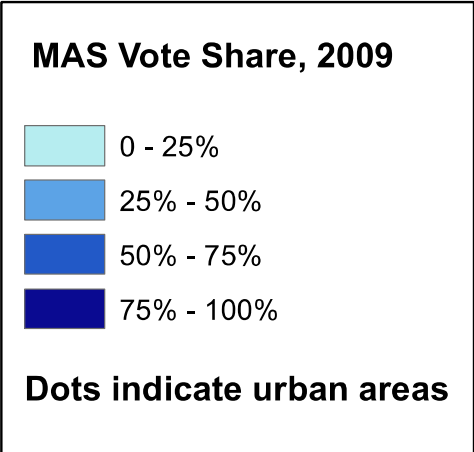
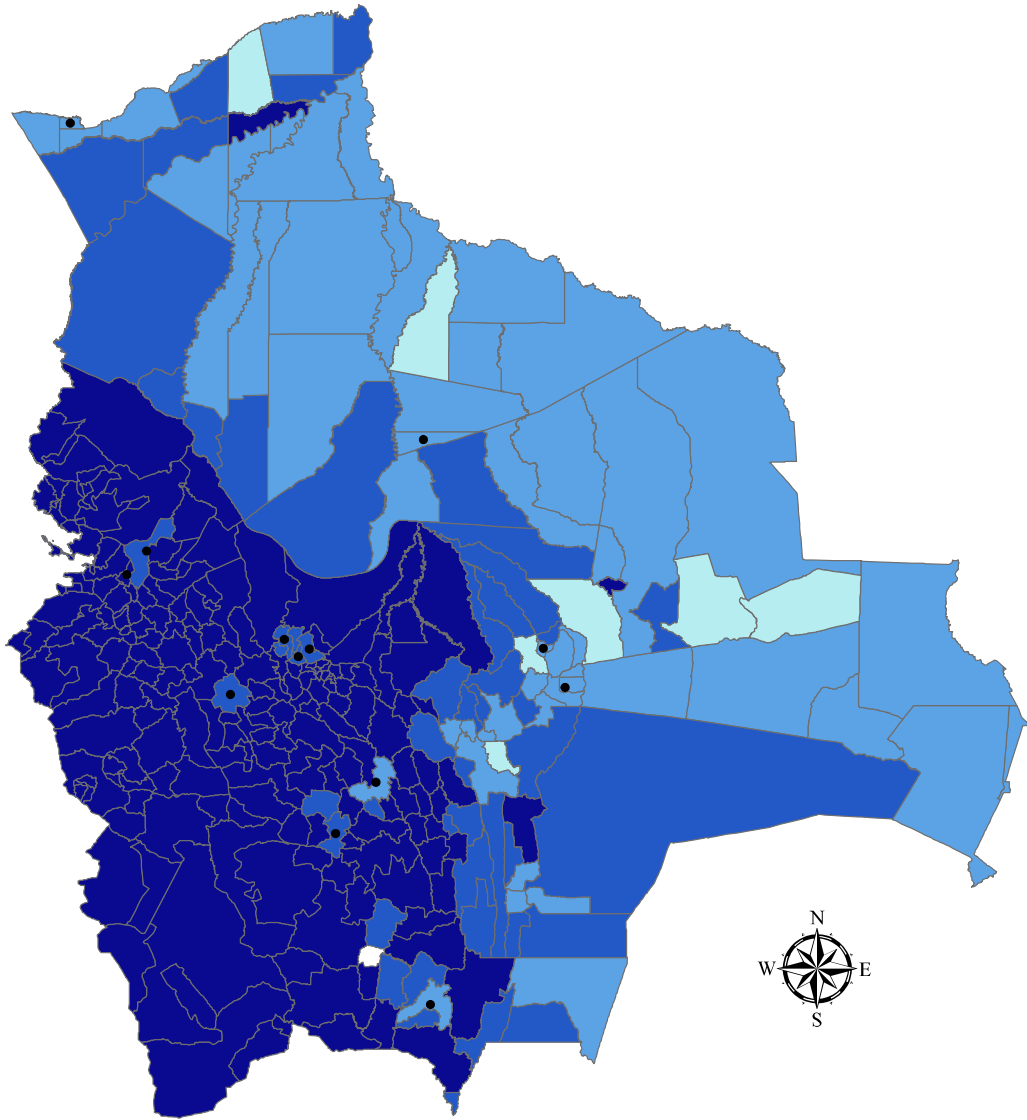
Light cyan	0 - 25%
Medium blue	25% - 50%
Dark blue	50% - 75%
Very dark blue	75% - 100%

**Dots indicate urban areas**

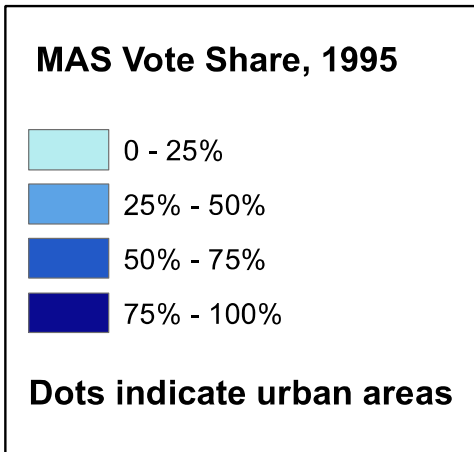
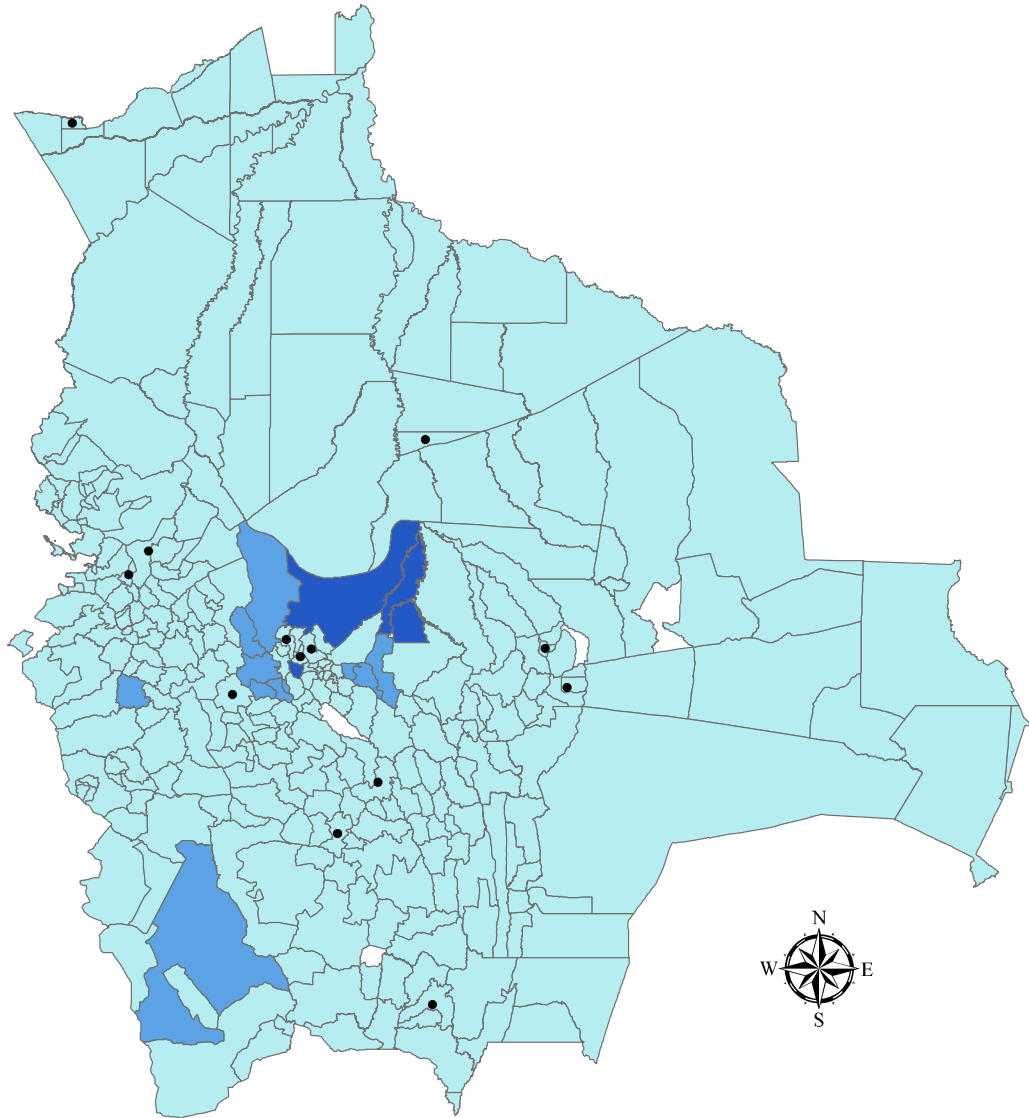
Map 2.3. 2005 Presidential Election MAS Vote (Rural and Urban)



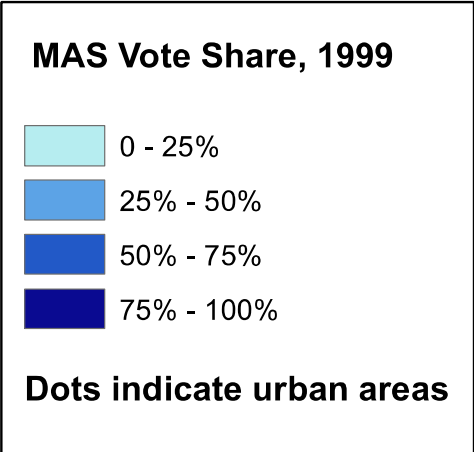
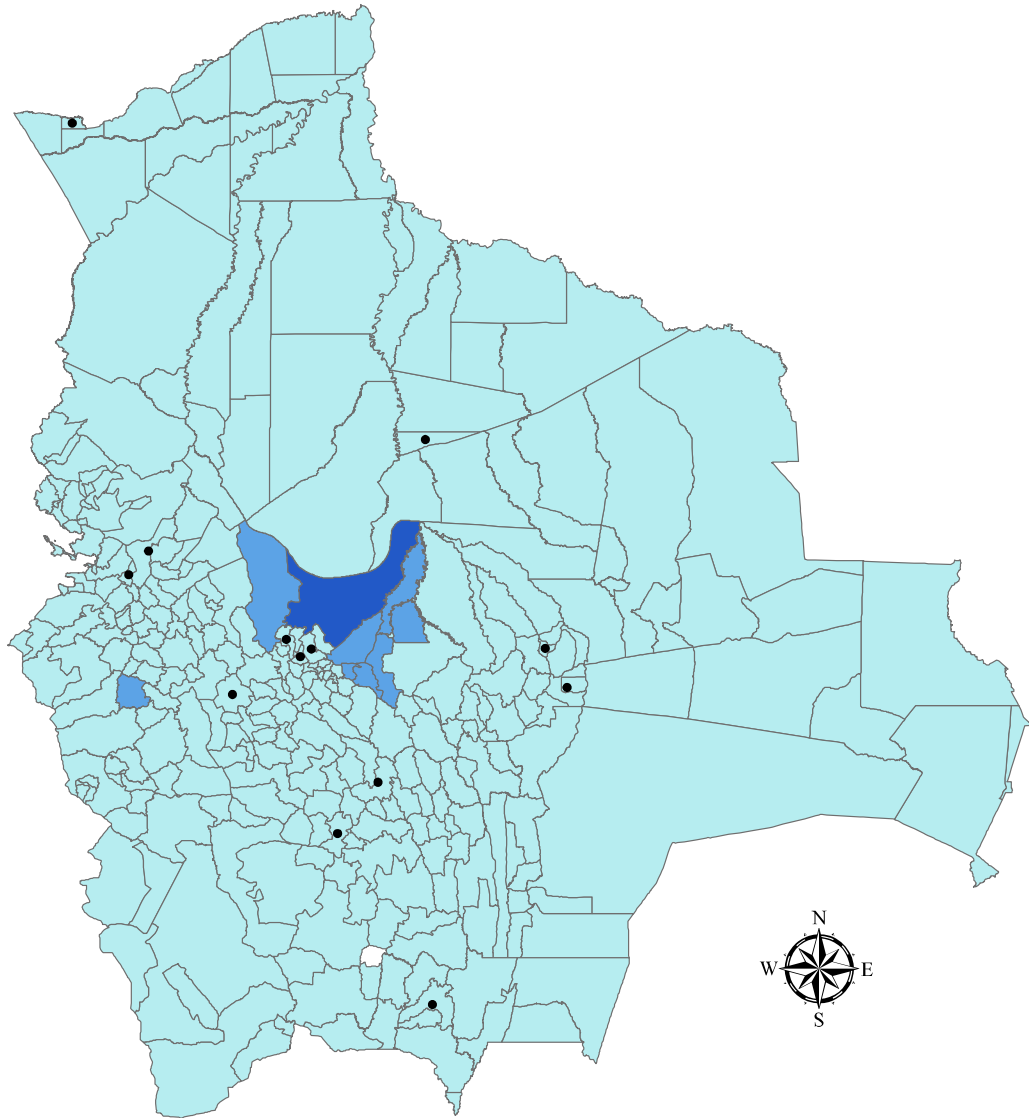
Map 2.4. 2009 Presidential Election MAS Vote (Rural and Urban)



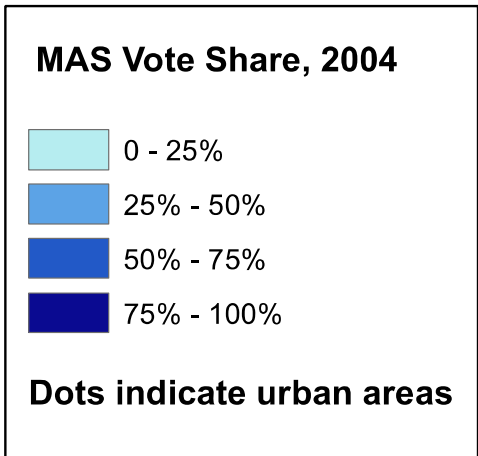
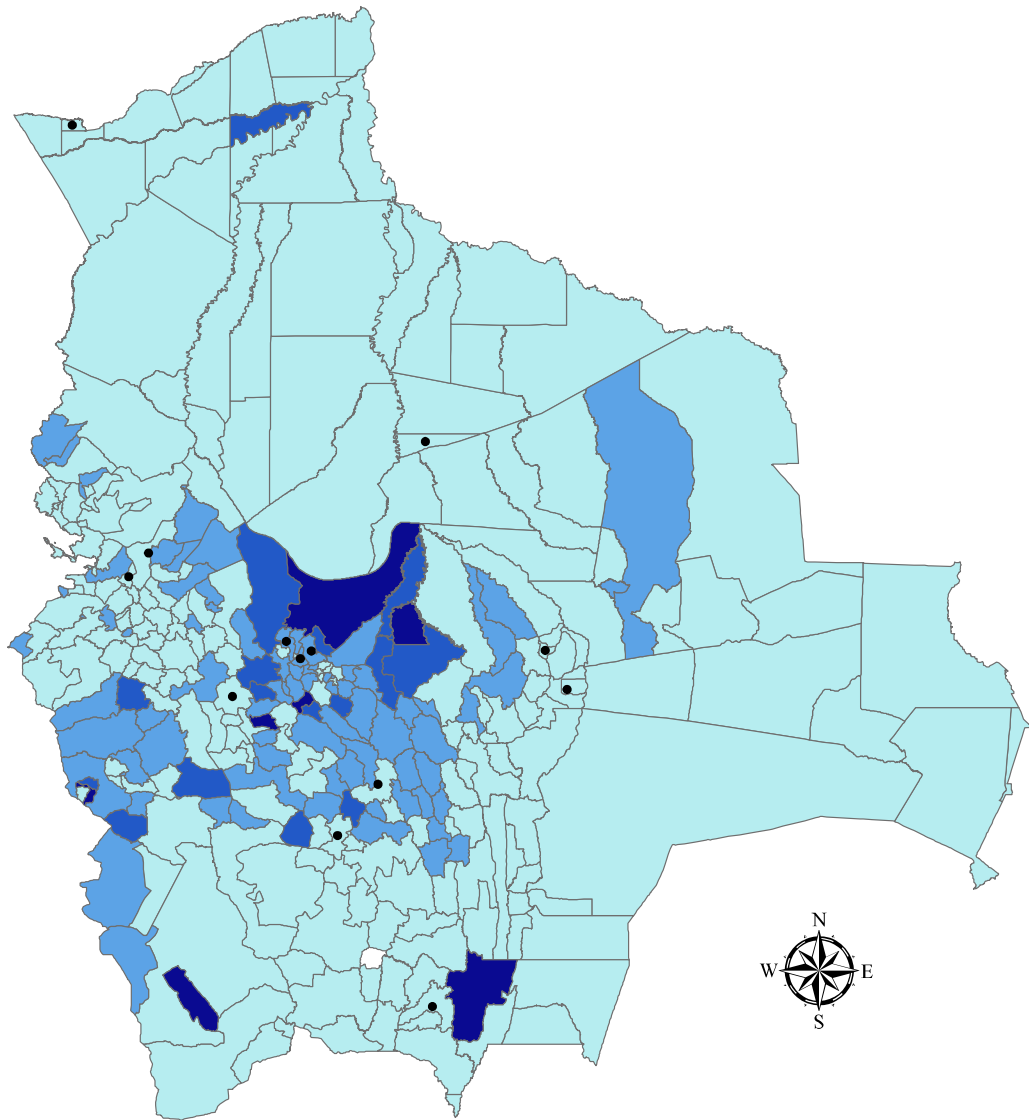
Map 2.5. 1995 Municipal Election IU Vote (Rural and Urban)



Map 2.6. 1999 Municipal Election MAS Vote (Rural and Urban)

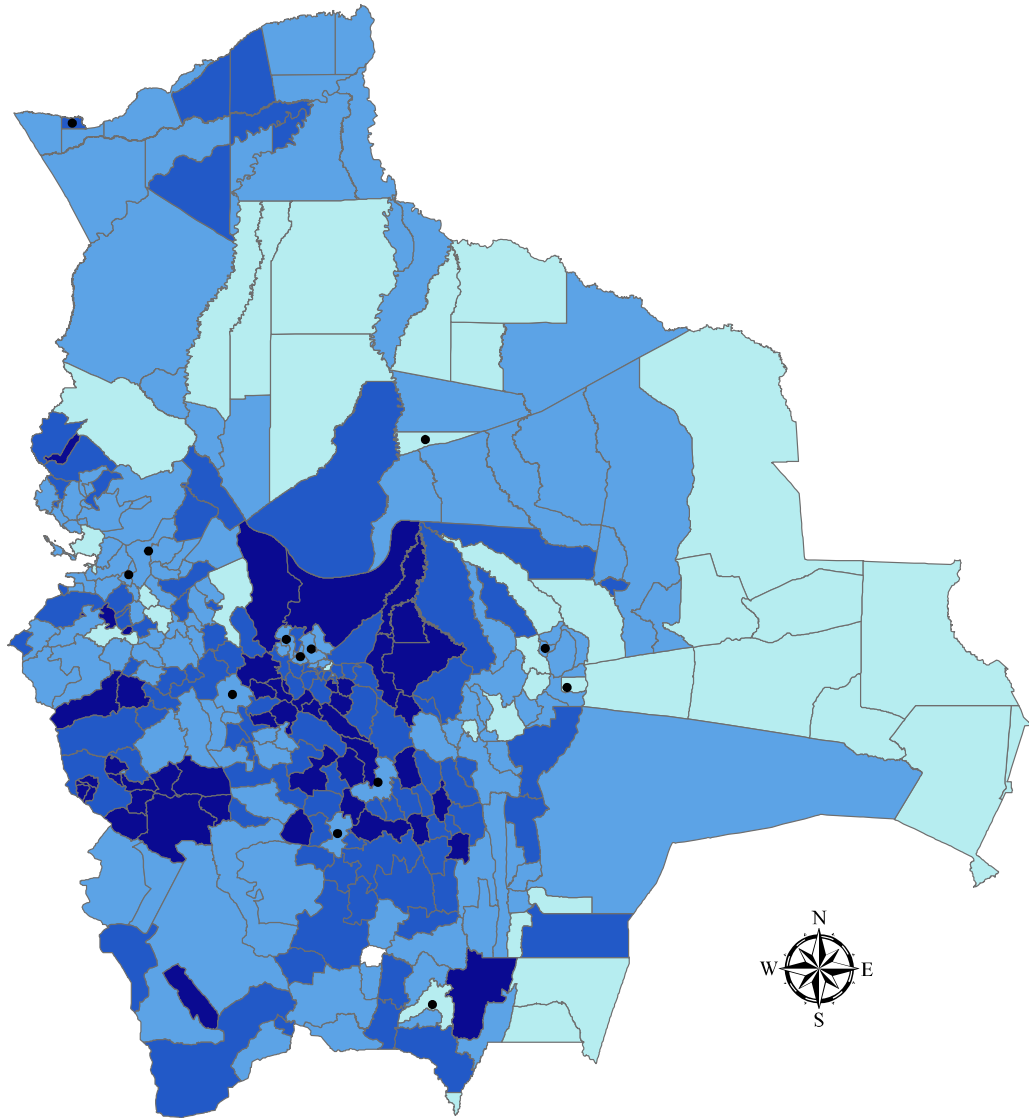


Map 2.7. 2004 Municipal Election MAS Vote (Rural and Urban)









Map 2.8. 2010 Municipal Election MAS Vote (Rural and Urban)



**MAS Vote Share, 2010**

	0 - 25%
	25% - 50%
	50% - 75%
	75% - 100%

**Dots indicate urban areas**

Edward Gibson's approach to conservative party electoral coalition building helps articulate the claims advanced in this chapter.<sup>72</sup> Gibson (1996: 7) argues that, in order to persist over time, conservative parties in Latin America tend to rely on two distinctive constituencies: a "core" constituency and a "noncore" constituency. Although the core constituency provides financial resources, policy-making support, and guidance, it is generally incapable of making the party a viable electoral force, let alone an electoral winner. In order to expand their electoral base, parties make inroads into noncore constituencies. The strategy for reaching these constituencies generally de-emphasizes ideology and is less programmatically oriented than the one directed at core groups. As a result, the noncore constituency consists of a less ideologically committed coalition designed to provide enough votes to guarantee the viability of the party; and, as such, it is usually less stable than the core constituency. Similarly, in an adaptation of this argument designed to assess the historical development and functioning of (populist) governing parties in Latin America, Gibson (1997) identifies that these core and noncore constituencies typically can be thought of as encompassing two coalitions, a "central" coalition and a "peripheral" coalition. This chapter uses the terms core and central (and noncore and periphery) interchangeably.

Following Gibson, this chapter argues that the MAS can be described as having two distinctive social coalitions. The central coalition is highly targeted. It is based on Bolivia's rural sector and consists of the *cocaleros* in the Chapare, as well as three national-level peasant organizations, which conceive of the MAS as their "political instrument" (interviews with Condori, Felipa Huanca, Román Loayza, Dionicio Núñez, Rodolfo Machaca, Segundina

---

<sup>72</sup> Although his study focuses on parties on the right, the conceptual distinction between core and noncore constituencies is amenable to the study of parties on the left. For empirical examples that support this claim, see Luna (2014).

Orellana, Concepción Ortiz, Juan de la Cruz Villca, and Leonilda Zurita).<sup>73</sup> These social organizations distrust political parties and think of them as obsolete types of organizations that can slow down social and political change. In this segment of its central coalition, the MAS is organized from the bottom-up and relies on the collective, assemblylike (*asambleísta*) style of decision-making utilized in Bolivia's social movements. The peripheral coalition, in turn, relies on a broader set of urban popular organizations and voters in Bolivia's largest cities, where neighborhood associations, trade unions, and other forms of local collective organization play a key articulatory role. The electoral strategy used to attract these peripheral constituencies has combined attempts to co-opt organized popular sectors with the pursuit of alliances with established center-left parties in hopes of reaching middle class segments.

In this regard, the MAS provides a clear example of a party that relies on a segmented linkage strategy to mobilize different constituencies (Luna 2014: 315-19). The different *electoral* strategies pursued by the MAS to reach core and noncore constituencies are, in turn, associated with different *organizational* strategies. On the one hand, the MAS's rural roots reflect patterns of bottom-up organization and organic movement-party linkages, a pattern that has facilitated a grassroots control over the leadership and is closely associated with the "movement" origins of the MAS.<sup>74</sup> On the other hand, the party's dramatic extension into urban areas—and the

---

<sup>73</sup> These organizations are the so-called *trillizas* (the triplets), which include the Unique Confederation of Rural Laborers of Bolivia (*Confederación Sindical Única de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia*, CSUTCB); the Syndicalist Confederation of Intercultural Communities of Bolivia (*Confederación Sindical de Comunidades Interculturales de Bolivia*, CSCIB); and the Bartolina Sisa National Confederation of Campesino, Indigenous, and Native Women of Bolivia (*Confederación Nacional de Mujeres Campesinas Indígenas Originarias de Bolivia "Bartolina Sisa,"* CNMCIQB-BS).

<sup>74</sup> Unlike other parties that emerged from social movements (such as the Brazilian PT), which consolidated a relatively autonomous and institutionalized bureaucratic structure, the MAS emerged as an extension of an indigenous social movement. During its initial stages, there was no clear distinction between the movement and the party "apparatus." As one of the MAS's founding members, Dionicio Núñez, commented in an interview, in this segment "the political structure is married to the social

evolution of the party “apparatus” in government, which facilitated access to state and patronage resources—has fostered the emergence of top-down mobilization strategies and co-optative practices reminiscent of earlier experiences with populism and neopopulism in those areas.

This chapter thus stresses the hybrid nature of the MAS organization. It argues that the MAS operates through a hybrid model that functions on the basis of a combination of autonomous mobilization from below with a top-down strategy of co-optation by a charismatic leader. Both linkage strategies, which reflect the party’s “movement” origins and its logic of electoral growth, have allowed the MAS to reach core and noncore constituencies, and thus craft a multiclass social base. Harmonizing these hybrid linkage appeals has not been an easy task, however, especially in the period since the MAS assumed governmental power. Although the MAS has maintained a degree of accountability to the social movements that brought Morales to power, the centralization of power in the hands of the president and the gradual suppression of participatory spaces within the party “apparatus” in government (e.g. Madrid 2012: 163) may indicate potential weaknesses in this regard. This situation has led to conflicts between organized popular constituencies and the MAS. Since taking office, the MAS has confronted difficulties in managing tensions within its increasingly heterogeneous governing coalition, particularly over the control of natural resources and over aspects of policy, and it has faced growing levels of discontent in its core constituency and its noncore allies, including middle class segments and indigenous organizations (Anria and Cyr 2015). This chapter provides examples that illustrate such tensions.

---

structure as a result of those early decisions,” and because of that it may be “hard to visualize a divorce between the social movement and the political instrument” (interview with Dionicio Núñez).

## **Factors Contributing to the Formation and Ascendance to Power of the MAS**

The emergence and rise of the MAS as a “political instrument” was influenced by at least four elements that interacted in quite unpredictable ways. One was the implementation and subsequent crisis of neoliberalism, which created economic losers that would then resist neoliberal policies. The second factor was the firm resistance to coca eradication programs and the state repression associated with such programs, which acted as a unifying force and strengthened peasant and indigenous movements around the defense of their interests. A third factor was a permissive institutional environment associated with changes in electoral legislation and the territorial configuration of the country, which provided opportunities for indigenous social movements and new parties to compete and thrive in local elections. Fourth was a crisis of Bolivia’s political party system and state institutions that became acute in the context of mass protests in the early 2000s.

Bolivia implemented draconian neoliberal reforms during the period 1985–2005, and the consequences of these reforms profoundly shaped the rise of the MAS.<sup>75</sup> Central to these policies was the closure of state-owned and -operated tin mines, which were no longer profitable by the mid-1980s. This meant that thousands of miners were forced to “relocate” to other sectors of the economy (Gill 2000). Some of these workers, who were the vanguard and most combative sectors of the Bolivian proletariat, left the mining camps and moved to cities like El Alto (Lazar 2008), which could not absorb this labor force. Hence, this situation accelerated the growth of the informal, predominantly artisan economy. Others moved to the coca-producing regions of the Chapare, where they began to produce coca and organize with the *cocaleros*. Relocated workers

---

<sup>75</sup> For a review of the neoliberal period in Bolivia, see Kohl and Farthing (2006).

brought with them a Trotskyist union-organizing background and a history of militant struggle and solidarity, which would influence the discourse of the coca growers by introducing elements of Marxism and nationalism (Stefanoni 2003; Stefanoni and Do Alto 2006; Guillermprieto 2006; Escóbar 2008). Still, it is worth noting that while relocated miners played an important role in organizing the coca growers around the idea of forming their own party, the coca grower movement preceded these mid-1980s developments.

A second important contributing factor involved the position of *cocaleros* in relation to coca eradication policies. As Postero (2010: 22) notes, *cocaleros* “came of age in a low-intensity war on drugs led by the U.S Drug Enforcement Agency.” Indeed, it was due to Bolivian Law 1008, which framed the U.S.-sponsored drug war, that such groups were able to gain strength and self-confidence (interviews with Modesto Condori, Filemón Escóbar, and Dionicio Núñez). The promulgation of this law was followed by state repression and conflicts in which many *cocaleros* died. But state repression worked as a catalyst for the *cocalero* unions, prompting their participation in the formal political system by constituting a relatively united political front with other peasant and indigenous organizations (Albro 2005b). In this context, the leaders of the *cocalero* movement hatched the idea of building a “political instrument” through which *cocaleros* could challenge U.S. imperialism and neoliberal economic policies, both in the halls of Congress and on the streets (interviews with Condori, Escóbar, Loayza, and Villca; see also Escóbar 2008; and Hylton and Thomson 2007: 171).

However, the fact that the MAS emerged so powerfully and that it became a national-level actor so rapidly had much to do with the circumstances of *cocaleros* in relation to the national political scene. A permissive institutional environment opened channels of participation for popular movements in local elections (Van Cott 2003; 2005). The Bolivian institutional

environment changed profoundly in the early 1990s, thanks to the 1994 Popular Participation Law and the 1995 Law of Administrative Decentralization, both of which were passed under the government of Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada (1993-1997). Taken together, these laws involved the creation of more than three hundred municipalities throughout the national territory and instituted direct municipal elections for mayoral and council member positions. In addition, Bolivia's constitutional reform under Sánchez de Lozada's administration introduced single member districts to one tier of the lower chamber in Congress, creating the so-called "uninominal" representatives (see Chapter 3). As the Bolivian political scientist Moira Zuazo (Zuazo 2008; interview with Moira Zuazo) notes, all of these institutional changes unleashed a process of "ruralizing" politics, meaning that the reforms recognized rural and indigenous communities as actors in municipal level decisions and expanded citizenship rights to indigenous peoples; one example of this is that the government began recognizing collective titling for indigenous territories (Postero 2007: 5–6). Indigenous movements formed their own political vehicles and, taking advantage of the new opportunity structures, engaged in electoral politics at the local level, which resulted in rapid gains in access to local offices (Collins 2006; Van Cott 2005, 2008; Albó 2008). Undoubtedly, the most successful of these newly created parties was the MAS.<sup>76</sup>

At first, the MAS took form as the Assembly for the Sovereignty of the People (ASP), which was a social movement organization of peasants and coca growers led by Quechua peasant leader Alejo Véliz (Burgoa and Condori 2011: 20). ASP never ran for office, but the movement backed the United Left (IU), which was a declining left party, in the municipal elections of 1995

---

<sup>76</sup> Other indigenous parties include the Pachakuti Indigenous Movement (MIP), headed by Felipe Quispe, and the Revolutionary Liberation Movement Tupaq Katari (MRTKL), headed by Genaro Flores. These did not become as electorally successful as the MAS (Madrid 2012: 35–73).

and the national elections of 1997. *Cocaleros* in Cochabamba provided an important flow of votes, helping the IU gain ten municipal governments in 1995 and four congressional seats to represent the Chapare region.<sup>77</sup> The ASP then formed the Political Instrument for the Sovereignty of the Peoples (IPSP), which was based on the idea of the “self-representation” and became the electoral arm of that movement (Burgoa and Condori 2011: 40; García Linera, León, and Monje 2004). For legal reasons, IPSP, under the leadership of Morales, then borrowed the acronym and legal registration of a nearly defunct party, the MAS-U, which was a left splinter of the Bolivian Socialist Falange party, and a member of the IU (interviews with Alejandro Almaraz, Modesto Condori, Filemón Escóbar, Sergio Loayza, Isabel Ortega, and Juan de la Cruz Villca).<sup>78</sup> This allowed the IPSP to participate in the 1999 municipal elections.

From the beginning, the MAS engaged in electoral politics, and its leaders conceived of it more as a “political instrument” of the social movements than as a traditional political party. Its first electoral experience as the MAS was in the municipal elections of 1999, in which it obtained 3.3 percent of the national vote, and it was in Cochabamba, specifically in the coca-growing Chapare, where it obtained the most votes (Rojas Ortuste 2000; Ballivián 2003). These early electoral results helped to consolidate the *cocaleros* in the Chapare as the leading faction of Bolivia’s peasant movement, and they also consolidated the leadership of Evo Morales in

---

<sup>77</sup> Evo Morales, Román Loayza, Néstor Guzmán, and Félix Sánchez became uninominal deputies for the Chapare and fought neoliberalism from the halls of Congress. Evo Morales received 70 percent of the vote in his district. As Madrid (2012: 48) notes, however, “outside of Cochabamba, the party fared poorly, winning only 1.2 percent of the total vote.”

<sup>78</sup> David Añez Pedraza, who was the former president of the MAS, gave the acronym to Evo Morales and the coca growers. This explains why in the party statute Mr. Pedraza is formally recognized as life and honorific president of the MAS (interviews with Juan de la Cruz Villca, Modesto Condori, and Carlos Burgoa). The letter “U” (an homage to Óscar Únzaga de la Vega, a historic anticommunist leader of the MAS) was eliminated at a party congress in 2001, once Morales and the coca growers were in control of the party (Burgoa and Condori 2011: 70). That party congress also formalized the name of the party as MAS-IPSP. It will be referred to here simply as “the MAS,” however.



relation to other peasant leaders such as Alejo Véliz and Felipe Quispe (Zuazo 2008: 29-30). Having established an anchor in the Chapare—and having decided to pursue an electoral path to be elected to the government at the national level—the challenge for the MAS was to nationalize its appeal by winning as many votes as possible.

The cycle of mass protests that started in 2000 with the Water War accelerated this process of organizational growth. Indeed, the MAS used this context to its advantage and adopted a “supraclass strategy” of electoral recruitment (Przeworski and Sprague 1986: 70).<sup>79</sup> Anthropologist Robert Albro (2005a) has described this period in terms of a “plural popular” strategy of coalition building, in which indigenous issues became the framing plank for successful political articulation.

Expanding the electoral base, however, was anything but a straight line. Strategically, the MAS sought to include left-leaning and nationalist intellectuals, as well as the urban indigenous and nonindigenous middle classes, for example, by naming José Antonio Quiroga and Antonio Peredo as vice presidential candidates in 2002 (interviews with Filemón Escóbar, Antonio Peredo, and José Antonio Quiroga; also see Escóbar 2008).<sup>80</sup> But expansion via electoral mobilization and territorial penetration were not the only component of its repertoire. Indeed, the dynamics of social mobilization in the streets proved to be central, as they allowed the MAS to forge a strikingly heterogeneous coalition of disenchanting voters that would challenge the established political class and the unpopular market reforms they had implemented. Although the

---

<sup>79</sup> This vote-maximizing strategy entails turning to groups other than the core constituencies of a party in order to gain the support necessary for electoral majorities. Party leaders are generally willing to pursue this kind of strategy once they know they enjoy sufficient support among their core constituencies.

<sup>80</sup> Quiroga was invited to run as Morales’s vice presidential candidate but declined the offer, asserting personal reasons (interview with José Antonio Quiroga). Morales then selected Antonio Peredo, a renowned journalist and teacher associated with the Bolivian Communist Party (PCB), and Peredo accepted the candidacy (interview with Antonio Peredo).

MAS did not win the presidency in the 2002 elections, it placed 27 of 130 deputies in the lower chamber and 8 of 27 seats in the Senate and thus accrued significant institutional positions.<sup>81</sup>

Appealing to the middle sectors to generate votes involved a set of tradeoffs, as the recruitment of new allies generated ideological and organizational transformations of the “political instrument.” One example of such tradeoffs was related to the dynamics of the newly elected parliamentary group. While some of these new parliamentary deputies were representatives from the Chapare and had been selected by grassroots organizations through mechanisms of direct participation (on these, see Chapter 3), others were directly “invited” by the leadership, had no history of militancy in the MAS, and had few checks from below. Because they lacked a common socialization inside the party, when these representatives initiated their work in Congress, they “didn’t even know each other; we met for the first time in the hallways of Congress” (interview with César Navarro). Many of the “invited” leaders quickly became visible spokespeople for the MAS, as some had already had parliamentary experience, they related to the media very effectively, and they knew how to operate within representative institutions. In contrast, those with little political experience perceived the emergence of unwanted power imbalances between old and new members and feared an internal power switch from the social organizations to a group of potentially unaccountable representatives (for a parallel argument, see Madrid 2012: 60). Ultimately, these tradeoffs elicited derision from leaders of its founding

---

<sup>81</sup> Three days before the 2002 election, U.S. ambassador Manuel Rocha warned Bolivians about the risks of voting for a candidate associated with coca growing activities. Together with Morales’s expulsion from Congress months earlier, Rocha’s statement appears to have contributed to the increase of support for Morales. Inspired by Juan Peron’s electoral campaign in 1945, who campaigned with the slogan “Braden or Perón” (Spruille Braden was then the U.S. ambassador to Buenos Aires), campaign advisors of the MAS used Rocha’s words to inflame feelings of nationalism and anti-Americanism, and this boosted the support for the MAS. Voters rejected the US intervention in domestic politics and in the campaign, and many who were likely to vote for Reyes Villa or Jaime Paz Zamora decided to vote for the MAS as a sign of protest to the U.S. Embassy (interview with Marcelo Quezada).

organizations and core constituency (interviews with Filemón Escóbar, Román Loayza, Sergio Loayza, Dionicio Núñez, Juan de la Cruz Villca, and Leonilda Zurita).<sup>82</sup>

The mass mobilizations that started in 2000, which contributed to the organizational growth of the MAS, continued in 2003 with the first Gas War, leading to Sánchez de Lozada's resignation. They continued with the 2005 May–June protests, which forced both the resignation of de Lozada's successor, Carlos Mesa, and the anticipated call for elections. While Morales and the MAS did not initiate the strikes or participate actively in these protests, they used this historical moment strategically to expand their following. As Webber (2010) argues, by adopting the discourse of the most mobilized groups during these popular struggles and incorporating their demands, Morales and the MAS managed to shift the prevailing balance of social forces to their advantage and win the presidential elections of 2005. On this occasion, the electoral formula of Evo Morales and Álvaro García Linera (an Aymara Indian and peasant leader as presidential candidate and a *mestizo* middle-class intellectual as vice-presidential candidate) was elected to the executive in an unprecedented landslide victory (53.7 percent of those who voted). But to win electoral majorities, the MAS had once again undergone thorough ideological and organizational adjustments. In addition to having incorporated the demands of mobilized groups into its discourse, it celebrated pre-electoral alliances with a wide array of urban popular organizations that would exchange organizational loyalty for more particularistic benefits (interviews with Alejandro Almaraz, Gustavo Torrico, Iván Iporre, Walter Chávez, and Moira

---

<sup>82</sup> Founding member Román Loayza commented that, “leaders of social organizations that did not struggle like we did soon became the spokespersons of the MAS, and they tried to use the MAS for their own interests. We were upset as we watched this happen” (interview with Román Loayza). Antonio Peredo also commented that whereas on the one hand, “in 2002 the MAS became a national-level force,” on the other hand the elections signaled “the beginning of the difficulties of structuring the political instrument” (interview with Antonio Peredo).

Zuazo). The relationships between these groups can be described as instrumental. Whereas urban organizations found in the MAS a vehicle to advance their sectoral interests, the MAS found in them a possibility to expand its electoral base, especially amongst the urban poor. The linkages between the MAS and these organizations were never explicitly recognized in party statutes, however. Overall, these ties remained loosely structured, leading to tensions between the party and allied social movement after the MAS formed national government.

To summarize, the MAS went through a series of shifts between its founding and its rise to national-level power: a territorial shift from being a movement anchored in the coca-growing Chapare to a national movement with rural and urban social bases, as well as a growing presence in Bolivia's largest cities such as La Paz and El Alto; a shift in its class make-up from a movement of coca producers and relocated miners to a catch-all, multiclass movement that included urban and informal workers as well as middle class individuals, all of whom converged in their rejection of the political status quo; an ethnic shift from being a largely indigenous movement to one that incorporated both indigenous and nonindigenous groups; and a shift in terms of the organizations it comprised, from a small group to an increasingly larger and diverse group of base and "umbrella" organizations.

It is through this last shift that the MAS inserted itself into the cities of La Paz and El Alto in the era of mass protests of the early 2000s. Ultimately, these four shifts pushed the MAS in a more populist direction,<sup>83</sup> as it built on top of older political parties' structures and social networks and adopted many of these other parties' practices and participation schemes.

---

<sup>83</sup> For an in-depth discussion, see Anria (2013).

## **The MAS in Two Cities: La Paz and El Alto**

The metropolitan area of La Paz and El Alto consists of more than 1.5 million people. La Paz is Bolivia's principal city and administrative capital, and, together with El Alto, it comprises the biggest urban area of Bolivia, making both cities decisive players in national politics (Arbona and Kohl 2004; Albó 2006).

These cities, which were crucial to the organization and success of the protests of 2000–2005, are often seen as critical to winning national elections and to ensuring governability. Indeed, they achieved international prominence when their residents took to the streets and confronted the military forces that occupied those spaces. Urban residents were central to the various mobilizations that had rendered the country ungovernable for several years, and they became key actors in the resignations of Sánchez de Lozada in 2003 and Mesa in 2005. Yet although the MAS penetrated these cities, it did not accompany the process with the consolidation of a structure that incorporated the interests and leaderships of these urban populations.

The MAS's experience in these cities is relatively recent, and it has been influenced by the protest activities that took place in September and October 2000 in the Department of La Paz. In September 2000, the conflicts that began in Cochabamba with the Water War spread to the highlands of La Paz, as Felipe Quispe ("the Mallku"), Aymara peasant leader and later head of the Unique Confederation of Rural Laborers of Bolivia (CSUTCB), led a series of mobilizations against the government of General Hugo Banzer. Protesters demanded that the government fulfill a series of agreements it had concluded with peasant workers (Esposito and Arteaga 2006). Although Quispe later formed his own party, the MIP, and rejected association with the MAS (Van Cott 2005), his mobilizations acted as a blow to the "traditional" political parties and

facilitated the expansion of the MAS in the city. Disenchanted with the status quo, *paceños* and *alteños* welcomed the MAS as a viable alternative.

But La Paz and El Alto differ in important ways, and these differences have shaped the ways the MAS as a rural organization adapted to these urban settings. Specifically, they differ in terms of their ethnic and class composition. Besides being Bolivia's fastest-growing city (Arbona and Kohl 2004: 258), El Alto is an urban community made up overwhelmingly of recent Aymara immigrants (see table 2.1). In contrast, the *cocaleros* of the Chapare tend to be Quechua and—to the extent that they are *colonos*, as many are—they tend to come from the mining communities of Oruro and Potosí.

Table 2.1. Population of La Paz and El Alto

	La Paz		El Alto	
	1992	2001	1992	2001
Population	715,900	793,292	405,492	649,958
Poverty	297,507 (41.55)	263,783 (33.25)	261,845 (64.57)	424,504 (65.31)
Extreme poverty	78,200 (10.92)	74,420 (9.38)	95,529 (23.55)	111,697 (17.18)
Self-identification with indigenous peoples				
Aymara		275,253 (49.81)		291,977 (74.25)
Quechua		55,384 (10.02)		25,025 (6.36)
Other		3,175 (0.57)		1,399 (0.36)
None		214,296 (38.78)		73,556 (18.71)

Figures in parentheses denote percentages.

Note: The 1992 census did not include a question asking whether people self-identified as indigenous. That is why those values are not included on this table.

Source: Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas (INE) (2001).

Table 2.1 also reveals El Alto's strikingly high levels of poverty. By contrast, La Paz is more of a "middle class" city, with a significantly larger proportion of the population that does not claim an "indigenous" identity. Still, according to the 2001 census, close to 50 percent of the population over 15 years of age self-identifies as Aymara, and 10 percent as Quechua. Such ethnic and class differences between the MAS's "core constituency" and its constituency in La Paz and El Alto have made it difficult for the MAS to adapt to these settings, but this is particularly true of El Alto, which is a highly politicized social space with a strong Aymara identity (Albó 2006).

Table 2.2. Voting in La Paz and El Alto, General Elections, 1989–2009 (percent)

	La Paz						El Alto					
	1989	1993	1997	2002	2005	2009	1989	1993	1997	2002	2005	2009
CONDEPA	30.1	27.6	31.5				47.1	47.9	55.1			
ADN	27.5		25.8				15.8		14.8			
MNR	22.9		15.5	23.4			14.1		6.8	8.7		
MIR	12.5		10.5	10.8			16.3		11.2	12.7		
MNR-MRTKL		35.7						24.5				
AP		16.4						8.3				
UCS		9.2	10.8					9.8	8.1			
MBL		5.4										
NFR				28.5						21.3		
MIP				6.8						17.9		
LJ				6.3						6.9		
<b>MAS</b>				<b>16.2</b>	<b>55.7</b>	<b>63.1</b>				<b>27.9</b>	<b>77.1</b>	<b>87.5</b>
PODEMOS					28.5					13.9		
UN					10.1	14.7						6.1
PPB-CN						18.6						

Notes: Empty cells denote parties that either did not participate in the electoral contest or received less than 5 percent of the vote. Parties not in the table, if they placed candidates, received less than 5 percent of the vote in the respective electoral contest.

Source: Organo Plurinacional Electoral



Table 2.3. Voting in La Paz and El Alto, Municipal Elections, 1989–2010 (percent)

	La Paz							El Alto						
	1989	1991	1993	1995	1999	2004	2010	1989	1991	1993	1995	1999	2004	2010
MIR-ADN	37.2							11.2						
AP		23.9							20.8					
UCS	5.4	18.8	3.4	4.8	2.8			10.8	27.1	5.8	10.8	2.8		
MIR			4.2	3.3	16.2	6.4				4.6	21.0	45.6	3.7	
ADN			5.3	20.2	17.8		1.5			2.9	3.1	4.1		
MNR	13.3	23.2	40.0	15.2	16.7		1.7	8.5	9.3	12.8	7.1	6.6		
MBL		4.5	5.1	8.3	0.8				3.9	3.4	2.2	3.6		
CONDEPA	40.4	27.4	38.1	38.2	5.7			64.8	35.6	61.8	49.2	19.6		
IU	<b>2.2</b>	<b>2.2</b>		<b>0.9</b>				<b>2.8</b>	<b>3.4</b>					
MAS					<b>0.9</b>	<b>19.9</b>	<b>34.9</b>					<b>2.1</b>	<b>17.1</b>	<b>38.8</b>
MSM					22.5	45.9	48.5					4.0	2.7	24.4
ASP							2.4							2.6
UN						12.3	9.7						1.2	30.4
PP													52.6	

Notes: Empty cells denote parties that did not present candidates in the respective election. Parties that are not in the table, if they presented candidates, received less than 5 percent of the vote and are not relevant for the arguments in this chapter.

Source: Organo Plurinacional Electoral; Fundemos (1998).

Table 2.2 shows voting trends in both cities in the general elections since 1989, when the data for municipalities became more reliable. Specifically, it shows that a populist party (Conscience of the Fatherland, or CONDEPA) dominated the electoral preferences of El Alto during the 1990s, capturing over 45 percent of the vote in the general elections of 1989, 1993, and 1997. While CONDEPA was also an important force in La Paz, this city remained more committed to “traditional” parties (ADN, MIR, and MNR) up until the 2002 election. Table 2.3 provides additional evidence that El Alto was heavily penetrated by CONDEPA during the 1990s, while residents of La Paz remained more committed to “traditional” parties (though with a gradual shift toward the center-left Movement Without Fear, MSM, starting in 1999). Against this backdrop, the MAS pursued two divergent strategies to penetrate these cities: whereas in El Alto it sought to co-opt grassroots organizations by distributing patronage and resources, in La Paz it sought to boost its support among middle-class voters by pursuing an alliance with the already established MSM. This was key to moderating the image of the MAS among urban, middle class voters (Madrid 2012: 59).

At first, residents of La Paz and El Alto resisted the MAS. Due to its origins in coca-growing regions, they associated the MAS with illicit activities, such as drug dealing, and they associated MAS operators with drug traffickers (interviews with Bertha Blanco, Elvira Parra, Martha Poma, and Roberto Rojas).<sup>84</sup> On the one hand, this aversion meant that the expansion of the MAS was possible only once CONDEPA started to lose influence in cities, which allowed the MAS to directly capitalize on the neopopulist inroads and symbolic and cultural strategies used by CONDEPA. On the other hand, this process was complicated by the presence of the

---

<sup>84</sup> Bertha Blanco was one of the people who brought the MAS to El Alto. A former member of the National Federation of Campesina Women of Bolivia-Bartolina Sisa, she was, at the time of the interview, estranged from the MAS.

MSM, which, particularly in La Paz, had been a dominant force since the late 1990s.<sup>85</sup> This pushed MAS leaders to negotiate a strategic alliance with this party. According to Román Loayza, this was detrimental to the MAS because it forced the MAS to allow MSM members to run as MAS candidates and to include some MSM figures in important positions within the public administration (interviews with Román Loayza; also with Manuel Mercado, Sebastián Michel, and Marcela Revollo).<sup>86</sup>

Founded in 1988, CONDEPA emerged at the end of the 1980s to represent sectors that were “affected by adjustment policies and unrepresented by the established parties” (Mayorga 2006: 154). This party was built around the charismatic leadership of Carlos Palenque, and its political and symbolic practices combined the extensive use of clientelism, paternalism, plebiscitary appeals to the masses, unmediated relationships with constituents, and a strong anti-establishment discourse (Madrid 2012: 47; Alenda 2003; Revilla Herrero 2006). Partly because CONDEPA failed to consolidate a party structure or forge organic linkages with its constituency, the party practically died along with its founder in 1997. This party’s loss of political power created opportunities for the MAS, which would build on top of the networks inherited from older parties and replicate many of its practices in the cities.

In the municipal elections of 2004, which were affected by the contentious events of the Gas War, the MAS emerged as the most electorally successful party, especially in the western part of the country.<sup>87</sup> As noted, while the MAS was neither a chief instigator nor a key

---

<sup>85</sup> One of its founders, Juan del Granado, served as mayor of La Paz between 2000 and 2010.

<sup>86</sup> Loayza was one of the founding members of the MAS and is now a dissident, since he was accused of betrayal and expelled from the MAS in April 2009.

<sup>87</sup> It is worth noting, however, that even though the MAS won almost every municipal government in the country, it did not win the municipalities of La Paz and El Alto.

protagonist of the protests (Lazar 2006), it used the context to its advantage. After Mesa's resignation (or fall) in June 2005, some urban forces attempted to configure a "broad front" as a mechanism to incorporate a coalition of progressive forces into the MAS, both in order to develop a comprehensive long-term program of government and as a collective effort to democratize the MAS. The attempts to configure a broad strategic front failed, as the MAS insisted on the "zero alliances" formula (interviews with Iván Iporre, and José Antonio Quiroga). That MAS leaders refused to form alliances with political parties had much to do with the idea of avoiding any kind of association with, first of all, the "traditional" parties, which were seen as inefficient and corrupt, and, secondly, with the unpopular neoliberal policies these traditional parties had implemented.<sup>88</sup> The anti-alliance position was also seen as an attempt to protect the MAS's anti-establishment stance and guarantee the party's survival.<sup>89</sup> But some of these forces, particularly the center-left Movement Without Fear (MSM), decided to accommodate the MAS and negotiated an alliance with heavy personalistic components. In particular, the MAS-MSM alliance was designed to guarantee important spaces of power for MSM candidates (interviews with Manuel Mercado, Sebastián Michel, and Marcela Revollo). Before the presentation of lists to the National Electoral Court, then, the MSM placed some of its candidates on the MAS's lists. As some of the MSM candidates performed fairly well in the elections, this situation generated discontent in the *masista* rank and file, which saw that their possibilities of getting a job in the

---

<sup>88</sup> Neopopulist parties such as Conscience of the Fatherland (CONDEPA) and Civic Solidarity Union (UCS) joined governments led by "traditional" parties in the 1990s and 2000s. Not only did this undermine these neopopulist parties' anti-establishment credentials, but it also contributed to their collapse.

<sup>89</sup> It might be worth noting that individuals such as José Antonio Quiroga, René Joaquino, and Juan del Granado, among others, had attempted to articulate a similar front in 2002, without success. This previous proposal was rejected by peasant leaders on the grounds of wanting to avoid any kind of association with the "traditional" political parties (interview with José Antonio Quiroga).

new government were reduced (on this, see Do Alto 2006). It also caused tensions within the party's core constituency, particularly with respect to nominations for bureaucratic and ministerial posts.<sup>90</sup>

The MAS, therefore, was not an organic product of these cities. Rather, it inserted itself into La Paz and El Alto as something foreign. As such, it faced obstacles as it sought to organize a structure of its own on top of political configurations and existing social networks of older parties, even though parties like CONDEPA had already broken significant popular ground for the entrance of the MAS. Along with this organizing, the MAS incorporated militants and party operators from other parties, such as CONDEPA. These incorporations were accompanied by a transfer of top-down schemes of participation, as well as a set of co-optative practices that are now characteristic of the MAS in these settings.

## **Social Organizations and the Party**

### ***The Relationship between the MAS' 'Apparatus' in Power, Social Movement Leaders, and their Bases***

This section examines the relationships between the party "apparatus" in power, the leadership of the social organizations that support it, and the rank and file. It focuses on three areas of the country—Villa Tunari, La Paz/El Alto, and Santa Cruz—, which represent distinctive patterns of interaction between those three components.

As has been shown, the MAS emerged from a very specific social constituency, the *cocaleros* in the Chapare region of the department of Cochabamba. Together with the country's

---

<sup>90</sup> In interviews conducted in 2008, a common complaint by peasant leaders was that the grassroots organizations that had formed the MAS and that had made its rise to power possible had lost influence in the nomination of candidates for key positions within the government, particularly in relation to new members that joined during the campaign (interview with Román Loayza, and Orlando "Tito" Guzmán).

main peasant organizations, they still conceive of the MAS as their “political instrument” under their control, and they view the MAS government as *their* government. That the MAS was formed in the Chapare meant that it was infused with the democratic principles and collective decision-making traditions found in the unions, which provide a framework for decision-making embedded in a “culture of delegation and accountability” (Crabtree 2013: 284). In that region of the country, moreover, the MAS as a party does not appear to have an independent role vis-à-vis the coca growing unions, and indeed, the two can be seen as fused.<sup>91</sup> As some have argued, *cocaleros* view the MAS more as an extension of the union than as a classic party (Grisaffi 2013: 49). The boundaries between the two are notoriously blurred.

The dynamics between the coca growing unions, the MAS, and the municipal government can help to illustrate this point. In Villa Tunari, which is the largest municipality in the Chapare, candidates for local office running with the MAS ticket are almost always drawn from the coca growing unions (on this, see Chapter 4), and the relationships between elected officials and union leaders (*dirigentes*) are close and constant. As the mayor of Villa Tunari, Feliciano Mamani, commented in an interview: “there is a kind of overlap between social organizations and municipal authorities. We are constantly talking, either in person or by phone, and when we have acts of inauguration, sports events, and meetings, for example, they [the *dirigentes*] are there first” (interview with Feliciano Mamani).<sup>92</sup> The candidates are generally males and females with considerable leadership experience within the union structure (interviews

---

<sup>91</sup> Indicative of this, in Villa Tunari, the site of my fieldwork, there were no party offices for the MAS. As Grisaffi (2013: 56) notes, “there is a total overlap between membership of the Union and membership of the MAS party.” The hegemony of *cocaleros* in Villa Tunari creates exclusions, however. It marginalizes people who are not affiliated with the unions from the political process and limits their access to resources.

<sup>92</sup> I attended several meetings where municipal authorities and *dirigentes* shared the credit for the delivery of public works. Usually, the *dirigentes* have the last word in these events.

with Emiliana Albarracín, Erasmo Espinoza, Ricardo Henríquez, Segundina Orellana, Julio Salazar Edgar Torres; also with Fernando Salazar, Eduardo Córdova Eguivar, and Jean-Paul Benavides). Once in office, elected officials are expected to execute decisions made by the unions (interviews with Omar Claros and Segundina Orellana), to “work together in the development of the municipal development plan” (interview with Asterio Romero), and to “participate actively in the ‘organic life’ (*la parte orgánica*) of the union” (interview with Feliciano Mamani). In Villa Tunari, the headquarters of the largest and most militant of the coca growers’ unions, the Special Federation of Peasant Workers of the Tropics of Cochabamba (*Federación Especial de Trabajadores Campesinos del Trópico de Cochabamba*, FETCT), serves as a meeting place for *dirigentes*, affiliates, and elected officials. Union affiliates thus maintain close links with both their *dirigentes* and their elected officials,<sup>93</sup> and they have the power to hold these delegates accountable to the rank and file. This community-led control scheme, known as “social control,” happens on a regular and face-to-face basis, occasionally forcing *dirigentes* and elected officials to resign before the end of their term. The argument is that “if the unions nominate authorities and put them in positions of authority, the unions can also remove those authorities from power” (interview with Jean-Paul Benavides).<sup>94</sup>

As Grisaffi (2013: 57) notes, because the MAS emerged infused with these community based forms of governance, it came as no surprise that “when Morales won the 2005 election, the

---

<sup>93</sup> The mayor of Villa Tunari was present in all of the meetings I attended at the FETCT, for example.

<sup>94</sup> These relationships can be highly contentious. While mayors may not enjoy full autonomy vis-s-vis the social movement bases (Van Cott 2008: 184), over time they tend to develop their own interests, and they are also constrained by legal structures, which may not allow them to follow through on the demands set by the rank and file. The highest-level female authority within the union structure, Segundina Orellana, commented: “there are norms in the municipality that mayors have to follow, [and therefore] we cannot impose [these norms] 100 percent of the time” (interview with Segundina Orellana). Conflicts between *dirigentes* and the rank and file arise if the former are seen as “protecting” the mayor and not respecting the decisions forged in the unions. This usually leads to divisions within the unions.

coca growers imagined that the national government would function in a similar way to local government, in other words, the *cocaleros* thought of the government officials as nothing more than spokespeople for decisions forged at their [the *cocaleros* 's] union meetings.” But governing a country involves responding to wider domestic and international pressures, so it is unsurprising to find some mismatch between expectations and actual practices.

Of all the grassroots actors that brought Morales to power, he has maintained strongest links to the *cocaleros* in the Chapare. Indeed, he has continued to be the president of the Six Federations of the Tropics of Cochabamba, which is the overarching union of coca growers. He travels there frequently to participate in their *ampliados* and other types of meetings, which serve to reaffirm his leadership and to collect valuable information from the rank and file. In my observations during these meetings, he usually begins by telling *dirigentes* and the rank and file that he is there “to listen to them,” to “inform them about things we are doing in the government,” and “to ask you [affiliates] and your leaders to come up with proposals.” However, when *dirigentes* talk in these forums, it is rather common to hear complaints about problems of coordination between the grassroots and the party in government. A union leader of Chimoré told me in an interview: “never ever did we have the opportunity to tell authorities to their faces what our problems and demands are. I thank the president for that, for always coming here to talk to the rank and file. But the representatives and the ministers usually do not come.”

These kinds of complaints capture some of the tensions that exist between the bottom-up politics and collective decision-making that characterize union politics, on the one hand, and the top-down logics of governing a country, on the other. Sometimes decisions coming from the top can create tensions among the rank and file, in particular when these average citizens do not feel that their *dirigentes* are putting sufficient pressure on higher-level authorities or are not carrying



out the decisions made in the unions. However, Morales still commands overwhelming authority among the rank and file in the Chapare, and both he and the MAS enjoy strikingly high levels of support in that region of the country (in the 2009 presidential election the MAS received 96.34 percent of the vote, and in the 2010 municipal election it received 100 percent of the vote).

*Dirigentes* play a key role shielding Morales from grassroots criticism, which helps to strengthen his leadership. When unpopular policies that affect the rank and file come from the top, for example, *dirigentes* usually blame ministers and representatives for what are seen as mistakes made by the government but induced by Morales's alleged disloyal aides.<sup>95</sup> Examples of these policies include the *Gasolinazo* of 2010 (on this, see Chapter 4), and, paradoxically, Morales's coca policy, which is seen by the base as a step in the right direction, but also as an imposition from the top (Grisaffi 2013: 60).<sup>96</sup> In both cases, the *dirigentes* could not generate full compliance with the policies and encountered popular resistance.

Despite these tensions, the MAS maintains strong organic links to its core constituency. While the *dirigentes* generally align with Morales and "protect" his government and his leadership, they do not command full control over the rank and file, and thus cannot always generate compliance of their base with governmental policies. As such, there is neither

---

<sup>95</sup> When asked about the increment of fuel prices in 2010 (an event known as the *Gasolinazo*), Segundina Orellana commented: "the ministers made a mistake, they fooled the president" (interview with Segundina Orellana). Usually, the assumption is that ministers, especially those who do not come from the ranks of a trusted social organization, are not fully committed to the MAS's project and are instead driven by personal motivations.

<sup>96</sup> The policy eliminates forced eradication of coca crops but sets a restriction (1 *cato*, or 50,000 acres) on the amount of coca that farmers can legally grow. It also replaces the old regime of police and military repression for a community-led form of "social control" (Farthing and Kohl 2010: 205). Although the policy was designed with the participation and input of the unions, many coca farmers believe that the ceiling of permitted coca growth was arrived at arbitrarily, and they complain that it is too low and does not allow them to guarantee their survival. In the meetings I observed, where the issue of coca production is a major topic of discussion, Morales also recurrently complained that, "there are several of you [union affiliates] that do not want to comply with the 1-*cato* ceiling."

government co-optation of its core constituency nor full grassroots autonomy, but rather permanent interactions and degrees of cooperation between the two. There are also strong pressures from below to keep the leadership accountable to the rank and file, a pattern that is closely associated with the “movement” origins of the MAS and with the legacies of social mobilization that forged the organization at its inception. These links and interactions are different in other areas of the country, however, which the MAS penetrated in later stages of its development by using different strategies. The examples below illustrate two distinctive alternative patterns.

As was noted in the previous section, penetrating the cities of La Paz and El Alto was crucial to the MAS’s ability to win electoral majorities and become a national-level actor. There, the MAS came in as an outsider party and expanded in two ways: first, by building a territorial party infrastructure, and second, by configuring a network of alliances with urban popular organizations (see Anria 2009; also 2013). Although the MAS had been inching along with the latter path to expansion since 2002, its strategic alliance did not truly materialize until the 2005 general election campaign. Organizations representing groups as diverse as artisans, microenterprises, pensioners, transportation, street vendors, miners working for cooperatives, and other forms of local organization, such as neighborhood associations (*juntas de vecinos*), perceived the alliance with the MAS as a unique opportunity to achieve parliamentary representation, occupy important positions in the government, and gain access to government jobs for their affiliates. For the MAS’s part, by forging links to groups with great mobilizational capacity, the party dramatically expanded its support base and thereby its influence. Given that some of these organizations had been key protagonists in the protests that forced the resignation

of two consecutive presidents, forging alliances with them was also seen as a way to ensure some degree of governability.

As anthropologist Sian Lazar (2008: 52–55) notes, El Alto is a highly mobilized and self-organized political space. The main civic organizations at the city level are the Federation of Neighborhood Boards (FEJUVE) and the Regional Labor Federation (COR).<sup>97</sup> These organizations are critical for ensuring governability in the city and gaining electoral majorities at the national level (García Linera, León, and Monje 2004; see also Alenda 2003). As a result, party operators have historically attempted to infiltrate these organizations and control their leadership, and the MAS is no exception. Indeed, operators believe that infiltrating the leadership levels of these militant organizations allows the MAS to extend its influence and control throughout the territory and to recruit leaders who mobilize large numbers of voters.

While, in accordance with their statutes, these organizations do not have formal ties to political parties, the MAS has configured an umbrella of informal alliances with key *dirigentes* through which it has sought to insert itself into the cities to build a political base and acquire political influence. Trying to win over these organizations, *masista* operators have frequently used top-down co-optive practices (interview with Abel Mamani). These have consisted, for example, of offering positions in the government in exchange for organizational loyalty (or what in Bolivian parlance is known as *pegas*), providing services or infrastructure to particular organizations, and infiltrating the ranks of organizations to directly control their leadership. From the beginning, this approach was not aimed at building organic ties with these organizations.

---

<sup>97</sup> The FEJUVE is a coordinator of residents, as well as neighborhood councils and associations, in El Alto. The COR is an umbrella organization of workers, which includes factory workers, teachers, journalists, and artisans but is dominated by street traders. A third organization, the Federation of Street Traders (“the Federation”), coordinates associations of street traders. Taken together, the three organizations possess an impressive mobilizational strength in the city.

Bertha Blanco, one of the leaders who brought the MAS into El Alto, noted, “When we were constructing the MAS, we needed to find candidates [to run for office]. We didn’t have candidates in the city, and nobody wanted to be associated with the MAS. And what did we do? We went to find persons within the organizations, for example in the COR. And there we talked directly with the *dirigentes*” (interview with Bertha Blanco).

What began as a search for candidates quickly turned into a penetration strategy aimed at eroding the autonomy of social organizations from the top, a pattern that became particularly clear after the MAS gained governmental power. As a *masista* representative for a “uninominal” district in El Alto commented in an interview: “We can’t deny we do that. We aim for our people to become leaders in these organizations. It is an effort to control the social organizations from the top” (interview with Miguel Machaca). A *masista* delegate to the Constituent Assembly concurred:

The project we have had as MAS is to be able to take control over the social organizations. In order to do that, you need to start from working at the district level and from there you can start climbing. For FEJUVE’s next congress, for example, we have the wish that we’re going to take on FEJUVE’s leadership [...] At least, that’s what I can tell you that we’d like to happen (interview with Elvira Parra).

These testimonies provide evidence for a deliberate plan to win over previously existing popular organizations at the regional level by penetrating their social networks and seeking to control them. But it should be noted that this is not something new in Bolivia. Rather, it reflects a general pattern of how different collective political interests have long contended for control of umbrella organizations in Bolivia, as the history of the Bolivian Workers’ Central (COB) and the

CSUTCB demonstrate (García Linera, León, and Monje 2004). In short, the MAS has not innovated much in terms of its practices for controlling base and umbrella organizations.

This strategy, however, creates a situation in which *dirigentes* of social organizations perceive these entities simply as “a trampoline for launching oneself into a public administration position” (interview with Gerardo Morales). Becoming a *dirigente* is therefore a rather attractive role, for it is a path to getting a government job. The case of FEJUVE in El Alto provides a good example. Abel Mamani, the highest authority of this organization since 2004, was appointed as the water minister for the Morales government in 2006. His appointment translated into the direct presence of a FEJUVE representative in a high-level government position and into government jobs for some of its affiliates. On the one hand, this entailed growing capacities for the organization to negotiate corporatist demands from within the state. On the other hand, its presence in the government eroded its autonomy and created strong divisions within the organization (interview with Abel Mamani). As a high-level *dirigente* of FEJUVE commented in an interview:

We have lost considerable capacities for mobilization. Why? Because *dirigentes* have occupied ministries and other public offices [...] they have received quotas of power. But the people can see what their real interests are and thus it is difficult to strengthen the organization (interview with Luis Huanca).

Much of this had to do with the mode of nomination used by Morales to form his cabinet. Mamani, for example, was appointed directly by Morales, and he accepted the nomination without having the chance to consult the rank and file, which alienated the lower-level members from the leadership (interviews with Abel Mamani, Néstor Guillén, and Fanny Nina).

In the case of the COR-El Alto, the linkage with the MAS is subtler and less direct. This organization has supported the government and the process of social transformation sponsored by the MAS. Unlike FEJUVE, the COR has never been represented directly in the government apparatus; in other words, the COR has not physically occupied spaces of power under the Morales government. But party operators and government officials have sought to infiltrate this organization, and they have established negotiations directly with the leadership, creating tensions between *dirigentes* and the rank and file. As Edgar Patana, the former COR executive in El Alto and El Alto's current mayor, commented in an interview:

Former executives of COR have always had rapprochements with political parties. Since 2002 they have been courting the MAS so that they could negotiate spaces of power, such as a candidacy for deputyship or something else. But we have never been 'organic' members of the MAS (interview with Edgar Patana).

The MAS became a national-level force only to the extent that it played an articulatory role among the experiences, demands, and internal structures of various base and "umbrella" organizations in urban settings. But, of course with exceptions, the strategies for linking these organizations and the MAS have been driven predominantly by pragmatism and the negotiation of spaces of power and influence within the government. The MAS came to these cities as an outsider party and tried to win over existing base organizations. By incorporating or attempting to co-opt their leadership into the party "apparatus" in government, a strategy facilitated by having access to state resources and patronage, the MAS has attempted to control these organizations from above and thus erode their autonomy and independence. Whereas the rural dynamic that shaped the emergence of the MAS was one of bottom-up mobilization and organic

party-movement linkages, a pattern that to a certain extent still characterizes the relationships between the MAS and its core constituency, the strategy for linking to its peripheral constituencies in the urban areas under study for this chapter is more top-down and co-optative. Nevertheless, many of these organizations are the bearers of the legacies of social mobilization that brought down successive governments; even if *dirigentes* support the government or are coopted by it, they cannot always secure that their base will be compliant with the government's policies.

Yet another pattern worthy of some elaboration here is found in Santa Cruz, which used to be a bastion of right-wing opposition to the MAS, particularly during Morales's first term in office (2006-2009). In that department, the MAS has grown electorally from rural districts—particularly from areas recipient of collective peasant migration—to urban areas. In rural areas, the MAS has grown by forging links with peasant organizations and the lowlands' indigenous movement, which is organized around the *Bloque Oriente* (Eastern Block). The MAS has also built bonds on the basis of programmatic representation, particularly around the issue of land redistribution (interviews with Justa Cabrera, Lidia Choque, Hugo Salvatierra, and Lázaro Tacóo).<sup>98</sup> NGOs such as ALAS, CEJIS, and CIPCA played a central role in bringing together peasant and indigenous organizations, providing spaces for articulation, and providing legal advice and basic infrastructure (i.e. personnel, offices, suggestions for candidates, etc.) for the party “in times when nobody wanted to be associated in the MAS in Santa Cruz” (interview with

---

<sup>98</sup> *Bloque Oriente* was an alliance of peasant and indigenous organizations with a presence in the departments of Santa Cruz, Tarija, Beni, and Pando. Many of my interviewees described it to me as a regional version of the Unity Pact. *Bloque Oriente* developed proposals for the Constituent Assembly, particularly focusing on common demands and proposals related to land.

Alejandro Almaraz; also with Lidia Choque, and Hugo Salvatierra).<sup>99</sup> The MAS has faced the strongest resistance in districts where peasant or indigenous organizations are not well organized and where the political right is established and in control of well-functioning clientelistic networks (interview with Lidia Choque).

In the city of Santa Cruz, the MAS has grown in two directions: by pursuing alliances with powerful sectors with great mobilizational capacity—such as cooperatives, health care workers, transportation, street vendors, neighborhood associations, and school boards—and by configuring a strong territorial party infrastructure around districts, which overlaps with the administrative division of the city (interviews with Tito Sanjinez, and Rodolfo Zeballos). Although the first strategy has relied on practices reminiscent of those found in El Alto, the novelty in Santa Cruz lies in the organizational strength of the territorial infrastructure, which was built on top of existing networks of older parties, such as the Nationalist Revolutionary Movement (MNR) and UCS.<sup>100</sup>

Santa Cruz is the only city that has an urban directorate.<sup>101</sup> This structure is stable, in the sense that it operates not only during electoral cycles but also between elections, and it operates with autonomy from both the peasant organizations that control the departmental directorate (interviews with Lidia Choque, José Quiroz, Tito Sanjinez, and Hugo Salvatierra) and the party “apparatus” in power (interviews with Gabriela Montaña, and Álvaro García Linera). Although

---

<sup>99</sup> ALAS is an NGO directed by former minister of rural development, Dr. Hugo Salvatierra. CIPCA is the Center for Research and Promotion of the Peasantry, and it is an NGO supported by the Catholic Church. CEJIS is the Center for Juridical, Institutional, and Social Studies.

<sup>100</sup> Civic Solidarity Union (*Unión Cívica Solidaridad*, UCS) was a neopopulist political party founded by Max Fernández in the 1990s. It made significant electoral inroads and mobilized the urban poor in the peripheral areas of Bolivia’s largest cities, including La Paz, El Alto, and Santa Cruz.

<sup>101</sup> Urban directorates are not recognized in the party’s statute.



this territorial party structure yields considerable influence in the nomination of candidates for local and national office, the party's top leadership often bypasses it, thereby causing friction among the rank and file and creating internal divisions. In the municipal election of 2010, for example, Evo Morales formed an alliance with a right-wing party in Santa Cruz, the Popular and Solidarity Alliance (ASIP), which guaranteed the nomination of one of ASIP's leaders as the mayoral candidate (interviews with Gabriela Montaña, Hugo Salvatierra, Freddy Soruco, and Hugo Siles). This is indicative of the limits on the territorial party structure's ability to generate decisions autonomously. As Tito Sanjinez, the vice-president of the urban directorate in Santa Cruz, commented in an interview: "this agreement created discontent among the rank and file, as it was seen as coming from the top" (interview with Tito Sanjinez). While the MAS' top leadership praises the urban structure for its mobilizational capacity (interview with Álvaro García Linera), it does not grant full autonomy to this structure. At the same time, the leadership of the urban structure recognizes the leadership of the peasant organizations, but maintains tense and competitive relationships with it.

### **Morales's MAS in Power (2006-Present)**

Morales took office in January 2006. Becoming a governing party entailed important internal transformations for his party. This process involved a dramatic organizational expansion primarily via (1) the articulation of alliances with a wide array of "peripheral" popular organizations, which can be partially explicable in terms of the logic of "supra-class" electoral recruitment theorized by Przeworski and Sprague (1986), and (2) also by breaking with the "zero alliances" formula and, indeed, by celebrating an informal alliance with the MSM, which was central to engaging the electorate in La Paz. This coalition-building strategy yielded favorable electoral results, but it also led to the configuration of a strikingly heterodox and loose coalition

of grassroots actors and those in power. As a governing party, the MAS has sought to maintain close relationships with both the core and noncore social movements that constitute its social base, and to retain a degree of responsiveness to its increasingly diverse constituency. This has not been easy.

Some observers have argued that the MAS has become increasingly detached from popular organizations as a governing party, and that it has, in fact, undergone a process of “personalization of power” since the 2000s (Madrid 2011: 241–242). To assess the relationships between the party in government and the social movements that support it, other scholars have looked at the composition and evolution of Morales’s cabinet of ministers. While it is true that his first cabinet included a mix of leaders of rural and urban popular organizations, some of whom came from “plebeian” origins and had little or no previous experience in government (Stefanoni and Do Alto 2006; Crabtree 2013: 285),<sup>102</sup> the presence of these people in key positions of the cabinet has tended to decrease over time (see Zegada, Torrez, and Camara 2008; Laruta 2008; Do Alto 2011: 105). The participation of representatives drawn from popular organizations in top-level positions within the executive branch has been indeed limited and isolated. With some exceptions, key positions have been occupied by a technocratic elite that is “invited” into the ranks of the party, that does not represent grassroots organizations, and that consequently has few checks from below. A key example of this is Bolivia’s minister of economy, Luis Arce Catacora, who has been in office since 2006. Of course, the appointment of these individuals is related to the need for expertise in certain “technical” ministries, and the lack of cadres from within the ranks of social organizations with that expertise.

---

<sup>102</sup> This observation led Bolivia’s Vice-President to characterize the Morales government as a “government of the social movements” (García Linera 2009: 90) and to argue that, through the MAS, social movements are in control of the state (García Linera 2006).

Yet other scholars have examined the social composition of the Congress, pointing to a prominent—and growing—presence of representatives drawn from and nominated by a wide array of rural and urban grassroots organizations in this institution (Zuazo 2008: 36–41; Crabtree 2013: 285). As Chapter 3 in this dissertation shows, organized popular constituencies allied with the MAS have managed to retain significant bottom-up influence in the selection of candidates for national and local office, even after the party assumed national-level governmental power. As Dunkerley (2007: 166) notes, the “character of the leadership-mass relation is distinctly bottom-up.”<sup>103</sup>

Since Morales assumed office in 2006, he has tried to maintain participatory linkages between the leader, the party in government, and the support base (Roberts 2007). To differentiate his government from those of Bolivia’s “traditional” parties, and also to avoid their fate, Morales endorsed the Zapatista principle of “ruling by obeying.” For Freya Schiwy (2008: 9), this “means that if the organizations and social movements that brought Morales to power find him failing to pursue their decisions, they are likely to force the president to step down.” It also refers to being responsible for positive actions, and maybe responsive to the will of constituents while planning those actions. When Morales assumed office, for example, he addressed the demands set forth by the mass mobilizations of the early 2000s, which had, *de facto*, set the government’s agenda.<sup>104</sup> Therefore, upon taking office, he nationalized gas and oil,

---

<sup>103</sup> That elected representatives overwhelmingly come from organized popular groups does not mean that these organizations have a strong influence on setting the legislative agenda, however (on this, see Chapter 4). Scholars have pointed out that under the Morales government representatives have had a “subordinate standing” in relation to the executive (Crabtree 2013: 287; also Fornillo 2008: 3).

<sup>104</sup> This was known as the “October Agenda.” It was not a clear party program designed by the MAS, but more of a list of aspirations that emerged from the insurrection of El Alto in October 2003, which the MAS used for its campaign. The agenda included a wide array of popular demands to re-found Bolivia in the name of the poor and the indigenous majority. Among the key demands included in the agenda were the nationalization of hydrocarbons, an agrarian reform, and the call for a constituent assembly.

proclaimed a New Agrarian Reform Law, promoted an anticorruption law, and called for a constituent assembly through which popularly elected delegates would rewrite the country's constitution.<sup>105</sup> All of these actions can be seen as examples of Morales's positive accountability to the social movements that loosely constitute the MAS's social base; that is, as attempts to fulfill his campaign promises. In addition, they can be seen as efforts to consolidate Morales's leadership and to ensure governability during difficult times, particularly when elites in the eastern departments dubbed the half-moon, or *media luna* (Santa Cruz, Beni, Tarija, and Pando) organized a counter-movement that threatened secession (Eaton 2007).<sup>106</sup>

The centrality of peasant leadership in the MAS is hard to overstate (Zuazo 2010; Do Alto 2011).<sup>107</sup> Coca growers in the Chapare, together with other national-level peasant organizations, constitute the party's core constituency. Yet, over time, the MAS has developed a peripheral constituency by establishing a broad network of alliances with rural and urban popular organizations. In big cities that are central to win electoral majorities—such as La Paz, El Alto, Cochabamba, and Santa Cruz—the MAS has drawn support from two powerful sectors of similar socioeconomic background; namely, transportation and street vendors. These are generally associated with Bolivia's large “informal” economy. Alliances also included neighborhood

---

<sup>105</sup> The constitution exemplifies the main tendencies reported in this chapter. Indeed, the 2009 Constitution reflected the MAS's attempts to follow through on the protests' repeated calls for a constituent assembly. At the same time, the outcome of the constituent assembly was a text approved by progovernment delegates only, and many people accused the MAS of forcing the constitution through in antidemocratic ways. Nevertheless, that draft was negotiated and modified in Congress, with input from opposition forces and compromises on both sides. It became law with the constitutional referendum of January 2009.

<sup>106</sup> During Morales's first term (2006-2009), the political opposition controlled the Senate and was not willing to compromise. This period was highly contentious, and it reflected the regional dispute between the west and the east.

<sup>107</sup> For example, Morales retains responsibility for leading both the MAS and a social movement organization, the Six Federations of the Tropics of Cochabamba, which is the overarching union of coca growers.

associations, as well as organizations representing artisans, micro-enterprises, pensioners, and miners working for cooperatives, among others. Once in office, conflicts emerged among grassroots allies, particularly over the control of natural resources (Crabtree 2013: 286). The ongoing frictions among peasant organizations and indigenous organizations over issues of land redistribution (Fabricant 2012), and the recurrent confrontations among unionized mineworkers and miners working in cooperatives over the control of mining areas (Webber 2011), are illustrative of this trend. Conflicts also emerged between old and new members and the MAS government over aspects of policy. Examples of these are the widespread protests against the increase of fuel prices in 2010, which paralyzed every major city in the country and eventually succeeded at forcing the policy to change, and the sustained protests led by indigenous organizations, beginning in 2011, against the construction of a major highway through the Isiboro Sécure National Park and Indigenous Territory (TIPNIS) in lowland Bolivia. These frictions between grassroots actors and the party in government have proliferated during Morales's second term (on this, see UNIR 2012), and they illustrate how complicated and contested the relationships between social movements and the MAS government are.

There have been attempts to establish mechanisms to channel the bottom-up power of social movements and to design ways to resolve their redistributive conflicts and disputes. In September 2004, preceding the rise to power of the MAS, the peasant organizations that constitute the MAS's core formed an alliance with large indigenous movements in the eastern lowlands, like the Confederation of Bolivian Indigenous Peoples (CIDOB), and in the Andean highlands, like the National Council of Ayllus and Marcas of Qullasuyu (CONAMAQ), and called it the Unity Pact. The Unity Pact operated independently from the MAS, although it had *dirigentes* involved with the MAS, and it organized mass mobilizations demanding the

convocation of the Constituent Assembly. After years of deliberations full of tensions, the Unity Pact also produced a complete draft of a constitutional text and presented it to the Constituent Assembly (Garcés 2010; also 2011: 57). Above all, it provided advisory consultation; its proposal for a “plurinational” state was debated and eventually shaped many of the features of the draft of Bolivia’s new constitution. In the days since the new constitution was approved in 2009, however, the Unity Pact has not been visible or actively participatory in decision-making processes, as splinters of CIDOB and CONAMAQ have taken a critical stance against the government and peasant organizations have consolidated their hegemony within the alliance (interviews with Xavier Albó, Fernando Garcés, Walter Limache, Juan Carlos Pinto, and Raúl Prada). The MAS government has promoted other innovations to facilitate a bottom-up influence beyond the constituent assembly process, such as the National Coordinator for Change (Conalcam). However, there has been strong resistance to institutionalization, in part because MAS leaders think that institutionalization would be viewed as co-optative, with the MAS operating as a conventional political party—that is, as one with formal hierarchical elite structures.

To the extent that these structures do not take hold, the interactions between the party in government and its grassroots allies remain fluid and unmediated by party or state bureaucracies. This situation has contributed to the concentration of power in the hands of the president, who plays the role of an arbiter, often at the expense of the Congress and the judiciary (Anria et al. 2010: 254–60; Madrid 2012: 163; Crabtree 2013: 287). This tendency was further aggravated by the new constitution, which strengthened executive power. In addition, as we have seen, having access to state resources has encouraged the use of co-optative strategies vis-à-vis grassroots groups, which leads to patronage distribution and service provision to particular organizations,

among other things, and thus allows the government to influence the leadership and condition the behavior of allied social movements (Anria 2013: 33-35). However, this is not to say that Morales's power is absolute, nor that he can easily control his grassroots allies from the top. There are limits to his authority, in part because powerful groups in the MAS's coalition have managed to retain autonomy and pursue their agendas despite the attempts to control social organizations from the top (on this, see Chapter 4).

These limitations are set by Morales's own political camp. Aside from these limitations, Morales has had to yield to pressures from his opposition from the right, particularly during his first term, and more specifically in the period of time between the convention of the constituent assembly and the approval of the new constitution (Stoyan 2014). The outcome of the constituent assembly was a text approved by progovernment delegates only (Lehoucq 2008: 110–111). The text needed to be submitted to the verdict of the citizens, which required that the Congress sanction a law specifying the schedule and other details for the constitutional referendum. As the MAS controlled the Chamber of Deputies but not the Senate, this bill was blocked in Congress until the events that followed the recall referendum of August 2008 shook the political arena. While Morales emerged victorious in this referendum, opposition governors (then “prefects”) were ratified with large majorities in the *media luna*. These intensified their demands for autonomy. In September 2008, after a series of armed confrontations among autonomists and MAS supporters in Pando and Santa Cruz left several dead, the government and opposition politicians engaged in deliberations in Congress, where the text of the constitutional draft was negotiated and modified heavily upon input from the opposition (Romero, Bohrt Irahola, and Peñaranda 2009). The constitution was then ratified via referendum in January 2009, and in elections held in December 2009, Morales was reelected by an unprecedented 64 percent of the

vote. The MAS also won over two thirds of the seats in the Plurinational Legislative Assembly (as Congress was renamed in the new constitution).

Bolivia emerged from the constitution-writing process with a constitutional arrangement that involves indigenous self-rule with innovations in participation, although it maintains the framework of representative institutions (Cameron and Sharpe 2010; Tockman 2014). The constitution deepened some participatory elements such as the use of referendums and public consultations, which were already in place in the old constitution, and which were also used by previous incumbents (Crabtree 2011: 128–129). It also added a layer of supplementary features to the electoral regime, such as the system of indigenous autonomies, which have been designed to promote and institutionalize participatory democracy at the local level (Tockman and Cameron 2014). Some of these mechanisms, including the recall vote, were used by Morales in 2008 to reaffirm the legitimacy of his administration—and to eventually reduce the number of opposition governors. Others have been used by social movements, or by indigenous communities, to gain greater control over their territories.

Yet, despite these participatory innovations, observers have noted important erosions of liberal rights and freedoms under the Morales government, leading some to argue that Bolivia has slid into “competitive authoritarianism” (Levitsky and Loxton 2013; Sanchez-Sibony 2013). Using the same designation, others have noted that in his bid for hegemony, Morales has crowded out the spaces for meaningful political opposition and moved into the terrain of nondemocracies (Weyland 2013). It is frequently noted that this tendency was aggravated after Morales’s reelection in 2009, when the MAS gained full control of the Plurinational Legislative



Assembly.<sup>108</sup> And, indeed, Bolivia is deeply polarized between those who passionately support Morales and those who are equally passionate in their opposition. Members of the political establishment, particularly opposition politicians, almost always highlight that Morales is undermining certain political rights and freedoms. Among other things, they are concerned with the government's attempts to control the mass media, the political use of the judiciary, and the harassment of opposition politicians and journalists (interviews with Erika Brockmann, Diego Cuadros, Carlos Hugo Laruta, and Marcela Revollo). This is a legitimate concern. The fact that the government acts in ways that undermine the rights of individuals and political minorities by legal means and by controlling the media is indeed a worrisome trend. But to suggest the emergence of competitive authoritarianism may be misleading and far-fetched. A regime must be first deemed authoritarian before it can be called competitive authoritarian. It is not enough to show that it is insufficiently *liberal*.

That Morales and the MAS command electoral legitimacy (and that they indeed enjoy substantial levels of popular support) is an inconvenient fact for those who classify Bolivia's regime as authoritarian.<sup>109</sup> But of course electoral legitimacy is not enough to classify a regime as democratic. A more fruitful way to approach the classification of Bolivia's government under Morales is to focus on organizational dynamics (i.e. the organizational ecology in which his regime is embedded), which tells us a great deal about how power is organized and exercised.

---

<sup>108</sup> As Crabtree (2013: 289) notes, this electoral tendency also appeared at the regional level. In the 2010 regional elections, the MAS won 6 out of 9 regional governments, as well as a working majority in almost every regional legislative assembly.

<sup>109</sup> The MAS won majorities in the 2006 elections for the constituent assembly, the 2008 recall referendum (in all but three departments), the 2009 referendum on the Constitution, and the 2010 regional elections. In the 2009 general elections, Morales won with 64 percent of the vote, and the MAS won 114 (out of 163) seats in the Plurinational Legislative Assembly.

Such an approach tells us that it would be equally misleading to suggest that Morales has full control of the social movements that support the MAS. Despite the co-optation attempts and trends highlighted in this chapter, “mobilization in Bolivia comes most from the bottom-up” (De la Torre 2013: 27). The MAS’s fluidity, or its absence of routinization, leaves wide maneuvering room for the social organizations allied to it. In many cases, these organizations maintain considerable autonomy from the MAS, and they mobilize both *for* and *against* the government, often forcing Morales to negotiate with social movements in ways that place limits on his attempts to concentrate executive power. His authority and popular legitimacy, in short, may be challenged by what occurs at the level of the social movements that support his government.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has attempted to show that the MAS operates with different organizational strategies in different settings. Whereas the MAS’s “movement” roots in a rural social movement of coca producers reflect a pattern of bottom-up mobilization and organic links to its core constituency, its rapid extension into urban areas has fostered the emergence of top-down mobilization strategies and co-optative practices vis-à-vis the leadership of its peripheral constituency. The party grew from the local to the national level by bringing together a strikingly heterogeneous constituency through different strategies in rural and urban settings. The electoral payoffs of such an approach have been significant, and they have helped to consolidate the status of the MAS as a dominant party. But these same strategies also created internal tensions between core and noncore constituencies. In addition, the transition from being a rural movement to becoming the national government introduced new tensions within the governing coalition, particularly over the control of economic and political resources, and also over aspects of policy.

Despite authoritarian tendencies within the Morales government and the prevalence of co-optation attempts as efforts to control social movements from the top, movements in Bolivia have retained considerable autonomy from the governing party. The legacy of social mobilization (i.e. that some of these movements have contributed to the overthrow of unpopular governments) means that social movements are still vibrant. Even if their leaders support the government, or are coopted by it, these leaders cannot always guarantee the compliance of their base with the government's policies. Frictions and conflicts within the government coalition, as seen in the cases of the Gasolinazo and the TIPNIS, have forced the MAS to negotiate with movements and prevented attempts to concentrate executive power. This reflects an interesting, and highly *reactive*, pattern of policy-making in contemporary Bolivia, which will be analyzed thoroughly in Chapter 4. Here, it suffices to say that Bolivia's government under Morales is best described as operating on the basis of a complex combination of the bottom-up power of social movements – a pattern that is embedded in the party's "genetic model" – and the-top down logic and pressures associated with governing a country, rather than as an example of competitive authoritarianism.

### CHAPTER 3: CANDIDATE SELECTION WITHIN THE MAS

This chapter examines the degree to which grassroots social movements have been able to retain control over candidate selection processes in the Bolivian MAS. Using original data collected through fieldwork in different regions of Bolivia, the chapter identifies conditions of social and political structures where greater grassroots controlled is most likely and where the trend toward power concentration does not hold. The key to understanding variation in terms of degrees of grassroots influence over selection lies on the organizational field in which parties operate. The analysis reveals that in contexts where civil society is strong, has mechanisms to arrive at collective decisions, and can agree on selection, then it can effectively impose their choices for MAS candidates; where civil society is weak, top-down decision-making is more likely to occur. The analysis also reveals that the MAS operates differently in different contexts depending on how the political space is structured.

The chapter is organized as follows. First, it defines candidate selection and explains why this activity is central to understanding internal power distributions. Second, it develops a theory of within-party variation in candidate selection in which institutional elements interact with civil society characteristics. Third, the chapter provides an in-depth analysis of the MAS by looking at how the party selected its legislative candidates in the 2009 general election.<sup>110</sup> Fourth, to

---

<sup>110</sup> The selection of *legislative* candidates is the best point from which to study power distributions within parties because they generally involve a broader set of actors and processes than executive elections. While the study of candidate selection for the executive branch could be also beneficial, it requires separate treatment since presidential races are more personalistic enterprises; they tend to strengthen the importance of strong personalities and thus contribute to undermine the role of candidate selection procedures in relation to individual groups or influential personalities that wield overwhelming power.

increase number of observations and thus strengthen the evidentiary base for causal inference, the chapter develops subnational comparisons of how the MAS selected its municipal authorities in five municipalities for the 2010 elections.<sup>111</sup> Finally, the chapter draws conclusions from the findings and discusses some of the most important implications.

### **Why Candidate Selection Matters**

The selection of candidates is arguably the single most important activity that distinguishes political parties from other organizations (Hazan and Rahat 2010: 6–12; Field and Siavelis 2008: 620; Schattschneider 1942: 64). It can be defined as the “process by which a political party decides which of the persons legally eligible to hold an elective public office will be designated on the ballot and in election communications as its recommended and supported candidate or list of candidates” (Field and Siavelis 2008: 621).<sup>112</sup>

---

<sup>111</sup> Observing selection dynamics during those elections allows us to see the MAS in its most expansive phase. Since 2009, it has adopted a “catch-all” strategy of electoral recruitment conceived of as a deliberate plan to (1) control two-thirds in the legislative assembly that would allow the party to implement the newly approved constitution and (2) establish a strong presence in every municipality in the country and neutralize the opposition in the eastern departments (interviews with campaign advisor Jorge Silva, and campaign communications strategist Manuel Mercado). That situation can be seen a most likely case for oligarchic decision-making, given that the MAS expanded itself to the east and to areas where there were no strong grassroots organizations that could serve as its base. Yet, the patterns observed in this chapter are consistent with those found by other researchers who undertook studies at earlier stages in the life of the party (Komadina and Geffroy 2007; Escóbar 2008; Zuazo 2008; Zegada, Torrez, and Camara 2008). Thus, there are reasons to believe that the deviant pattern is sustainable in the long run and that the trend toward oligarchization can be held off if conditions are conducive. The expansion to the east, which is the strategic shift adopted by the MAS since 2009, only accentuated some oligarchic decision-making dynamics that already existed at earlier phases. It did not significantly alter the deviant pattern.

<sup>112</sup> Long ago, French political scientist Maurice Duverger (1954) described candidate selection as “a private act which takes place within the party. Often it is even secret, as parties do not like the odours of the electoral kitchen to spread to the outside world” (354). Selecting candidates is therefore a rather mysterious intraparty affair, and due to its hidden secrecies it is still often seen as a “secret garden” of politics (Gallagher and Marsh 1988).

The selection of candidates is of central interest because it sheds light on the dynamics of party power struggles among leaders themselves—and between them and aspiring leaders.<sup>113</sup> Recognizing the centrality of candidate selection, Schattschneider (1942: 64) goes so far as to claim that “the nature of the nominating process determines the nature of the party; he who can make the nominations is the owner of the party. This is therefore one of the best points at which to observe the distribution of power within the party.” Understanding how individuals become candidates is indeed central to the analysis of representation and internal party democracy (Gallagher and Marsh 1988; Katz 2001; P. Siavelis and Morgenstern 2008a; Hazan and Rahat 2010).

Although the significance of candidate selection has been understood for decades, research on the topic has remained rather underdeveloped until recently, particularly when compared to the extensive literature on party and electoral systems. That this is the case does not mean that candidate selection is a trivial matter, however. Recent research into this topic has noted that candidate selection methods have political consequences on various democratic dimensions, including representation, participation, competition, and responsiveness (Hazan and Rahat 2010: 3, 89-164). Other studies have noted that candidate selection processes generally create loyalties to particular groups or individuals, which in turn impacts the behavior of legislators once they are in office (P. M. Siavelis and Morgenstern 2008b: 32-34). Moreover, the importance of candidate selection rests on the idea that these selection procedures can

---

<sup>113</sup> The importance of candidate selection has been acknowledged for over a hundred years. Authors such as Ostrogorski (1964 [1902]), Michels (1962 [1911]), Weber (1946), Schattschneider (1942), Duverger (1954), and Panebianco (1988), have noted that the processes of candidate selection are of especial interest in the study of parties because they considerably determine the distribution of power within parties.

significantly shape patterns of social and political incorporation by including historically excluded sectors into the political process (I return to this point in Chapter 6).

Ever since Michels's seminal study, party oligarchy has been associated with exclusive procedures for candidate selection and centralized decision-making, a model of organization whereby a party elite or a single leader has complete control over candidate selection. Conversely, internal party democracy has been loosely associated with more inclusive selection procedures that spread responsibilities and power among many political actors and that ensure leadership accountability (Bille 2001; Hazan and Rahat 2010). From this perspective, the contemporary literature has linked internal party democracy to the idea of power diffusion. If the idea is to limit power concentration in centralized authorities, a study showing that candidate selection procedures effectively diffuse power among several political actors can serve to advance theory by showing ways of organization that can generate genuine empowerment of the grassroots relation to party elites.

The literature focusing on candidate selection within Latin American parties is small but growing.<sup>114</sup> The existing case studies seem to lend overwhelming support to Michels's notion of party politics, and his theoretical argument about power concentration seems to apply to almost every case, independent of the specific party type. Examples include, but are not limited to, the Venezuelan Democratic Action (AD) Party in the 1990s (Coppedge 1994), the Argentine Justicialista (PJ) and Radical parties (McGuire 1997; Jones 2008), the Chilean Independent Democratic Union (UDI) Party (Navia 2008), the Mexican Institutional Revolutionary Party before 2000 (Langston 2008; Wuhs 2008), and the Mexican Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) (Bruhn 1997). In all of these cases, candidate selection is an activity dominated by a small

---

<sup>114</sup> See Siavelis and Morgenstern (2008a); also Siavelis and Morgenstern (2008b).

party elite. Even the Brazilian Workers' Party (PT)—the other classic example of a movement-based party in contemporary Latin America—seems to be following this pattern (Hunter 2010; Ribeiro 2014).<sup>115</sup>

The pages that follow seek to unpack the “black box” of movement-based parties. The concern is with candidate selection, particularly with the extent to which selection patterns provide an option that can challenge the trend toward party oligarchization.

### **Explaining Within-Party Variation in Candidate Selection**

Institutional and structural factors interact to shape candidate selection within movement-based parties. Institutional elements comprise aspects of a country's electoral system that create the space for the grassroots to shape the selection process, and elements related to the strength of the local party apparatus. Structural factors correspond with the organizational strength of civil society. Strongly organized societies, as the empirical literature shows, serve as a potential power base for parties. They can play not only an important party-building role, but can also shape internal party governance.

#### ***Institutional Elements***

My analysis focuses on two institutional elements – electoral rules and the nature of the local party organization. Just as electoral systems affect party outcomes like discipline in Congress (Samuels 1999), electoral systems also affect candidate selection by creating space for civil society actors to shape the process (P. M. Siavelis and Morgenstern 2008b). Mixed-member proportional electoral systems (MMPs), like the one used in Bolivia, force parties to produce

---

<sup>115</sup> Although Wendy Hunter's (2010) book on the transformations of the PT does not delve specifically into candidate selection dynamics, its overall findings indicate that the PT is transforming into a type of party where the “iron law” of oligarchy rules without any significant loopholes.



individual district candidates alongside a party list. As the literature shows, party leadership tends to become more central to selection and candidate list placement as district magnitude increases (Carey and Shugart 1995). Thus, it is likely that grassroots organizations will be able to exert more influence on selection for single-member district candidates than for proportional representation candidates.

MMPs create distinct incentives for the party's top leadership, predisposing it toward the selection of different types of candidates. In single-member districts, the key for electoral success is the candidate's personal reputation and support within the district, which leads to three possible scenarios. First, a candidate that emerges with strong backing from grassroots organizations can be accepted by the leadership to increase the probability of getting out the vote. Second, if there are strong organizations but contested nominations, the leadership can provide arbitration to maximize the chance of electoral success. In these cases, the option that maximizes the likelihood of success is for the leadership to choose a candidate that is most acceptable to a majority of local organizations. Third, where there are few social organizations linked to the party or where these are weakly organized, the central leadership can use nominations to build alliances to existing organizations or to attract the support of specific social sectors. However, for proportional representation candidates the key to electoral success is the overall strength of the party ticket. Parties often use these candidacies to diversify their lists and attract maximum electoral support. Candidates can emerge with strong organizational backing, but they are likely to be acceptable to multiple organizations or attractive to particular social groups.

Recent studies also highlight the relevance of the organizational strength of party subunits for party outcomes (Levitsky 2003; Tavits 2013; Van Dyck 2014; LeBas 2011). Tavits

argues that local organizational strength helps parties survive.<sup>116</sup> In addition to mobilizing supporters and delivering votes, the literature shows that a strong local party organization can play a role in the aggregation of political interests, such as in the selection of candidates. It can either nominate candidates directly, or serve as an arena for resolving conflicts among competing groups. However, variance in the organizational strength of party subunits does not fully explain variation in candidate selection patterns, nor how internal conflicts are resolved. This paper shows that a party's top leadership can serve as an arbiter in chief in conflicts where the local party organization is either weak or strong. However, the leadership more likely performs this role in contexts with a strong and heterogeneous civil society that is not fully aligned with the party. In other words, it is the failure of coordination among grassroots actors that, in general, creates an organizational opportunity for the party leadership to centralize power. This finding points to the importance of examining broader structural elements associated with the strength of civil society, and more broadly, with the organizational contexts in which parties are embedded.

### ***Structural Elements***

Indeed, structural factors associated with the organizational strength of civil society are central to my explanation. Classic works in political sociology, as well as more recent empirical research on party building, have established that densely organized civil societies can serve as a potential power base for parties.<sup>117</sup> The expectation is that the organizational infrastructures of politically oriented associations may contribute to building strong parties by reducing costs and coordination problems. This “organizational inheritance” – as Levitsky, Loxton, and Van Dyck

---

<sup>116</sup> Tavits (2013: 39-40) uses four indicators to measure party organizational strength: number of party membership, number of party branches, presence of a professional staff (as a percent of the electorate), and participation in local elections.

<sup>117</sup> See Chapter 1 for a more thorough discussion.

(n.d) argue – can provide invaluable resources to new political parties and contribute to their long-term empowerment. For these authors, new parties are more likely to take root, and also to persist over time, where politicians build upon the infrastructure of pre-existing organizations. Movement-based parties, even if initially loosely organized, are well positioned to build strong parties.

Following these insights, I add that a significant factor affecting the internal governance of parties and their tendencies toward oligarchization is the variation in the organizational strength of their civil society allies. Specifically, I argue that the presence of civil societies that are both (1) strongly organized and (2) united can generate politically consequential pressures from below. These pressures can, under certain conditions, place limits on the centralized decision-making power and self-regarding political objectives of the central party leadership.<sup>118</sup>

Strongly organized civil societies are those with high organizational density (percentage of the district’s population that are members of grassroots organizations). United means affinity of purpose – the ability to privilege common purpose over narrow organizational interests in order to agree on decisions affecting common interests. Unity among organizations not only strengthens civil society; it can also represent a counterweight to the centralizing tendencies of an allied party.

Strongly organized civil societies may play a central role in resisting the oligarchization of allied parties in the realm of candidate selection by nominating desired candidates in spite of the central leadership’s preferences. This is largely a function of how the political space is structured in a given electoral district, and of the political alignments between civil society and

---

<sup>118</sup> As I show in Chapter 4, this pressure may also defy the trend toward oligarchization by helping to keep channels open for agenda setting from below, and can thus contribute to keeping parties responsive to societal demands.

the party. At least four combinations of party-civil society are possible: (1) strong civil society aligned with the party, (2) strong civil society aligned with opposition parties, (3) strong civil society with different political alignments, and (4) weak civil society (in which case political alignments are less relevant).

Systematic evidence from candidate selection within a movement-based party demonstrates that oligarchic decision-making by the party leadership is less likely to take place in districts where grassroots organizations aligned with the party are strongly organized, have mechanisms to arrive at decisions, and can agree on selection. In turn, in contexts where strong grassroots organizations aligned with the party are absent, or where they are strong but have multiple alignments and do not agree on selection, oligarchic decision-making in the hands of a small party elite is much more likely to occur. Similarly, contexts of weak civil society create organizational opportunities for power concentration in the hands of a few. Thus, the evidence highlights the importance of both the strength of civil society organizations and political alignments of civil society on candidate selection outcomes. These findings are consistent with recent developments in the social movement literature inspired by the organizational ecology tradition (e.g. Soule 2012).

Though not yet connected to the literature on political parties, organizational ecologists emphasize the broader organizational field in which parties operate (Robertson 2010). Similarly, the findings from the Bolivia case suggest that a potentially rewarding area for further research on the internal dynamics of political parties is the relevant contextual conditions, such as the impact of diverging patterns of party-civil society relations. Just as parties deploy different linkage strategies to attract different electoral constituencies in unequal societies (Luna 2014), their local operations vary according to how the political space is structured.

## Research Design

In the rest of this paper I focus on the Bolivian MAS. The MAS is a particularly relevant case for studying power distributions inside movement-based parties because it deviates from the conventional wisdom. Although there are observable tendencies towards power concentration, grassroots groups have retained considerable “bottom up” influence in processes of candidate selection in districts where civil society is strong, has mechanisms to arrive at decisions, and can agree on selection. The result has been salient variation in candidate selection outcomes across different geographical constituencies.

According to its statute, the MAS is “the political and ideological branch of the social organizations that represent Bolivia’s cultural diversity in rural and urban areas” (Article 5). The statute further stipulates that: “members and activists participate in the different levels of the political structure [of the MAS] through their natural social organizations, which guide the work of these leaders and extend their own loyalty, work, and honesty to the structure of the MAS” (Article 9).

According to the party statute, moreover, the organizational structure of the MAS is decentralized along territorial and functional lines. The statute recognizes directorates at no fewer than eight levels: national, departmental, regional, provincial, municipal, indigenous territories, districts, and sectors (Article 12). For example, it recognizes the organizational structures of the social organizations and unions at the rural level, the districts and social sectors in urban areas, as well as the autonomous territories of indigenous peoples.

The highest decision-making authority within the MAS is the Regular National Congress (*Congreso Nacional Ordinario*, CON). Here the leadership of the peasant organizations is recognized by the rule that the CON should “respect the historical trajectory of the three core

organizations that head the National Directorate of the MAS: CSUTCB, CSCIB, and CNMCIQB-BS” (Article 18, b).<sup>119</sup> This rule imposes a candidacy requirement for the National Directorate: having a background as a leader of one of the national-level peasant unions. The CON has the prerogative to select these leaders by “respecting internal democratic practices in free elections and through direct and secret vote. Their selection requires an absolute majority of the delegates attending the congress, or by consensus in accordance to the modality decided by the congress” (Article 18, a).

Although the party statute is clear on the definition of the internal mechanisms for selecting leaders for internal leadership bodies such as the National Directorate, it is much less clear on the procedures that regulate the selection of candidates for elective public office. Article 37 says that it is a responsibility of the National Directorate of the MAS to “coordinate and respect the modes of selection, as well as the norms and procedures used by social organizations for the creation of the candidate lists—for national assemblies, departmental assemblies, regional or provincial assemblies, municipal governments, districts and sectors—that the MAS will present in electoral contests.” In other words, there is not a single and clearly stipulated candidate selection method: grassroots organizations should select candidates through whichever “democratic” means they consider appropriate. In short, the statute does not tell us much about the internal dynamics of candidate selection within the MAS. This makes the case attractive for

---

<sup>119</sup> These are the Unique Confederation of Rural Laborers of Bolivia (*Confederación Sindical Única de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia*, CSUTCB); the Syndicalist Confederation of Intercultural Communities of Bolivia (*Confederación Sindical de Comunidades Interculturales de Bolivia*, CSCIB); and the Bartolina Sisa National Confederation of Campesino, Indigenous, and Native Women of Bolivia (*Confederación Nacional de Mujeres Campesinas Indígenas Originarias de Bolivia “Bartolina Sisa,”* CNMCIQB-BS).

studying the causes and impact of different selection mechanisms across different districts in the country.

Examining this variation in a highly diverse country that uses a mixed-member proportional electoral system (MMP), such as Bolivia, is also useful because it allows for a systematic comparison of candidate selection strategies.<sup>120</sup> It allows us to see how the same party selects candidates for different electoral lists, while keeping constant all other contextual factors.

There have been some attempts to understand how the MAS selects its legislative candidates. Zuazo (2008) notes an important rural/urban cleavage in the realm of candidate selection, and her study has shed light on organizational aspects of the MAS. Based on interviews with 85 MAS representatives in the 2005-09 Congress, she claims that there are horizontal decision-making mechanisms for the selection of candidates to run for Congress, particularly in rural areas. These mechanisms, which tend to guarantee high levels of participation “from below,” vary greatly for each organization and each region, and they are rooted in uncodified indigenous customs and traditions. The candidates emerging from these mechanisms of direct participation are generally known as “organic,” whereas other legislative candidates who are invited “from above” directly by the leadership are known as “invited.” And they are predominantly urban. Zuazo’s study does not explore this variation systematically, however, nor does it delve deeply into the internal dynamics of candidate selection procedures. The study also focuses on the selection of legislative candidates leading to the 2005 general election, and thus it fails to capture the internal transformations that the MAS has undergone

---

<sup>120</sup> No study of which I am aware addresses candidate selection within movement-based parties from this angle, nor do any of the existing studies on the case of MAS take full advantage of this institutional framework.

since it gained power, and particularly after 2009, when it adopted a “catch-all” strategy of electoral growth by expanding to the east.<sup>121</sup>

Do Alto and Stefanoni (2010) address candidate selection processes in a more systematic way. Their ethnographic study provides a “thick” sociological examination of the selection of legislative candidates for the 2009 general election, focusing on the internal dynamics of specific uninominal districts in the departments of La Paz, Santa Cruz, and Pando. Like Zuazo (2008, 2010), the authors observe the presence of mechanisms of direct democracy that guarantee high participation levels “from below,” particularly in rural areas, and they provide detailed accounts of how these actually work. Do Alto and Stefanoni (2010) argue that while those mechanisms tend to be respected by the leadership of the MAS, in the absence of clearly established rules and procedures, the tendency is for those mechanisms to “favor the articulation of clientelist networks around leaders of social organizations” (354). In short, by examining the micro dynamics of concrete cases, they point to a tension between the idea of “self-representation”—what they refer to as the “founding myth” of the MAS—and the actual relationships that exist between the social organizations and the MAS, and also among the social organizations themselves (Do Alto and Stefanoni 2010: 354-55). They argue that these power relations not only shape candidate selection process but also largely determine the outcome.

While these studies offer some important insights on the selection of legislative candidates and provide a wealth of qualitative information, they also leave some crucial questions unanswered. In general, they fail to address questions regarding the role of the MAS as an independent agent in candidate selection. For example, if the candidates are “nominated by a social organization” that decide to join the MAS, as many of them are, who or what party body

---

<sup>121</sup> On the topic of “catch-all” parties, see Kirchheimer (1966).



approves the nominations, and at what level? If there is a rural/urban cleavage, does the MAS as a party play a more important role in one context than the other? Assuming that candidate selection processes are contested, does the MAS serve as an arbiter if conflicts emerge between different organizations that compete for the same space? If so, how are these conflicts resolved? In short, although existing studies acknowledge variation within MAS and provide a wealth of qualitative information, they fail to explain what the main sources of that variation actually are.

My empirical analysis addresses this issue. It examines subnational variation in the selection of candidates for *national* office in the electoral process leading to the 2009 election. This is a key moment because MAS was in its most expansive phase, when it adopted a “catch-all” strategy of electoral recruitment. Thus, the lead up to that election was a highly likely period for oligarchic decision-making. I rely on evidence collected through interviews with over fifty MAS representatives from the districts of La Paz, Cochabamba, Oruro, and Santa Cruz (see Table 3.1 and Map 3.1),<sup>122</sup> in addition to 120 interviews with key informants, to explain how candidates are selected under different party-civil society constellations. Interviewees included leaders of allied grassroots organizations, non-elected regional party brokers, unsuccessful aspirants, members of the executive branch, representatives of opposition parties, experts, journalists, as well as candidates nominated for *local* office in rural and urban districts.<sup>123</sup> Data from these interviews are supplemented by a close reading of newspapers on the process and its aftermath, and of the existing secondary literature.

---

<sup>122</sup> While these departments do not cover the entire country, the organizational patterns observed there were also common elsewhere, as confirmed through interviews with representatives and social movement leaders from other departments in the country.

<sup>123</sup> Evidence from the selection of authorities for local-level office further supports the main argument of this chapter (see below).

Table 3.4. Number of Interviews with MAS Deputies and Senators in 2010-2015 Congress, by Department

<b>Department</b>	<b>Number of Interviews</b>	<b>Total elected under MAS</b>	<b>Total Seats</b>
La Paz	20	28	31
Oruro	8	11	12
Santa Cruz	8	11	28
Cochabamba	10	16	22
Other	11**		
<b>Total</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>93*</b>

\* This count only includes the total seats for the departments systematically studied in this paper, which accounts for a clear majority. The total number of seats in the Bolivian Congress is 166. Of these, the MAS has 114.

\*\* This number includes interviews with MAS representatives from Bolivia's remaining departments (Chuquisaca, Potosi, Tarija, Beni, and Pando).

Map 3.9. Fieldwork Sites for Legislative Candidate Selection



The analysis developed here reveals tremendous variation across different localities. Conditions where organizations allied to MAS have a near monopoly of organization are more likely to be observed in the rural areas in Bolivia's western departments, including La Paz, Cochabamba, and Oruro, where single-member district candidates are more likely to emerge from social organizations and be accepted by the party leadership. This pattern of candidate selection reflects a *de facto* diffusion of power, in that it mirrors the balance of power between MAS and territorially grounded grassroots organizations, and also between these organizations themselves.

Bolivia is no exception to the rule that urban areas are generally more heterogeneous than rural areas. In some cities or urban districts the diffusion of power among organizations leads to a situation where agreement on candidates is difficult, while in other cases the organizational density (i.e. the presence and strength of organizations aligned with MAS) is significantly lower. In both types of situations, the candidate selection process exhibits a combination of oligarchic decision-making with grassroots participation and consensus building. Specifically, where there are strong organizations but no consensus among them, the leadership is likely to choose a candidate acceptable to a majority of local organizations; where organizations are weak, however, the leadership is likely to select candidates that will help to build alliances to existing organizations or to attract support from particular groups that may increase electoral returns. These patterns are similar to that observed for most proportional representation candidates. Finally, in Bolivia's eastern departments, which represent *new* arenas of competition for MAS, the social organizations linked to the party are weak. In the absence of strong organizations that can agree on candidate selection, elite decision-making is more likely to occur.

## **Empirical Setting**

Bolivia's bicameral Congress consists of a Chamber of Senators with 36 seats, and a Chamber of Deputies with 130 seats. All elected representatives serve five-year terms, and re-election is permitted. Members of the Chamber of Senators are elected through a closed-list proportional representation. Deputies are elected by a mixed-member proportional (MMP) electoral system that has created two different types of seats, "plurinominal" (proportional representation) and "uninominal" (single-member district -- SMD), forcing parties to produce individual district candidates alongside a party list.<sup>124</sup> In addition, the country's 2009 constitution established a few "special" seats for indigenous peoples and Afro-Bolivians. Seventy uninominal representatives are elected by plurality vote in single-member districts, fifty-three plurinominal representatives are elected in a closed-list proportional representation system, and the seven special representatives are elected by plurality vote in single-member constituencies.<sup>125</sup>

MMPs generate different incentive structures and variable impacts on internal grassroots participation. SMDs encourage the cultivation of a candidate's personal reputation and support within a district. To increase the probability of getting out the vote, there is an incentive to increase the participation of allied groups, which can mobilize collective support for a given candidate and thus exert significant influence on the selection process. In the case of proportional representation candidates, as the literature shows, the party leadership becomes more central to selection and list placement as district size becomes bigger. In such cases, the power of the central leadership is strengthened in relation to the grassroots.

---

<sup>124</sup> See Ardaya (2003) for a critical early assessment of this system.

<sup>125</sup> In the 2009 general election MAS gained 26 of 36 seats in the Chamber of Senators, 33 of the 53 plurinominal representatives, 49 of the 70 uninominal representatives, and 6 of the 7 special seats.

## Uninominal Candidates

Generally, in selecting these candidates, the MAS delegates responsibilities and control to the grassroots organizations that are present in a given electoral district. In these cases, then, candidate selection consists of procedures that provide significant opportunities for the grassroots to influence decision-making, and candidates emerge based on the strength of the social organization they represent. Prior to an election, the National Directorate of MAS issues a call for nominations to allied grassroots organizations throughout the country. These organizations then are in charge of conducting screening, pre-selection, and candidate nomination processes, and they do so by electoral district and according to the norms and procedures they themselves deem adequate. In most cases, the leadership of the MAS respects the decisions by grassroots organizations. With some exceptions, these organizations have the last word on nominations, representing a counterweight to the power of the leadership.

Formal membership in the MAS is not a condition for candidacy. Instead, “aspiring candidates need to be approved by the people in their territory” (interview with Leonilda Zurita).

<sup>126</sup> The only hard-and-fast rule that the MAS respects is that each district has to ensure rigorous gender equality: by statute, if the titular candidate for a district is a man, the substitute needs to be a woman and vice-versa. Although there is no rule stipulating that uninominal candidates must have experience as a leader of a grassroots organization, this is almost always the case. As a former deputy commented, “it is practically impossible to become a uninominal candidate for the MAS if you do not have experience as a [social organization] leader” (interview with

---

<sup>126</sup> They also are required to demonstrate no history of corruption, no prior affiliation with a “neoliberal” or “traditional” party, and a demonstrated loyalty and commitment to the “process of change” led by the MAS (interview with Samuel Guarayos). These rules, however, can be overlooked under certain exceptional circumstances, predominantly due to electoral imperatives and other strategic considerations (interview with Leonilda Zurita).

Dionicio Núñez). Interviews with multiple uninominal representatives in La Paz, Cochabamba, Oruro, and Santa Cruz, confirm this observation. Analyses based on the survey of Latin American parliamentary elites conducted by the University of Salamanca show that most of them, indeed, came from a grassroots organization (Zegada and Komadina 2014).

The key actors are grassroots organizations with a territorial base. These gained legal status as Territorial Grassroots Organizations (OTBs) with the 1994 Law of Popular Participation, and they generally include neighborhood associations, traditional indigenous organizations (the *ayllus*), and modern peasant unions (the *sindicatos campesinos*). Candidate selection within the MAS ensures the representation of the OTBs that decide to join the party.<sup>127</sup> Below I examine subnational variation in the nomination of uninominal candidates according to the four party-civil society constellations outlined above.

***Strong Civil Society Aligned with the MAS.*** Where civil society is strongly organized and aligned with MAS, as in many districts in the western departments of La Paz, Cochabamba, Oruro, and Potosí, this decentralized form of participation tends to be the norm. The process begins at the lowest organizational level of the union structure, the *sindicatos campesinos*, and then moves up to the territory's higher organizational levels, the *subcentrales* and the *centrales*. Figure 1 depicts a stylized version of the functional levels of the peasant union organization in Bolivia.<sup>128</sup> In general, the *subcentral* aligns with the territory of the electoral district, meaning

---

<sup>127</sup> By “joining the MAS” I mean the process by which grassroots organizations align politically with MAS and engage in competitive nomination processes.

<sup>128</sup> The *sindicato* is the organization that brings together almost all of the families in a given community. Affiliation is voluntary and the requirements for affiliation include living and having land within that community. The *subcentral* is an intermediate structure between the *sindicatos* and the *centrales*. It is generally elected through the vote of the members of the *sindicatos*. The *central* brings together all of the *subcentrales* in a given province, and it is the highest level of authority in the local-level *sindicato* structure.

that there is generally one *subcentral* per electoral district. The more specific mechanics of the process described below can be only described as a general tendency, and the following account portrays an “ideal typical” model through which the MAS selects uninominal candidates.<sup>129</sup>

The selectorate for such candidacies is highly inclusive, and there is a clear emphasis on extending grassroots participation. As Vice President Álvaro García Linera commented in an interview, because “these candidates are not handpicked, they are not the candidates of the party in a strict sense. They are selected by grassroots organizations as a function of their territorial power, and they are the representatives of those organizations” (interview with Álvaro García Linera). In other words, in contexts where civil society is strong and aligned with the MAS, the participation and decision-making capacity of grassroots organizations with a territorial base is high in the case of uninominal candidates.

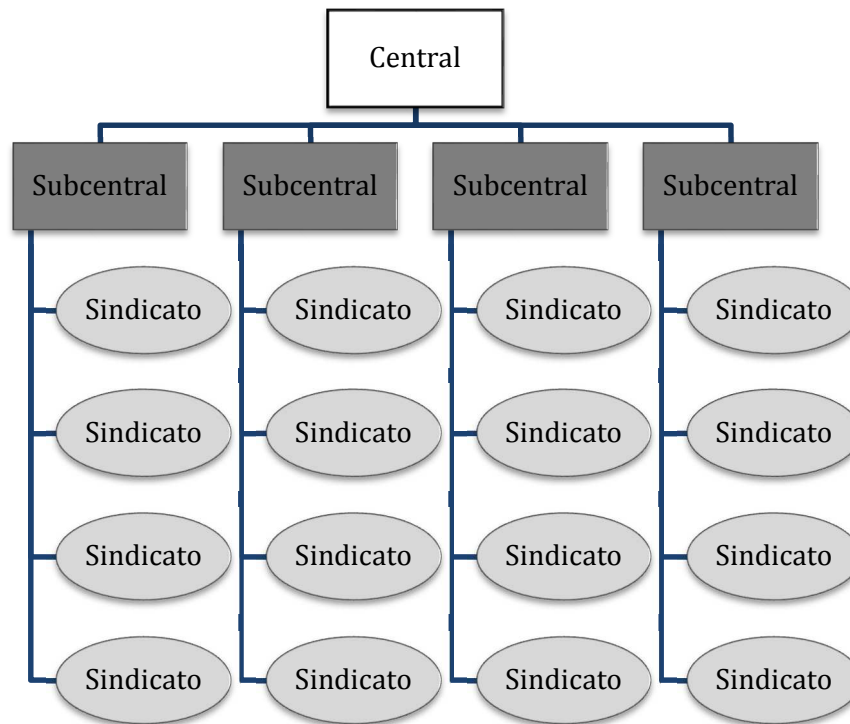
The mechanics of selection can be summarized in three steps. First, each *sindicato* and other OTBs in a given district organize meetings to conduct a preliminary screening of potential candidates and then select their nominees. These meetings, called *ampliados* or *cabildos*, are crowded events that ensure broad grassroots participation. The individuals who are elected at this level will then represent their organization in the competition at the next highest level of organization, the *subcentrales*. At this level, each *subcentral* holds an *ampliado* or a *cabildo* to choose among the *sindicato*-level nominees. The winner of each *subcentral* contest then goes on to compete for representation at the next highest level of organization, the *central*. The candidates for each electoral district are defined at this level, as seen below.

---

<sup>129</sup> Exceptions are more easily observable in urban areas, where MAS tries to replicate the selection methods that are prevalent in rural areas. In urban settings, however, there is generally more organizational atomization. In the eastern departments, in turn, MAS tries to replicate this “bottom-up” selection method, but this is combined with a more pragmatic approach to alliance building.



Figure 3.1. Basic Organizational Structure of Bolivia's Peasant Unions<sup>130</sup>



Third, the *central* organizes an *ampliado* or a *cabildo* with all of the nominees presented by the *subcentrales*. The winners at this level typically emerge as uninominal candidates if they receive the support of all the organizations involved throughout the process. This support is determined at a large congress of the authorities from all participating levels, and it is obtained by mechanisms of union democracy that have no uniform codification. The runners-up serve as substitute candidates for the district.

<sup>130</sup> This figure depicts a stylized version of one territorial unit with 4 *subcentrales* – which coincides with 4 electoral districts – 16 *sindicatos*, and one *central*. The *central* is generally affiliated to one of the nine departmental federations within the CSUTCB, which is the highest-level organization in the peasant union hierarchy.

***Strong Civil Society Aligned with Opposition.*** The expansion to the east, where the MAS was historically weak, pushed decision-making structures into a more oligarchic direction.<sup>131</sup> In parts of Santa Cruz, particularly in rural districts, the selection of uninominal candidates followed the familiar “bottom up” pattern described above; in contrast, in the city of Santa Cruz, where there are strong organizations aligned with opposition forces, a local party structure played an influential role and nominated several candidates from its ranks.<sup>132</sup> However, department level selection also involved alliance and coalition building with other parties,<sup>133</sup> with politically influential groups and non-traditional organizations,<sup>134</sup> and with a wide array of *ad hoc* urban organizations.<sup>135</sup> These alliances guaranteed representation for members of those groups, and were made by the national leadership; neither the local party, nor the grassroots organizations that control the Regional Directorate created them (interviews with Isaac Ávalos, Lidia Choque, Gabriela Montaña, Reymi Ferreira, Tito Santibañez, and José Quiroz). The composition of the electoral list reflected an internal balance of power that favored those urban groups over peasant organizations, reflecting a more centralized and exclusive selection pattern, whereby the influence of a small party elite was strengthened.<sup>136</sup> It also revealed a strong pragmatism by the

---

<sup>131</sup> Jorge Silva commented that the objective for the 2009 election was “to reach an absolute majority in both chambers in the Congress at whatever cost” (interview with Jorge Silva). Thus, it is reasonable to expect a pragmatic approach to selection and alliance building.

<sup>132</sup> The configuration of this unusually strong party structure is a function of a deliberate decision by MAS’s leadership to consolidate its presence in an area that was seen as hostile to MAS (interview with Álvaro García Linera). See more about this structure in the sub-section “Additional Evidence: Local Elections.”

<sup>133</sup> Such as the center-left Movement Without Fear (MSM).

<sup>134</sup> Such as the right-wing Crucenista Youth Union (UJC).

<sup>135</sup> Such as the “Coordinator for Change,” the “Professionals for Change,” and the “Lawyers of the MAS.”

<sup>136</sup> Lidia Choque commented that the “agreement ‘from above’ could have only happened because the social organizations [in Santa Cruz] are not united and each supports whoever offers the best deal.”

top party leadership.<sup>137</sup> Evidence from other eastern departments, such as Beni and Pando, where major civil society organizations are aligned with the opposition, reveals a similar pattern of candidate selection that combines participation from below with oligarchic decision-making.<sup>138</sup>

***Strong Civil Society Aligned with Multiple Parties.*** The fact that the MAS has grown fast and in a decentralized manner has given significant flexibility to newly incorporated local organizations regarding the selection of candidates.<sup>139</sup> In general, their decision to be a part of the MAS implies mutual benefits. The MAS opens its electoral lists and gives these organizations control over the selection process. Thus, the MAS benefits from the social networks and organizational infrastructure of these organizations, which are familiar with the electoral terrain and able to organize campaigns and mobilize resources more efficiently. In turn, grassroots organizations

---

<sup>137</sup> For example, Nemecia Achacollo, Bolivia's current Minister of Rural Development and a leader at the Bartolina Sisa National Confederation of Peasant Women of Bolivia, figures prominently in most of my interviews as a central actor in the design and configuration of such alliances in Santa Cruz. She is also identified as a central actor in the final configuration of the electoral lists. Juan Ramón Quintana, Bolivia's current Minister of the Presidency, figures prominently as a key operator and as central actor in the configuration of alliances in Pando. Both ministers do not occupy a leadership position within the MAS, which shows that in configuring alliances members of the executive can wield significantly more power than the party structure.

<sup>138</sup> Interviews with campaign coordinators in both departments confirm this pattern, a pragmatic approach to candidate selection and alliance building that, framed as a part of a strategy to penetrate in traditionally "hostile" territories, centralizes decision-making power in the hand of a group of influential individuals, including, in some cases, President Morales himself. Indeed, alliances are not defined at the level of the grassroots (interviews with Walter Chávez, Manuel Mercado, and Jorge Silva). Research undertaken by Do Alto and Stefanoni (2010) lends additional support to the findings reported here. See, in particular, their treatment of selection and alliance building in Pando (2010: 348-352).

<sup>139</sup> As Harten (2011: 131) notes, in expanding to the cities the MAS has adopted a "laissez-faire approach" of organizational growth, through which it has sought to "benefit from specific local dynamics, as opposed to coercing these organizations into adopting a predetermined organizational style." Though this style of growth may have been prominent in urban areas, the conclusion appears to apply to non-traditional rural areas where the MAS has recently sought to insert itself.

benefit from the association with the MAS, which generally increases their likelihood of electoral success.

This symbiotic relationship is different in rural and urban environments, however. Grassroots organizations with a territorial base are central to selection in both settings, but in urban areas there are usually no clearly identifiable organizations that exert dominance over the territory. Rather, there is a multiplicity of neighborhood associations, professional associations, cooperatives, unions and the like. Since they usually are in competition during the selection process, these competing organizations often have difficulty agreeing on a preferred candidate. When conflicts arise and competing organizations cannot reach agreement, a small party elite that often includes the president himself acts as an arbiter and has the last word.<sup>140</sup> As I describe further below, the failures of coordination among grassroots actors create an organizational space for the leadership to centralize power, pushing internal decision-making structures into a more oligarchic direction.

***Weak Civil Society.*** In rural areas, particularly where grassroots organizations have dominant control over the territory, the MAS has not invested much in the building of a party branch independent of these organizations.<sup>141</sup> In urban areas, by contrast, and particularly in places where grassroots organizations are not strong, or where they do not have dominant control over the territory, the MAS has constructed territorial party organizations of varying strength. For the most part, however, these structures lack independent decision-making power, creating an

---

<sup>140</sup> Despite this, the selection procedures for uninominal candidates in these environments follow a roughly similar path and, according to most of my interviewees representing urban districts, they try to emulate the dynamics of the rural areas. They achieve this with different degrees of success, though.

<sup>141</sup> Evo Morales commented some time ago that, “where the grassroots organizations are strong, there is no need to organize MAS” (interview with Leonida Zurita).

organizational opportunity for the party leadership to centralize power in contexts where civil society is weak. In such contexts, elite choices are much more likely to prevail.

*Summary.* Thus, systematic evidence from the departments of La Paz, Cochabamba, Oruro, and Santa Cruz, complemented by observations of other departments, suggests that the crucial variable determining the nature of candidate selection is the strength of civil society, which depends on the strength in terms of number of members and the ability of grassroots organizations to reach an agreement on selection. In this scenario, MAS diffuses power among territorially grounded grassroots actors, which generally have the last word on selection. Once these organizations nominate a candidate, this person becomes a candidate for MAS. However, when conflicts emerge among competing organizations, MAS tends to concentrate decision-making power in the hands of a small party elite – and even Morales himself. These disputes are rarely resolved through formal channels, or by the local party organization. These dynamics are more commonly observed in urban areas, where the political space is more fragmented, and in the eastern departments, where MAS expanded by means of a “catch-all” strategy of recruitment.

### **Plurinominal Candidates**

Districts for plurinational candidates are larger, meaning that there are different party-civil society constellations within each district. It also means that coordination among competing organizations is generally more complicated than in uninominal districts. Conflicts among such organizations create an organizational opportunity for the party leadership to centralize power.

Indeed, plurinominal candidates and candidate list placement typically emerge from agreements between the leadership of the MAS and specific social sectors, or are directly selected by Morales. These candidacies help to generate balances – territorial, corporate, urban/rural, and male/female – after the list of uninominal candidates is approved (interview with

Adolfo Mendoza; also with Álvaro García Linera). In this instance the selection process is more centralized; the principal actors are either national party leaders, members of the national-level government, or brokers with access to patronage resources in departmental governments, and ultimately Evo Morales himself. In comparison to the uninominal candidates, the relative power of the party central leadership is strengthened in relation to the grassroots.

Although the selection of plurinominal candidates is more centralized and exclusive, and therefore more oligarchic, it serves as a part of a deliberate *strategy of addition* that allows for the incorporation of sectors and groups that do not have a territorial or an institutional corporate base. As Leonida Zurita commented, “the idea is to include everyone – that is, professionals, non-professionals, intellectuals, non-intellectuals, indigenous and nonindigenous middle class, women, and so on. It is in that sense that our project is one of inclusion and not of exclusion.” This view is akin to the view of Concepción Ortiz, the MAS’s Vice President, who stated that this mechanism allows the MAS to balance its electoral lists, and is seen by the leadership as an inclusionary way to give representation to urban middle classes (interview with Concepción Ortiz).

Formal membership and a background as a movement leader are not conditions for candidacy. As a result, some plurinominal candidates, particularly those without such a background, are generally seen as unwelcome competitors by rural and peasant organizations and by candidates that emerge from these organizations. They consider themselves the authentic representatives of the MAS. Indeed, these plurinominal candidates are referred to as “invited.” That characterization is used to contrast “organic” rural-based rank and file with “invited” urban and middle classes.

This form of nomination was not widespread during the early days of the MAS. Rather, as Do Alto and Stefanoni (2010: 312) suggest, the invitation of candidates only became common in preparation for the 2002 election, when MAS became a national-level actor. The MAS developed an expansive strategy of electoral recruitment and coalition building in order to compete successfully for the presidency and the congress. The idea behind this strategic maneuver was initially simple: to recruit indigenous and nonindigenous middle classes, left-leaning and nationalist intellectuals, social movement leaders, and professionals, among others, in order to expand the electoral base.

The strategy of invitation has changed over time, however, and it has served as a mechanism of accommodation that gives the MAS flexibility in changing electoral and political environments. It has also been useful once the party assumed power. According to Bolivian journalist Fernando Molina, once the MAS gained power, the growing presence of “invited” candidates has responded to two factors: “first, the need to improve the efficiency of the new regime, and second, the co-optation of the ‘process of change’ by bureaucratic and intellectual classes” (Molina 2010: 279). Molina’s account assumes that the MAS of necessity has adapted to, and has been absorbed by, the state apparatus, and that “invited” candidates are just a reflection of those dynamics. However, while there are oligarchic tendencies within the legislative group, and while these have intensified when MAS assumed governing roles, Molina’s conclusion can be misleading. It is possible that “invited” MAS candidates and social movement representatives do not form any sort of organic group with shared or corporate social and political interests and incentives – that is, they do not form an oligarchy. At best, they represent a temporary group of assorted representatives from diverse base organizations in a loose coalition.

Molina's functionalism also downplays the choices and power struggles within the party and the diverse selection mechanisms used by the MAS. According to Jorge Silva, the leading campaign advisor for the 2009 election, it is important to make an analytic distinction between plurinominal candidates *invited directly by Morales*, and those candidates *nominated by social organizations*. Most of the former are invited because they are considered "symbolic figures or political emblems that can give certain vitality to the government. In these cases, the selection decision does not come out from the social organizations but rather from the top down" (interview with Adolfo Mendoza). In other words, what takes place in these cases is a top-down nomination process where the source of legitimacy for these candidates comes from their accumulated symbolic capital. Examples of these candidates include Ana María Romero de Campero in the Department of La Paz,<sup>142</sup> Rebeca Delgado in the Department of Cochabamba,<sup>143</sup> and Betty Tejada in the Department of Santa Cruz.<sup>144</sup> The rationale behind these nominations is to capture the median voter.<sup>145</sup>

The analysis provided thus far characterizes the selectorate as highly exclusive. It is therefore possible to argue that the nomination process of plurinominal candidates within the MAS resembles an "appointment system," but that would be an oversimplification.<sup>146</sup>

My research shows that a single leader does not invite the vast majority of the plurinominal candidates capriciously, and they are not imposed from above. Rather, many are

---

<sup>142</sup> Former ombudswoman and prominent human rights activist.

<sup>143</sup> Prominent lawyer and former delegate to the Constituent Assembly.

<sup>144</sup> Former representative for the NFR, and vocal advocate for the MAS in Santa Cruz at a moment where the MAS was highly resisted in that department.

<sup>145</sup> Multiple interviews.

<sup>146</sup> On the "appointment system" see (Hazan and Rahat 2010: 73–86).



nominated by a wide array of social movements, unions, and civic associations that, among other base organizations, compete for representation. As in the case of the uninominal candidates, prior to an election cycle MAS's National Directorate distributes an open call for nominations to sponsoring and allied organizations throughout the country. After the invitation is out, the social organizations allied to the MAS – or those that intend to join and nominate candidates – propose their preferred candidates. According to Jorge Silva, since these nominees are “neither members nor activists of the social organization nor formal members of the MAS, it is only in this sense that we can say they are invited. It is not the president who brings them or imposes them on the organizations, but they are rather the organizations that actually make the invitations” (interview with Jorge Silva).

In these cases, then, the power struggles among competing organizations to nominate their own candidates, and how conflicts emerging from these struggles are resolved, are central to selection. To increase the likelihood of nominating their preferred candidates, competing organizations need to coordinate with other groups. Coordination is not always easy, however.

An example of the selection of senatorial candidates from the Department of Cochabamba will further illustrate how the selection of plurinominal candidates works. Of the list of four senators, the first slot went to Adolfo Mendoza, who had served as a legal and political advisor to peasant organizations during the constituent assembly; the second slot went to Marcelina Chávez, who is both a miner in a cooperative and a peasant union leader; the third slot went to Julio Salazar, who was a prominent coca-growing union-leader in the Six Federations of the Tropic of Cochabamba in the Chapare region; and the fourth slot went to Lidia Ordóñez, who was loosely associated to the “middle” class.

Mendoza explains why he obtained the first slot:

[W]e knew that we were going to win at least two seats, but not the four seats in the Department. The Six Federations of the Tropic of Cochabamba wanted the first seat for themselves, but that would have been a risky move, electorally speaking. [...] Since the Bartolinas and the Six Federations did not come to an agreement [...], they decided to invite me because they knew me by my work in the constituent assembly. I was also a visible person nationwide, as I had led a public campaign to defend the constitution in Cochabamba before it was approved, and as a result they thought that my candidacy would secure urban middle-class votes and increase the probabilities of winning, if not four seats, at least the first three. I was someone associated with the construction of the Plurinational State, but people knew I wasn't in the MAS. In fact, I didn't become a candidate because I was a member of the MAS, or even a leader of a social organization, but thanks to my collaboration with these. And it wasn't Morales who invited me, but rather these organizations (interview with Adolfo Mendoza).<sup>147</sup>

***Failures of Coordination.*** Even in the case of uninominal candidates, competing social organizations often do not reach a consensus in the selection process, failing to nominate candidates. This leads to conflicts among organizations. To date, there are neither clear hierarchies nor clearly established formal structures and mechanisms to resolve these conflicts within the MAS. The Regional Directorates, as intermediate-level party bodies, may play an

---

<sup>147</sup> Mendoza added that Evo Morales and the national leadership of the MAS were not pleased with his nomination, as they conceived of Mendoza as a “free thinker” or one who can “have an independent opinion and who doesn't follow ‘organic’ decisions by the party.” Still, his candidacy was approved albeit “with a big dose of skepticism.”

important role in this regard. However, just like the local party apparatus, they do not have sufficient autonomy and decision-making power, and they try “not to obstruct the decisions made by the executive or by the social organizations themselves” (interview with Adolfo Mendoza). In the absence of clear mechanisms for conflict resolution, most participants end up relying on Morales to resolve them. He plays the role of an arbiter in chief, particularly in areas where the political apparatus is weaker (e.g., in Beni, Pando, and Tarija). In cases where the MAS has developed a stronger party apparatus (e.g., in Cochabamba, La Paz, and Santa Cruz), conflicts are resolved by the intervention of local powerful political actors, who exert significant influence on intraparty decisions, but also by Morales himself.

When it comes to plurinominal candidates, *ad hoc* committees composed by a small group of influential leaders are often formed to decide the final composition of the electoral lists. While this is an *ad hoc* arrangement, interviews with plurinominal candidates suggest that this group typically includes the President, the Vice President, the Presidents of Congress, top members of the MAS’s National Directorate, and executive authorities of the principal peasant organizations that constitute the MAS’s political core. Additional leaders sometimes are included. These groups evaluate the lists proposed by social organizations in each department, and then negotiate with these organizations to determine which individuals will be selected as candidates.

These groups can also veto candidates already proposed. Their ability to do so, however, is contingent on structural elements. Two examples with differences in structural context may help illustrate this point. The first is in Santa Cruz, where civil society is strong and aligned with opposition forces. In such a context, vetoes from the top succeeded when regional organizations engaged in an alliance with the *Unión Juvenil Cruceñista* (UJC), a right-wing shock troop that

had violent confrontations with the MAS activists during the first Morales government. This alliance would guarantee the UJC an important number of seats, which the leadership did not accept. In other cases, however, despite the veto attempts by committees, social organizations manage to nominate their preferred candidate. Generally, this occurs where strong grassroots organizations are aligned with the MAS, as in the Department of Cochabamba.

**Summary.** The selection of plurinominal candidates is more centralized and exclusive than that of uninominal candidates. The process can be characterized as a combination of top-down decision-making by a small – but varying – group of influential leaders, and negotiation and consensus building from below. While in some cases the leadership can exert significant influence on the order and composition of the lists, in other instances the social organizations have more power to nominate their preferred candidate. Consistent with the main argument here, this is generally the case in areas where social organizations are stronger and aligned with MAS. When this is not the case, the leadership has more control over candidate selection.

#### **Additional Evidence: Local Authorities**

This sub-section presents additional evidence from candidate selection for local level office, which provides strong supplementary support to the claims developed above. As sociologist Fernando García commented in an interview “understanding how the MAS selects its candidates at the local level has been inexplicably under-explored so far. It is there where the MAS expresses its full heterogeneity. And the interesting thing is that it is in those locations

where the MAS decentralizes its authority and decision-making power the most” (interview with Fernando García).<sup>148</sup>

This is an idealistic view about the selection of local-level candidates, as the following pages demonstrate, using five municipalities. The criteria for selecting cases were straightforward. Taking the results of the April 2010 municipal elections, one urban and one rural district was selected with the following configurations: the MAS as electorally dominant at all levels of competition (i.e. national and municipal level), the Opposition dominant at all levels of competition, and mixed or split (neither the MAS nor the Opposition clearly dominant) (See Table 3.2 and Map 3.2).

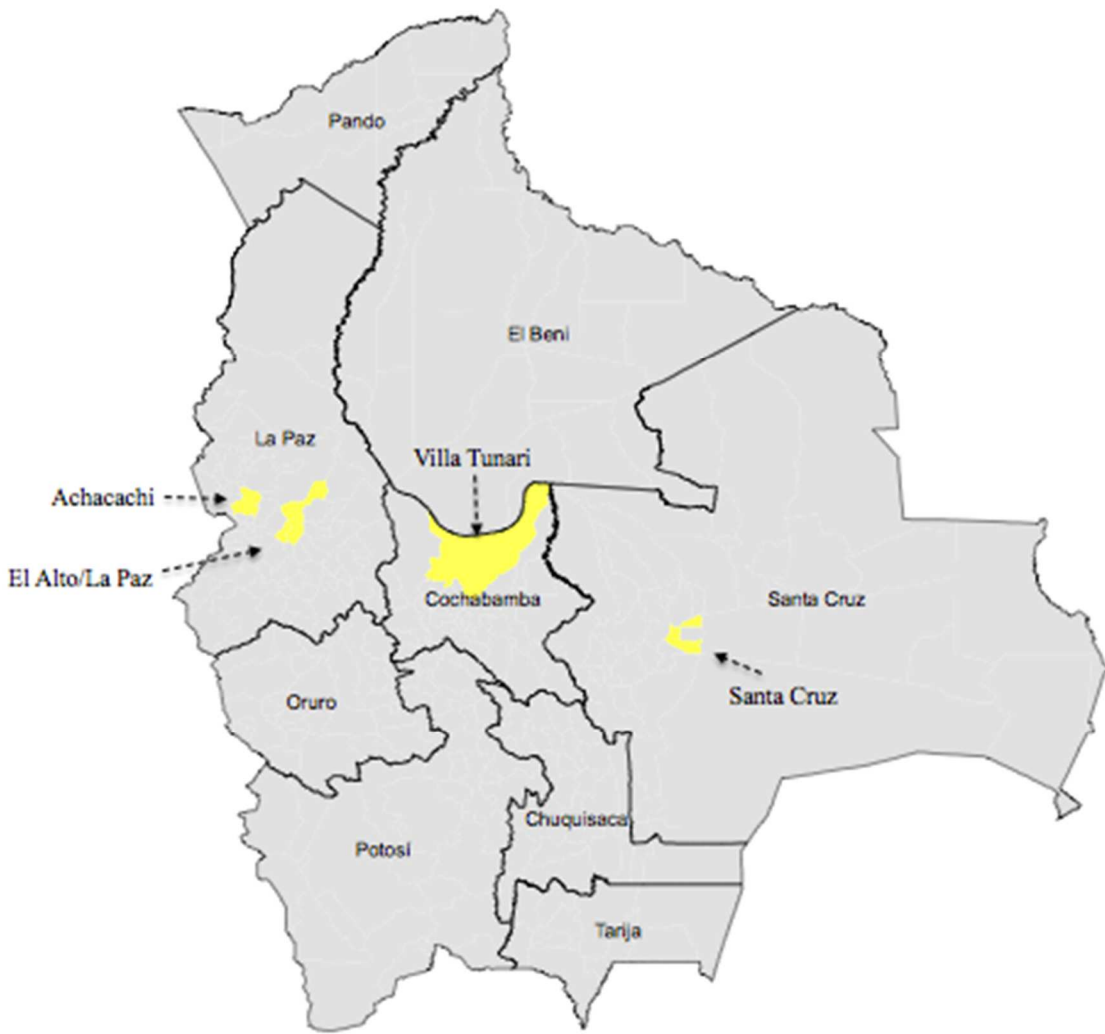
Table 3.5. Subnational Comparative Cases

	Urban			Rural		
	MAS	Mixed	Opposition	MAS	Mixed	Opposition
<b>El Alto</b>	All levels					
<b>La Paz</b>	National	Local				
<b>Achacachi</b>				National	Local	
<b>Villa Tunari</b>				All levels		
<b>Santa Cruz</b>			All levels			

Map 3.10. Fieldwork Sites for Local Level Candidate Selection

---

<sup>148</sup> García is a leading sociologist at the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in Bolivia.



*Strong Civil Society*

*Aligned with the*

*MAS*. The pattern that most clearly diffuses power can be observed in the municipality of Villa Tunari and, to a lesser extent, in El Alto. In both cases, where the MAS is dominant at all levels of competition, selection takes a very similar form as described above in the case of uninominal legislative candidates. In Villa Tunari, for example, the mayor and all of the representatives to the municipal council emerge from the two main coca growers' federations that are present in the district: the Special Federation of Peasant Workers of the Tropics of Cochabamba (*Federación Especial de Trabajadores Campesinos del Trópico de Cochabamba*, FETCT), and the Special

Federation of the Yungas of the Chapare (*Federación Especial Yungas del Chapare*, FEYCH) (see García Linera, León, and Monje 2004: 381–457; also UMSS 2004: Chapter 4).

Selection follows the *sindicato* norms, which derive from unwritten usage and customs practiced in highland sending communities (Van Cott 2008: 183). Once elections for municipal authorities approach, each local *sindicato* nominates its preferred candidate, who will then represent the *sindicato* and compete at the level of the *central*. Elections at these two stages are held either by standing in groups, or by secret ballot (interviews with Segundina Orellana and Feliciano Mamani). The winners of these contests then compete at the level of the federation, which is at the top of the local-level hierarchy. The FETCT, which is the largest and most powerful federation in the municipality, selects the mayor as well as 8 titular candidates and 8 sub candidates for the municipal council. The FEYCH selects the deputy mayor as well as 3 titular candidates and 3 sub candidates for the municipal council. This distribution, which is generally respected by the competing organizations, reflects the *de facto* balance of power in the municipality. Here the MAS as a party does not have an independent role vis-à-vis the grassroots organizations, and indeed the two seem to be fused. As a journalist at a local radio summarized it, “the MAS in Villa Tunari is not a political party; it is what allows the local *sindicatos* to legally compete in elections” (interview with Walter Cassía).<sup>149</sup>

---

<sup>149</sup> Although this “bottom up” mechanism is the general pattern, the selection process has several kinds of distortions. For example, Cordova Eguivar noted that by eliminating the need for counting, the voting system of the “lines” can be unfair and easily manipulated by powerbrokers and gatekeepers (interview with Eduardo Cordova Eguivar). In another interview, Jean-Paul Benavides commented that there are all kinds of agreements under the table that distort the “bottom up” selection process, particularly at the level of the federation. These agreements, which are typically seen as interferences by either Evo Morales directly or another member of the executive, can go against the consensus reached by the organizations (interview with Jean-Paul Benavides). Despite these distortions in the process, the presence of grassroots organizations that can agree on candidate selection is central.

***Strong Civil Society Aligned with Multiple Parties.*** Selection in El Alto is similar as in Villa Tunari.<sup>150</sup> The key organizations that wield power are the Federation of Neighborhood Boards (*Federación de Juntas Vecinales*, FEJUVE) and the Regional Labor Federation (*Central Obrera Regional*, COR).<sup>151</sup> However, these and other smaller organizations compete with an incipient local party structure that also is involved in selection. Once elections for local office approach, both the grassroots organizations and the local party structure nominate their preferred candidates according to their own norms and procedures. The composition of the electoral list reflects the balance of power within the “grassroots” component, and between the “grassroots” component and the party structure.<sup>152</sup> It also reflects the balance of power between those two and the national MAS leadership.

For example, the COR nominated Edgar Patana, who had served as the executive secretary for the organization during the first Morales government, to run for mayor. Though the COR was not the most powerful organization in the city at the moment of selection (and it still is not), it had maintained better relations with the national MAS government by defending the government’s key policies and by coordinating policies with national-level authorities (interview with Edgar Patana). This strengthened the candidacy of Patana vis-à-vis FEJUVE’s preferred

---

<sup>150</sup> For an alternative assessment of this process, see Mamani and Archondo (2010: 41–52). The main difference between their account and mine is that theirs does not address the selection of the mayor, and it focuses exclusively on what I term the “grassroots” component. It fails to mention the existence of a territorial party structure, and it fails to explain how these two components interact during the selection process.

<sup>151</sup> The FEJUVE is a coordinator of residents, as well as neighborhood councils and associations, in El Alto. The COR is an umbrella organization of workers, which includes factory workers, teachers, journalists, and artisans but is dominated by street traders. Other smaller organizations that have a stake in selection include, but are not limited to, the Unique Federation of Peasant Communities in the Urban and Semi-Urban Radius of El Alto (*Federación Única de Comunidades Campesinas del Radio Urbano y Sub Urbano de El Alto*, FESUCARUSO), and the Federation of Street Traders (“the Federation”).

<sup>152</sup> Almost all of the candidates were nominated by grassroots organizations, and a minority was nominated by the “party” structure.



candidate (interviews with Edgar Patana, Néstor Guillén, and Fanny Nina). FEJUVE's authorities and leaders of other, smaller local organizations saw Patana's nomination as an imposition from above and therefore resisted (interviews with Félix Patzi Abel Mamani, and Fanny Nina).<sup>153</sup>

The patterns described above—in Villa Tunari and El Alto—are of special interest because they represent exceptions to the trend toward oligarchization, albeit in varying degrees. First, they show that when there is not a single grassroots organization clearly articulating the local region and serving as a reference, there is space for the emergence of a local party structure that will then compete for representation with the “grassroots” component. That scenario cannot be observed in Villa Tunari, where there is no room for an autonomous “party” structure, as the coca growers' *sindicatos* control the local political environment. Second, the patterns show that, in a context where the territory is divided into competing grassroots organizations, having good relationships with the party in government can help to shift the balance of power in one's favor during the selection process. This, in turn, can open room for “top down” imposition of candidates, but such an imposition cannot be done without having the support of at least one of the competing organizations. Taken together, then, the patterns described above provide additional evidence in support of to the central claim in this chapter: that in districts where civil society is densely organized and can agree on selection, the grassroots organizations can effectively impose their choices of candidates and resist the trend toward internal power concentration.

---

<sup>153</sup> Patana almost lost the contest to a right-wing candidate of National Unity (*Unidad Nacional*, UN). This was surprising because El Alto had voted heavily for the MAS in the 2009 general election. Local authorities understand the “crossover voting” and the poor performance of the MAS in the 2010 local election as a result of the lack of consensus around the candidacy of Patana (interview with Jorge Silva), a conclusion shared by UN leaders (interview with Carlos Hugo Laruta).

The municipalities of La Paz and Achacachi follow a different pattern. Here the MAS has created a precarious party structure that, together with the national leadership and elected representatives, selected candidates with relative autonomy from the grassroots organizations. In both cases, MAS candidates emerged “from the top,” but selection took slightly different forms in both municipalities.

In Achacachi, where there are strong peasant organizations, the territorial party structure has an influential role in the selection of representatives to the municipal council and it bypasses the grassroots organizations.<sup>154</sup> In 2010, for example, the mayor was “directly invited from above, by Eugenio Rojas and David Choquehuanca” (interview with Adrián Mamani Paucara).<sup>155</sup> That way of selection was seen by local leaders as an imposition carried out by the “MAS bureaucracy and its leadership,” and as a result the candidates that emerged from local organizations ran under the ticket of a competing party (interview with Bernabé Paucara).<sup>156</sup> In this case, the presence of another party willing to serve as an electoral vehicle for grassroots organizations by respecting their selection norms, gave the organizations an exit option.

In La Paz, where there are not powerful grassroots organizations, selection was similar but the absence of such organizations meant that the central actors in selection were the MAS national leadership and the territorial party structure (interview with Jorge Silva). The power balance between the national leadership and the local party was clearly tilted in favor of the former—that is, the local party did not have enough power to nominate its preferred candidates.

---

<sup>154</sup> The most powerful organization is the Federation of Peasant Workers Tupac Katari.

<sup>155</sup> Eugenio Rojas is a former mayor of Achacachi and a MAS senator. David Choquehuanca is Bolivia’s Minister of Foreign Relations.

<sup>156</sup> In 2004, that party was the Pachakuti Indigenous Movement (*Movimiento Indígena Pachakuti*, MIP); in 2010, that party was the Movement for Sovereignty (*Movimiento por la Soberanía*, MPS)

Indeed, the composition of the electoral list reflects the *de facto* distribution of power quite clearly: most candidates nominated “from the top” were placed in the safe zone, whereas those nominated by the party were placed at the bottom (interview with Manuel Mercado).<sup>157</sup>

***Strong Civil Society Aligned with Opposition.*** That last point was also true for Santa Cruz—Bolivia’s largest city, and one that has traditionally been considered a stronghold of the opposition. This city has a pattern that combines decentralized participation with oligarchic decision-making. The MAS has created a fairly strong territorial party structure that has an impressive mobilization capacity, and that capacity gives it a central role in candidate selection and local-level governance.<sup>158</sup> This structure, which is led by an urban directorate,<sup>159</sup> draws support from two powerful urban sectors—transportation and street vendors—and is territorially based in sixteen political districts (interviews with Tito Santibañez and Rodolfo Zeballos). The urban structure operates autonomously from both the national leadership and the Santa Cruz Departmental Directorate led by peasant organizations (interview with Lidia Choque). And it wields significant power in candidate selection, particularly in the nomination of representatives for the municipal council.

Yet, despite its organizational strength, decisions made at this level in Santa Cruz can be bypassed under certain circumstances. The selection of the mayor is particularly instructive. In that case, though the territorial structure nominated Saúl Ávalos to run for mayor by an agreement with the political authorities and social bases in every district, the national leadership

---

<sup>157</sup> This was verified by interviewing all of the nominated candidates that did not fare well in the election.

<sup>158</sup> The configuration of this territorial structure, which is unparalleled in other cities of the country due to its density and stability, represents the peculiar historical trajectory of Santa Cruz and its organizational dynamics. It also responds to a deliberate decision by the MAS leadership to consolidate its presence in a territory that was initially seen as hostile to the MAS (interview with Álvaro García Linera).

<sup>159</sup> Santa Cruz is the only city in the country that has a MAS “urban” directorate.

of the MAS conceived of Ávalos as unelectable and vetoed his candidacy (interview with José Quiroz).<sup>160</sup> Through prominent elected officials from Santa Cruz—including for example the president of the senate, Gabriela Montano—the MAS national leadership established a formal alliance with a new political party, the Popular and Solidarity Alliance (*Alianza Popular Solidaria*, ASIP).<sup>161</sup> This alliance guaranteed representation for ASIP in the municipal council, including an invitation to ASIP’s president to run for mayor (interviews with Gabriela Montaña, Hugo Siles, and Freddy Soruco). Lidia Choque, a peasant leader and former president of the Santa Cruz Departmental Directorate, commented that the “agreement ‘from above’ could have only happened because the social organizations [in Santa Cruz] are not united and each supports whoever offers the best deal. Ávalos wasn’t the candidate of the organizations and he had no support from them.” Her statement is consistent with the central argument that oligarchic decision-making is more likely to occur in the absence of strong grassroots organizations that can agree on candidate selection.

## Conclusion

The MAS employs several candidate selection methods. Some of those methods diffuse power territorially and among grassroots actors. At the national level, this can be clearly observed in the case of uninominal candidates. At the local level, a similar pattern can be

---

<sup>160</sup> Electoral considerations played a central role in this decision. Indeed, opinion polls showed that Avalos’ voting intention was very low in the city, and having him run as a mayor was a risky move for the MAS, particularly in its “expansive phase” to the east. In other words, the MAS could not afford to run with a candidate that, although it was nominated by the social bases, would only bring about a small voting flow.

<sup>161</sup> A political party founded by Roberto Fernández, the son of a former politician that formed the neo-populist party Civic Solidarity Union (*Unión Cívica Solidaridad*, UCS) in the 1990s. UCS made significant electoral inroads in the peripheral areas of Bolivia’s largest cities, including La Paz, El Alto, and Santa Cruz. ASIP has built its precarious structure on top of the social networks developed by its antecedent.

observed in municipalities where strong grassroots organizations control the territory, something that is more easily, though not exclusively, observed in rural districts. Using a wealth of original empirical evidence, the chapter has identified the conditions and explained the mechanisms under which broad and substantive grassroots participation can be promoted in a movement-based party. Where civil society is strong, has mechanisms to arrive at collective decisions, and can reach agreements on candidate selection it can play an important role in defying the oligarchization of an allied party by maintaining open political spaces for democratic participation from below. Where these organizations are absent or cannot reach an agreement, top-down elite choices more likely to prevail.

This chapter has also attempted to explain how candidate selection processes can facilitate greater grassroots participation in broader political processes. The implication is noteworthy: under certain circumstances, the way in which movement-based parties select candidates for elective office can open significant channels of representation for groups that have been traditionally at the margins of political life and facilitate their incorporation into the broader political system. Instead of following an organizational path that ratifies Michels's unilinear expectation of an "iron law" of oligarchy, movement-based parties can offer an alternative mode of organization and development that empowers the grassroots in relation to the party elite, if conditions are conducive. In Bolivia's MAS, this form of resisting the trend toward oligarchization is both a part of a deliberate organizational strategy and a reflection of the existing *de facto* distribution of power within the party and its sponsoring and allied organizations—and also among these organizations themselves.

This analysis has implications for understanding internal sources of party variance. Just as parties deploy multiple strategies to attract different electoral constituencies, they also operate

differently in different settings depending on how the political space is structured. I have shown with a new source of empirical evidence that variation in patterns of party-civil society relations shape the internal life of parties. The evidence and analysis suggest that internal party processes should not be seen as a mere reflection of formal institutional rules governing a country. While these are important and are manifested, for example, in electoral rules, they do not fully explain sources of variation within movement-based parties. To understand how parties operate, then, it is crucial to examine the organizational context in which they are embedded, and how this varies across geographical constituencies.

Having examined candidate selection within the MAS, the next chapter turns to an analysis of the degree to which greater grassroots control over candidate selection translates into greater substantive input into the crucial area of national policy-making.

## CHAPTER 4: NATIONAL POLICY-MAKING

This chapter examines the degree of power concentration within the MAS's policy-making process. Specifically, it focuses on the internal party politics and dynamics of popular mobilization in the streets, and the extent to which both affect government policy. In doing so, it identifies the most important actors within the MAS governing coalition, their sources of power, the relationships between them, and the degree to which they exert influence on the policy-making process. As has been noted in Chapter 1, many studies of party politics within comparative politics tend to lend support to the Michelsian argument about party oligarchization, associating party oligarchy with centralized leadership authority. These discussions almost always entail an over-time decrease in opportunities for participation in policy decisions by party members and activists. A remedy for oligarchy, it is argued, is more participation in decision-making and a sense of responsiveness to societal demands.<sup>162</sup> Is there anything about decision-making within Bolivia's MAS that might indicate whether such a remedy is actually possible?

To answer this question, this chapter proceeds in two ways. First, it examines whether internal structures allow organized popular constituencies to generate decisions by putting issues on the agenda. This approach tries to capture the "creative capacities" of the allied grassroots

---

<sup>162</sup> This insight builds on Roberts's (Roberts 1998: 3) notion of "deepening" democracy, which involves efforts to "expand participation in the making of collective decisions and enhance governmental responsiveness to popular concerns."

organizations by tracing their creative policy formulation abilities. Second, the chapter examines the extent to which internal structures and protest dynamics impose constraints on the exercise of power by the party leadership. Specifically, this approach tries to capture the “negative capacities” of the grassroots organizations that form the MAS governing coalition by tracing their veto and counter-mobilization power.<sup>163</sup> The chapter shows that features of party organization and dynamics of popular resistance in the streets provide opportunities for grassroots influence on the crucial arena of national policy-making. These groups can block or modify legislation *before* a legislative proposal becomes a law, or *after* the legislative proposal has been passed (that is, at the implementation stage). The chapter also shows that under certain institutional and political configurations, social mobilization can serve as a positive policy tool, assisting with the passing of controversial legislation important to organized popular constituencies.

### **Why and How We Should Study Policy-Making**

The way in which parties make decisions is of central interest because it provides useful insights into a central question of politics: who actually rules? If we look at governing parties, moreover, understanding how decisions are made sheds light on where effective—or “real”—authority falls within the party and the larger system in which it is embedded. In short, decision-

---

<sup>163</sup> We can think of these negative capacities as “social vetoes,” to distinguish them from the more institutional “veto points” described by Immergut (Immergut 1992) or Huber, Ragin, and Stephens (1993), who focus on the degree to which constitutional structures disperse power and open channels of influence on the formulation and implementation of policy. My approach is also different from Tsebelis’s (2002) notion of “veto players,” which focuses on the actors whose agreement is necessary for altering the legislative status quo. I conceive of social vetoes as individual or collective actors whose behavior (in Congress or in the streets) can impose effective constraints on the authority and decision-making power of party leaders in office.



making is central to the analysis of participation, internal party democracy, and regime dynamics because it reveals important information about how power is organized and exercised.

Party theorists in the Michelsian tradition expect that parties formed by social movements will evolve into bureaucratic and hierarchical organizations that suppress the “bottom-up” logic of social mobilization and horizontal decision-making that characterize social movements (Panebianco 1988: 164–168). Michels argues that even in leftist labor-based parties, which use the language of grassroots participation and democratic deepening, elitist decision-making will emerge. The Michelsian image of internal party politics portrays party leaders as pursuing their own selfish interests, as opposed to their party’s collective goals, and as striving to limit the influence of the grassroots on party strategy and policy choice. In this view, members and activists are seen as oddly passive actors with few claims of participation in party decisions, and as thereby leaving decision-making to political leaders. Thus, according to this model, *leadership entrenchment* and *grassroots passivity* reinforce each other and hinder party democracy.

As has been noted in Chapter 1, the implicit or explicit acceptance of this theoretical argument is even more common in studies of governing parties. These predict the almost inevitable emergence of hierarchical elitist structures in which the interests of the party’s constituent members would be increasingly marginalized. While the emergence of hierarchy will start before a party ever achieves governmental power, hierarchy will be aggravated when the party does come to power. This is because complex task structures associated with governing a country push governing parties to both be efficient in the administration of the state *and* to respond to political and economic pressures that come from sectors well beyond the party’s social base (Deschouwer 2008: 10). Coordinating the interests of diverse constituencies and reaching collective decisions is complicated and inefficient in complex organizations (Burchell

2001; Bolleyer 2011). Therefore hierarchy, specialization, and a cadre of professional politicians all become necessary to generate decisions.<sup>164</sup>

Governing parties tend to delegate authority to their leaders in the executive branch (Coppedge 1994: 64). The general expectation is that governing parties will generate support for any initiative designed by the executive. Yet, despite the tendency toward executive autonomy, there is still significant variation. In Argentina during the 1990s, President Carlos Menem could expect support for most of his initiatives, including reforms that were detrimental to his party's historic core constituencies (Levitsky and Way 1998). In Uruguay, however, the market reform process of the 1990s was slower than in Argentina, in part because the executive branch never enjoyed comparable levels of autonomy in relation to the governing parties (Pribble 2008; Bogliaccini 2012).

O'Donnell identified an extreme manifestation of executive autonomy in his study of "delegative" democracy (O'Donnell 1994). In these democracies, presidents govern with unchecked power and they are generally unaccountable to societal demands. This means that, "whoever wins the election to the presidency is thereby entitled to govern as he or she sees fit, constrained only by the hard facts of existing power relations and by a constitutionally limited term in office" (O'Donnell 1994, 59). This behavior is generally associated with weak party organizations, as these play a key role activating mechanisms of "horizontal" accountability (O'Donnell 1994). It is also associated with weakly organized civil societies, as they play a key

---

<sup>164</sup> At the same time, this logic almost always leads to a popular disenchantment with the ability of parties to reform state-society relations and generate more inclusive procedures of democratic decision-making. However, this is still an empirical matter. Governing parties can also transform existing structures through the adoption of new patterns of participation and decision-making and state-society linkages.

role activating mechanisms of “social” accountability (Smulovitz and Peruzzotti 2000). High levels of executive autonomy can undermine democracy by leading to power concentration.<sup>165</sup>

Movement-based parties seem well equipped to resist pressures toward power concentration in the hands of the president. Such parties are “indirect” organizations, in the sense that they exist as electoral vehicles for other organizations, from which they receive external loyalty. As Panebianco notes, these parties tend to never fully institutionalize, and this is because the sponsoring organizations almost always do not feel compelled to grant full autonomy to the electoral-political vehicle (1988: 62). At the same time, they are generally composed of diverse grassroots organizations and social movements, whose heterogeneity increases as these parties expand their electoral base. The hybrid nature of parties based on social movements may encourage democratic control from below by allowing for the existence of opposition among allied groups that check political power from within and keep open channels for agenda setting from below. Such encouragement, as this dissertation argues, can help to attenuate the trend toward oligarchization.

All movement-based parties encounter similar challenges when they assume national-level power: tensions emerge between the executive branch, the party’s parliamentary representatives, the party’s top leadership, and the leaders and grassroots members of sponsoring organizations that configure the governing coalition. These tensions often interact in unpredictable ways, and they have not been fully investigated by social scientists.<sup>166</sup> Most

---

<sup>165</sup> High levels of autonomy can also strengthen democracy by preventing entrenched minorities from imposing gridlock or by enabling popular executives to deliver on ambitious, popularly supported agendas.

<sup>166</sup> When dealing with movement-based parties in power, sociologists tend to look at social movement activity, failing to link it to party activity (Fung and Wright 2003). Political scientists tend to look at their

notably, however, all governing movement-based parties share a problem of organizational legitimacy. As Kitschelt (1989a: 130) notes, “an organization enjoys legitimacy when its members accept its decisions as authoritative and final even if they personally disagree with them.” Although his focus is on *individual* compliance and legitimacy (that is, at the level of individual members or activists), it is plausible to make a similar argument centered on the *organizational* level (that is, at the level of collective actors). Movement-based parties enjoy organizational legitimacy when their constituent members, usually a diverse set of popular movements and grassroots organizations, accept the supremacy of the party over the individual constituent part. Drawing on Hirschman (1970), this presupposes a sense of “loyalty” to the party, the acceptance of its decisions as authoritative and final even if they go against particular or more corporatist interests.

Governing movement-based parties are particularly susceptible to suffering challenges to their legitimacy. This occurs because governing a country involves reconciling the interests of different groups affected by government policy. It also requires harmonizing the often-diverse interests of the party’s constituent members. These groups can under certain circumstances successfully challenge government decisions if they disagree with them or if their interests are seen as not properly taken into account. As a result, governments headed by movement-based parties are likely to find themselves at odds with their constituent organizations, which can

---

contributions to local government institutional innovation, failing to link these innovations to the issues that arise when these organizations gain national-level power (Van Cott 2008).

become an obstacle to their programs. This refers to what I term the “negative capacities” of the party’s constituent organizations, or their veto and counter-mobilization power.<sup>167</sup>

Studies in the Michelsian tradition would expect the suppression of such veto powers via the co-optation of the constituent members (Foweraker and Landman 2000). Yet, evidence shows that social movements can—and often do—challenge their own governments if their interests are threatened or not adequately taken into account by government policy. They can do this with various degrees of success, depending on their power resources. Movements rooted in production or economic activity are generally stronger than other movements, and therefore can keep movement-based parties more open and can constrain governments based on these parties more effectively. As an empirical matter, then, we would expect that the stronger the internal organization of the sponsoring and allied groups, and the greater the capacities of these groups to mobilize people into the streets, the more likely they can impose effective constraints on the centralization of power by a leader or a group of leaders.

The study of decision-making would be incomplete until we consider what I term the “creative capacities” or positive policy formulation power of the party’s constituent organizations. With this I refer to their ability to generate decisions by determining which issues and claims enter the public domain and by proposing solutions to them. When movement-based parties assume office, they almost always confront the issue of the role of sponsoring and allied groups in the policy process. Yet, because the movement nature of these parties precludes the construction of firm institutions and clear participatory channels (Panebianco 1988: 53), the influence of their constituent organizations risks being limited. The new opportunity structures

---

<sup>167</sup> This behavior can be a double-edged sword from the perspective of “good” government. While challenging decisions via mobilization can pose effective constraints on the centralization of power, it can also affect the government’s capacity to rule in the general interest.

associated with the exercise of power can expand influence of constituent organizations, but they can also hinder it.<sup>168</sup>

The classic Michelsian bureaucratic argument would lead us to expect an increasing marginalization of the party's constituent organizations in the policy process (Michels 1962; Allison 1969; Piven and Cloward 1979). This tendency will aggravate if movement-based parties, as governing entities, consolidate a dominant position in the political system, for it means that they may have fewer incentives to be responsive to civil society organizations (Carbone 2008; Magaloni 2006; Heller 2009). As an empirical matter, then, we would expect that the longer these parties stay in power, the less likely it becomes for their constituent members to project themselves into the state and exert influence on the policy making process. In addition, however, we should expect movement influence to vary across policy areas or ministries. Integrating insights from the literature on the developmental states and from sociological approaches, their influence should be greater in ministries whose policies affect large groups of well-organized constituencies than in ministries whose policies affect broader cross-sections of society.

### **The Case of the MAS**

Eight years after assuming office, it is possible to evaluate whether the MAS has followed the expectations outlined above and reach some preliminary conclusions about the behavior of a movement-based party in government. On balance, while the influence of the grassroots on setting the agenda and participating directly in the generation of policies is limited

---

<sup>168</sup> On the one hand, access to power can come at the expense of moderation (Meyer and Tarrow 1998, 21) and it can also lead to suppression of contentious action via the co-optation of sponsoring and allied groups (Foweraker and Landman 2000). On the other hand, though, moderation can also be “the price to pay for the emergence of agile political actors that can negotiate with incumbent regimes” (Foweraker 1995: 103). At the other extreme, when sponsoring and allied groups reject to moderate and to abandon militant forms of contentious action, they can be excluded from positions of influence in the government and their ability to shape the agenda can be reduced (Meyer and Tarrow 1998: 21).

and non-routinized, the party's capacity to keep its leadership accountable by blocking or modifying government policy is more prominent. The leadership, then, is sometimes held hostage by the social organizations in ways that challenge the trend toward oligarchization.

As noted in Chapter 2, becoming a governing party altered the internal dynamics of the MAS in significant ways. This process involved the articulation of alliances with a wide array of peasant and urban workers' organizations, which can be partially explicable in terms of the logic of "supra-class" electoral recruitment theorized by Przeworski and Sprague (1986). This coalition building strategy yielded favorable electoral results, but it also led to the configuration of a strikingly heterodox and loose governing coalition. After assuming office, the challenge was how to organize power—and how to govern with that coalition. Tensions quickly emerged between the bottom-up dynamics present in the origins of the MAS, and the top-down dynamics associated with governing.

Many observers have argued that the MAS has become increasingly detached from popular organizations as a governing party (Madrid 2012; Webber 2011; M. Zegada et al. 2011; Zuazo 2010). To support this claim, some scholars have looked at the social composition and evolution of Morales's cabinet of ministers. While his first cabinet included a mix of leaders of rural and urban organizations as well as people of humble origins (Costa 2008; Stefanoni and Do Alto 2006),<sup>169</sup> studies have found that the presence of these in the cabinet has tended to decrease over time (Do Alto 2011; M. T. Zegada, Torrez, and Camara 2008; Laruta 2008). Indeed, the participation of representatives of popular organizations in top-level positions within the executive branch has been limited and isolated. With some exceptions, key positions have been

---

<sup>169</sup> This observation led Bolivia's Vice-President to characterize the Morales government as a "government of the social movements." For an argument that challenges this notion, see Zegada et al. (2008).

occupied by a technocratic elite that is “invited” into the ranks of the party, that does not represent grassroots organizations, and thus have few checks from below.<sup>170</sup>

A different story can be told about the social composition of Congress. About 70 percent of MAS representatives in the 2009-2015 Congress are men and women drawn from and nominated by a wide array of rural and urban grassroots organizations.<sup>171</sup> That they overwhelmingly come from organized popular groups does not mean that these organizations have a strong influence on setting the legislative agenda, however. Scholars have pointed out that under the Morales government elected representatives have had a “subordinate standing” in relation to the executive (see Crabtree 2013: 287; also Fornillo 2008: 3). As Do Alto (2011: 105) notes, when the MAS became a governing party, the locus of decision-making switched from its representatives in Congress to the executive branch (see also Anria et al. 2010).

Both observations—that the locus of “real” authority lies on the executive, where the presence of grassroots actors is limited and isolated—lend support to the idea of the “oligarchization” of the MAS. However, matters are less straightforward once we examine decision-making by looking at a broader set of internal organizational dynamics combined with the dynamics of social protests in the streets.

When Morales assumed office in 2006, for example, he addressed the demands set forth by the mass mobilizations of the early 2000s, which had, *de facto*, set the government’s agenda.<sup>172</sup> Therefore he declared the nationalization of the hydrocarbon industry, proclaimed an

---

<sup>170</sup> A key example of this is Bolivia’s minister of economy, Luis Arce Catacora.

<sup>171</sup> This represents an even larger percentage in comparison to the 2006-2009 Congress. As noted in Chapter 3, the candidate selection methods employed by the MAS, particularly to nominate “uninominal” representatives, have led to a growing presence of popular sectors in this institution.

<sup>172</sup> This was known as the “October Agenda.” It was not a clear party program designed by the MAS, but more of a list of aspirations that emerged from the insurrection of El Alto in October 2003, which the



extensive agrarian reform, promoted an anticorruption law, and called for a constituent assembly through which popularly elected delegates would rewrite the country's constitution.<sup>173</sup> All of these actions can be seen as examples of Morales's positive accountability to the MAS's social base; that is, as attempts to follow through on the demands from the direct action protests of 2000–2005. They can also be seen as an attempt to foster close bonds between the party in government and its support base, an effort to distance the MAS from the traditional parties in Bolivia.

Since its origins in the mid-1990s, the MAS's "core constituency" has been composed of the coca growers in the Chapare region.<sup>174</sup> Together with other national-level peasant organizations, they have maintained a strong influence over the party's platform, agenda, and policy orientation.<sup>175</sup> The centrality of peasant leadership in the party is hard to overstate (Do

---

MAS used for its campaign. The agenda included a wide array of popular demands to re-found Bolivia in the name of the poor and the indigenous majority. Among the key demands included in the agenda were the nationalization of hydrocarbons, an agrarian reform, and the call for a constituent assembly.

<sup>173</sup> The constitution is of particular interest because it exemplifies the main tendencies found in this study. The 2009 Constitution reflected the MAS's attempts to follow through on the protests' repeated calls for a constituent assembly. At the same time, the outcome of the constituent assembly was a text approved by progovernment delegates only, and many people accused the MAS of forcing the constitution through in antidemocratic ways. Nevertheless, that draft was negotiated and modified in Congress, with input from opposition forces and compromises on both sides. It became law with the constitutional referendum of January 2009 (see Stoyan 2014).

<sup>174</sup> Gibson (1996: 7) distinguishes core from non-core constituencies. He defines the former as "those sectors of society that are most important to its political agenda and resources. Their importance lies not necessarily in the number of votes they represent, but in their *influence* on the party's agenda and capacities for political action." Non-core constituencies, in turn, are necessary to expand the party's electoral base.

<sup>175</sup> These organizations include the Unique Confederation of Rural Laborers of Bolivia (*Confederación Sindical Única de Trabajadores Campesinos de Bolivia*, CSUTCB); the Syndicalist Confederation of Intercultural Communities of Bolivia (*Confederación Sindical de Comunidades Interculturales de Bolivia*, CSCIB); and the Bartolina Sisa National Confederation of Campesino, Indigenous, and Native Women of Bolivia (*Confederación Nacional de Mujeres Campesinas Indígenas Originarias de Bolivia "Bartolina Sisa,"* CNMCIQB-BS).

Alto 2011).<sup>176</sup> Yet, as the MAS became a catchall movement with a national presence, it also established a broad network of alliances with other grassroots organizations (interviews with Iván Iporre, Alejandro Almaraz, and Walter Chávez). In big cities that are central for winning electoral majorities—such as La Paz, El Alto, Cochabamba, and Santa Cruz—the MAS has drawn support from two powerful sectors of similar socioeconomic background: transportation and street vendors. These two sectors are generally associated with Bolivia’s large “informal” economy. Alliances were also made with organizations representing artisans, micro-enterprises, pensioners, and miners working for cooperatives, among others.<sup>177</sup> Once in office, tensions quickly emerged between these new members and the MAS government, particularly regarding policy orientation and the distribution of political power.

These “late incorporations” have complicated the decision-making processes, as growing heterogeneity in the governing coalition presupposes more intricate forms of consensus building among diverse constituent members. With exceptions, such as the configuration of the Unity Pact, which brought together a wide array of organizations and provided input for the constitutional reform, the MAS has not formalized clear channels of participation and consultation in decision-making.<sup>178</sup> There has been a strong resistance against institutionalizing the relations between base organizations and the party elite, partly because MAS leaders think

---

<sup>176</sup> For example, Morales retains responsibility for leading both the MAS and a social movement organization, the Six Federations of the Tropics of Cochabamba, the overarching union of coca growers.

<sup>177</sup> The MAS has had a particularly difficult time trying to build alliances with other urban sectors, like teachers and health workers (see Do Alto 2011: 108).

<sup>178</sup> The Unity Pact (Pacto de Unidad) was an alliance of rural and indigenous popular organizations from the west and east of the country. Operating independently from the MAS, the Unity Pact produced a complete draft of a constitutional text and presented it to the Constituent Assembly. Above all, it provided advisory consultation. Since the new constitution was approved, however, the Pacto de Unidad has not had active participation or visibility in decision-making processes (interview with Juan Carlos Pinto).

that formalizing these links might lead the MAS to operate as a conventional political party—i.e., one with a formal hierarchical elite structure.<sup>179</sup>

Insofar as these mechanisms remain absent, Morales “is a referee and no one challenges his decisions” (interview with Jorge Silva). Many accounts have shown that Morales has concentrated great power in the executive, at the expense of the legislature and the judiciary (Anria et al. 2010, 254–260; Madrid 2012: 163). And it is hard to overstate his centrality in the policy-making process (Crabtree 2013: 287–288). Yet, although he is a dominant actor in the policy process, he is not all-powerful, and he is not the sole actor. Morales cannot do as he pleases, as there are limits to his authority that are shaped by the nature of the MAS’s internal organization and the dynamics of mobilization in the streets.<sup>180</sup> It is precisely the MAS’s fluidity, or the diffuse and non-routinized mode of interaction between the party and the grassroots organizations, that leaves wide maneuvering room for these to exert pressure on the leadership (see Anria 2013: 37). The base organizations that support the government, too, have the potential to play an important policy role.

These actors can impact decision-making in at least four ways. First, they can generate decisions by putting issues on the public agenda—be it via the party structure, their representatives in Congress, and/or their direct access to the executive branch. Second, they can use mobilizations and other pressure mechanisms to assist with the passing of legislation. Third, they can veto or block the passage of legislation via their representatives in Congress (that is,

---

<sup>179</sup> MAS’s leaders define the organization as a “political instrument” of the peasant indigenous movement, rather than a conventional party. Leaders do not want such a party, and they think of it as an obsolete type of organization that can retard social and political change. In this sense, the parallels with the early Peronism are striking (see McGuire 1997: Chapter 1).

<sup>180</sup> These are limitations set by Morales’s own political camp. His capacity to shape policy is also limited by the opposition and domestic and international investors.

*before* the proposal becomes law). Finally, they can mobilize against the government if their interests are threatened or seen as improperly accounted for by government policy during the implementation stage (that is, *after* the legislation has been passed). Sometimes, they can even put enough pressure to force the leadership to give in and reverse decisions or take alternative courses of action, placing real limits on the centralization of power and on technocratic decision-making.

### **Agenda Setting**

As has been seen in Chapter 3, grassroots actors in Bolivia have gradually increased their access to representation in Congress and other state institutions via their linkages to the MAS.<sup>181</sup> The question here is whether they have been incorporated in the mainspring of national decision-making power, or whether their participation has been supplanted by party professionalism or more technocratic decision-making once the MAS became a governing entity.

This section highlights the tensions between these two logics. It shows that while the capacity of grassroots actors to generate decisions from below may initially seem limited, their influence should not be overlooked because decision-making is generally a negotiated process. Not only does Morales consult about strategic decisions with the leadership of prominent organizations, but he also includes their demands and priorities on the public agenda.<sup>182</sup> While the party structure lacks real influence, an analysis of the parliamentary body reveals a more mixed picture: there are tendencies toward the centralization of power in the hands of a small

---

<sup>181</sup> Critics like Luis Tapia, a prominent member of a group of intellectuals known as *Comuna*, criticizes this scheme of participation by noting that the MAS “has maintained the traits of the relation between political parties and civil society that were molded in neoliberal terms—that is, access to public office goes through the party membership or negotiation with that party” (Tapia 2011: 161).

<sup>182</sup> For a parallel argument, see Do Alto (2011).

group of representatives in what can be seen as an executive-dominated legislative process, but at the same time the presence of powerful sectors reduces the capacity of the executive to impose its agenda, as it faces multiple social vetoes. At the executive level, the influence of grassroots actors varies by policy area, generally reflecting the existing balance of power among competing groups. The analysis also points to the importance of considering different constellations of power to better understand decision-making dynamics. If the governing party lacks a majority of seats in Congress, for example, allied groups have a clearer incentive to cooperate with it—particularly if they perceive that it advances their interests. In turn, having legislative majorities increases the likelihood of the MAS to receive increasing pressures from below by dispersing demand making. In contemporary Bolivia, this dynamic generally occurs via mass protests.<sup>183</sup>

### ***The Irrelevance of the Party Structure***

The MAS' bureaucracy is significantly underdeveloped. The party has very limited professional paid staff, equipment, records of membership, and finances (see Anria 2009). Its headquarters are located in a very modest office in La Paz, where members of the National Directorate meet at least once a month to coordinate activities. However, formal leadership bodies such as the National Directorate and the Departmental Directorates do not play an important decision-making role and they lack independent authority vis-à-vis MAS office holders, particularly the president and his ministers, and also prominent leaders of social organizations.

Party structure is designed to disperse power. However, when asked about the role of party structure in shaping policy options, party platforms, campaign strategies, and overall party

---

<sup>183</sup> This argument is consistent with the findings of a team of researchers in *Fundación UNIR*, who found a drastic and sustained rise in protest activity targeting the government since 2009 (UNIR 2012).

strategy, most interviewees agree that formal party organs have little influence. Instead, they are generally seen as “empty shells” with no real power. And in general this is true: party organs do not generate policies and strategies.<sup>184</sup> As key advisor to the National Directorate Ximena Centellas commented in an interview:

“The formal party organs at the local, departmental, and national levels are ‘political’ bodies, and for the most part they do not have the strength or the experience to propose anything, really. Their work focuses more on dealing with intraparty conflicts, and with the conflicts that arise within allied social organizations over power struggles” (interview with Ximena Centellas; also with Concepción Ortiz).

Instead of relying on party organs for generating decisions, MAS office holders rely more on *ad hoc* committees for receiving input on specific topics.<sup>185</sup> These committees are almost always composed of small groups of influential or trusted individuals within the executive branch, who,

---

<sup>184</sup> Positional authority within the party generally does not correspond to “real” authority, legitimacy, or political influence. The exception is Morales, who is both the president of the MAS National Directorate and the Executive Secretary of the Six Federations of the Tropics of Cochabamba, the overarching union of coca growers in the Chapare. The question “Who is most influential in the party?” repeatedly turned up Morales, certain ministers, and prominent leaders of social organizations. With exceptions, like MAS’s Secretary of Foreign Relations, Leonilda Zurita, formal authorities within the party did not turn up as influential in any systematic way. Power and influence depend more on personal skill than on positional authority.

<sup>185</sup> For example, an *ad hoc* political committee was formed to design the strategy for the 2005 electoral campaign. Here the party organs, as independent agents, played virtually no role. Instead, the key actors in this process were individuals who would then become ministers under the first Morales government (interview with Iván Iporre). This tendency to bypass party organs was aggravated in the 2009 presidential campaign, after having exercised power for one term, thus revealing the increasing weakness of formal leadership bodies vis-à-vis MAS office holders. Also, the development of the 2009-15 Program of Government is particularly revealing of this centripetal trend. According to Wálter Chávez, a key advisor to the government and co-writer of the program, this document was prepared by a reduced technocratic group, which “restrained itself to writing down a concise version of a program designed by Evo Morales himself” (interview with Walter Chávez).

due to their unstable and fluctuating nature, do not form any sort of organic group with shared social and political interests and incentives. In short, they do not constitute an “oligarchy.”

According to the party statute, the highest decision-making body is the Regular National Congress (CON). It invites delegates of allied grassroots organizations to participate and elect members of the National Directorate, which must be headed by leaders of peasant-based organizations (Article 18, b). The CON also invites allied organizations to approve, reform, or modify the party’s Declaration of Principles, the Program of Government, and the Statute (Article 18, c). In addition, it reviews disciplinary sanctions imposed by the Ethics Board and resolves disputes over statutory provisions. Other party conventions include the Organic Congress, which meets to decide on party organizational issues (Article 19). Although these conventions ensure broad grassroots participation, they do not decide on public policies or on programmatic orientation. In addition, critics like political scientist Luis Tapia have described them as “moments of legitimation” of already-made decisions (cited in Zegada et al. 2011: 255).<sup>186</sup> Observations in party national and departmental conventions, and interviews with their participants, lend additional support to Tapia’s claim.

Scholars have noted that instead of relying on bureaucratic party structures Morales prefers to have direct unmediated consultations with the leadership of grassroots organizations prior to making decisions (Crabtree 2013: 287). And most of the leaders of (principally allied) social organizations interviewed for this dissertation confirmed this pattern. The majority of these consultation channels, however, are non-bureaucratic and non-institutionalized.<sup>187</sup> This

---

<sup>186</sup> This logic of decision-making is reminiscent of the functioning of the workers’ movement in 1950s Bolivia under the leadership of Juan Lechín.

<sup>187</sup> An example of this would be the Cochabamba summit of December 2011, which was an *ad hoc* meeting convened by Morales and the MAS to receive input on public policies from below. By the end of

makes them more likely to depend on the good will of the leader, rather than on clearly established rules and expectations. There are also annual meetings held between Morales and allied social organizations to exchange feedback and get input on public policies. However, observers have noted that, over time the tendency has been for these channels to become less important for generating relevant decisions. Drawing on interviews with key grassroots actors, a study by a team of researchers under María Teresa Zegada found that many leaders perceive that their voices are decreasingly heard by the MAS government, and that their input on decision-making is limited (Zegada et al. 2011: 249-54).<sup>188</sup> My interviews lend additional support to their findings, but they also suggest that additional caveats need to be introduced, for example, by looking at the behavior of the parliamentary group.

### ***The Parliamentary Group***

The party statute says little about the relationship between the formal party organs and representatives in Congress. The expectation, however, is that representatives work closely with their constituencies, that they contribute financially to the party organization, and that they regularly attend party conventions to inform authorities and the rank and file about their work in Congress (interviews with Leonilda Zurita, Concepción Ortiz, Modesto Condori, and Nélida Sifuentes).

---

the summit, which ensured the participation of a wide array of allied and non-allied groups, seventy legislative proposals were made and sent to Congress. Critics argued that the MAS use these types of meetings instrumentally to boost its image and its alleged participatory ethos when its relationships with social organizations and movements are contested in the streets.

<sup>188</sup> This observation leads the authors of this study to conclude that the MAS has not fulfilled the promise of the principle of “governing by obeying” promoted by Morales after he gained power. For a study on this principle, which is derived from Mexico’s *Zapatismo*, see Schiwy (2008).



Representatives are only related to the party structure indirectly, as they are agents of multiple principals. Many have been nominated by social organizations with which they retain strong ties; others have been nominated from above due to their individual contribution to the overall party list; and finally, they have been elected by voters, most whom are neither party nor movement members. The interviewed representatives often provide different answers to the question of to whom they are really accountable: the social organizations, the MAS, the “process of change” led by the MAS, president Morales, and the voters. The lack of a strong party structure providing guidance means that representatives lack a common socialization inside the party. Because they come from multiple sectors of society, they have not had a common socialization outside the party either. In principle, this might enable representatives to pick and choose to which constituency they are loyal, and this explains why interviews reveal a wide range of answers. At the same time, however, it creates incentives for the executive branch to develop its own instances of socialization and control, which serve to centralize power and discipline the behavior of MAS representatives.<sup>189</sup> Their behavior in office seems to follow an executive-enforced collective discipline that is at odds with the logic of constituency representation.<sup>190</sup>

---

<sup>189</sup> My observations and interviews indicate that such efforts occur in the Vice Presidency, where representatives meet weekly to decide on legislative strategy. The presence of the President or the Vice President and of key ministers is not uncommon in these meetings, and it is contingent upon the relevance of the topic. The idea behind the meetings is to generate an internal space of debate *before* legislative proposals are sent to Congress, and to avoid open discussion on the legislative floor by projecting an image of unity. While some representatives conceive of this as a “collective” agenda-setting exercise designed to ensure a balance between territorial and sectoral demands, others see it as an imposition from the top.

<sup>190</sup> As Komadina (2013: 23) notes, “the behavior of representatives is closely controlled by the executive ... representatives thus have a limited capacity to criticize or observe legislative proposals ... and acts of rebellion are sanctioned.” Many of the MAS representatives interviewed, particularly those representing “uninominal” districts, expressed discontent with this decision-making pattern, conceiving of themselves as relatively powerless to generate decisions.

As Vice President García Linera commented:

the presence of [representatives from] grassroots organizations in Congress is not only symbolic; they are also heavily involved in the design of policies. The interesting thing is that the MAS, being a flexible and heterogeneous coalition, has to negotiate constantly with competing organizations to enact legislation. Every law has to be developed *with* the social organizations, and when one of them tries to dominate the process then there is the veto of another organization (interview with Álvaro García Linera).

Although there is some truth in this statement, it needs to be qualified in at least two ways.

First, it is true that base organizations have increased their representation in Congress by unprecedented levels through their relationships with the MAS. However, as noted in Chapter 3, while some representatives are selected by the grassroots through mechanisms of direct participation, others are directly “invited” by the leadership and have few checks from below. Many of the “invited” leaders have quickly become the most prominent MAS representatives due to their personal skills, their ways to relate effectively to the media, and their ability to operate effectively within representative institutions.<sup>191</sup> That the party’s structure is not strong enough to project policies and strategies has the unwanted consequence of an increase in the power of certain individual representatives, whose power often depends less on their experience as grassroots or party leaders than on personal skills and resources.<sup>192</sup> From the point of view of

---

<sup>191</sup> Differential media access creates endemic conflicts among representatives. Conflicts arise when more extroverted representatives assume a role of “spokespeople” for the MAS without any prior discussion with their colleagues.

<sup>192</sup> In addition to weak party structures, the informal rule of no-reelection prevailing within the MAS encourages individualistic behavior and the emergence of this type of leaders; at the same time, in the longer run, it helps to prevent the consolidation of oligarchies within the parliamentary group.

the party's peasant leadership, however, these are generally unreliable (interviews with Leonilda Zurita, Sergio Loayza, and Concepción Ortiz). If they align uncritically with the agenda of the executive, the legislative process is generally dynamic and these leaders are praised for their loyalty. If they do not align with the executive and publicly express dissent, they can quickly be seen as traitors.<sup>193</sup>

Second, despite the growing presence of popular sectors in Congress, this trend has not automatically translated into greater independent power of legislators to set the legislative agenda. Most of the legislators interviewed commented that they have limited capacity to initiate important legislation as independent agents.<sup>194</sup> Most of them could not identify important or controversial legislative proposals that they had introduced to Congress. Indeed, most legislative proposals are brought to the floor by the executive branch.<sup>195</sup> However, an interesting pattern

---

<sup>193</sup> One of the most prominent accusations of treason occurred in early 2013, when the then-president of the Chamber of Deputies, MAS representative for Cochabamba Rebeca Delgado, criticized publicly the Asset Recovery Bill that had been introduced to the floor via the Ministry of Government. According to Delgado: "I knew that the legislative proposal, as it was sent to us, violated the spirit and the text of the constitution. Because the executive really wanted to push through this one, however, I 'obeyed' and brought the proposal to the floor. But the proposal faced strong resistance by the MAS parliamentary group, as many sectors, like transportation and street traders, would have been affected by it. And we were at the verge of not passing a bill that had been sent by the executive, which would have been unprecedented. I noticed that the executive was not willing to accept certain modifications, so I went public and criticized the proposal and its designers" (interview with Rebeca Delgado). This sparked a series of verbal confrontations between Delgado and members of the executive branch, including the minister of government and the Vice President. The Vice President called Delgado pejoratively a "free thinker" and made the bold claim that she had not respected the principle of "democratic centralism" that, for him, structures authority within the MAS. That Delgado is now regarded as a member of the opposition is a testament to the idea that party indiscipline is not tolerated.

<sup>194</sup> Rebeca Delgado, a former president of the Chamber of Deputies, commented: "if an individual legislator brings in a legislative proposal for a specific project, the executive branch generally does not send any financing for it. This leads me to say that, in a context where the executive gives you the agenda, constituency representation is undervalued and not fully exercised" (interview with Rebeca Delgado).

<sup>195</sup> To many representatives, these proposals are developed in consultation between the executive and the grassroots organizations. Although this is hard to observe empirically, they are also correct in pointing out that many legislative proposals are imposed by the imperatives of the country's new constitution, which establishes deadlines to regulate certain provisions.

emerging from systematic interviews with representatives and grassroots leaders is that the presence of representatives coming from grassroots organizations serves the purpose of having access to privileged information, which allows them to obstruct or modify legislation if it threatens their group interests. From the point of view of the MAS leadership the unwanted consequence is that some of the groups that join the MAS then become pressure or veto groups from within, making it difficult to pass legislation in Congress. They are also pressure groups from without, by leading resistance to legislation in the streets.

At first glance, then, the relationships between the executive and these representatives appear instrumental. Under this interpretation, groups are seen as exchanging organizational loyalty to the MAS to the extent that it delivers specific benefits—or that at least it does not threaten their interests. Examples of this pattern can be observed in the behavior of representatives of the transportation sector and cooperative miners, which are two of the most powerful groups that have gained representation through the MAS. Upon further inspection, however, it is also possible to interpret their behavior as creating incentives for the executive to negotiate constantly with allied groups. This means that the executive cannot impose its agenda without challenges, and thus setting the agenda requires negotiation.

Reflecting on the nature of political representation, legislators from these powerful sectors and leaders in their respective organizations support the idea of a “corporatist” representation. Typical responses include: “I should represent the interests of my social organization”; “as a representative from the transportation sector, I need to keep an eye on legislation that can potentially damage my sector”; “we receive pressures from below so that we defend the interests of our sector;” “we support the government but our representatives are there to keep control on unwanted legislation that can damage our sector.” They are clearly not the

only representatives expressing these views,<sup>196</sup> but they are among the few who have the power to actually veto the passage of legislation because they are backed by disciplined sectors with high mobilization capacity.

So far, my sketch of the MAS points to a trend toward the centralization of power in the executive that is hard to overlook. The lack of a strong party structure providing guidance and the lack of real influence of representatives to set the legislative agenda have the consequence of an increase in the power of Morales and other entrepreneurs within the executive. Yet, despite this centripetal trend, policy-making in Bolivia is a negotiated process and the capacity of the grassroots to affect decisions should not be overlooked. When collective actors are strongly organized and can mobilize large groups of people in the streets, they can put constraints on the government's agenda. A better place to examine these dynamics is within the executive branch.

### ***The Executive Branch***

The literature on developmental states is useful here because it makes the general theoretical claim that in order to achieve desired goals state agencies need to be connected to

---

<sup>196</sup> Most of my interviews reveal that representatives share a common tension: whether they should be accountable to their constituencies *or* be “loyal” to Morales and the MAS. The social constituencies, particularly in the case of “uninominal” representatives, generally do put pressures on their representatives so that they defend the interests of their organizations and their territory. And consequentially these representatives are generally more reluctant to accept an imposed party line, particularly when compared to their “plurinominal” colleagues. Yet, the informal rule of non-reelection places important limits on the incentives to be responsive to their social bases. Instead, it helps to cultivate better relationships with the executive, as post-Congress career paths depend more on these relationships than on their performance in Congress or on bureaucratic procedures within the party. This is particularly acute in a context where the expectation is that the MAS will keep winning elections. For the argument on the “careerist” orientation of legislators in contexts of term limitations, see Carey (1996). His argument, however, is that the situation of presidents controlling the political fortunes of term-limited representatives leads to a reduction of party discipline and cohesiveness. In the case of the MAS, I found the opposite. Much of it has to do with the dominant nature of the MAS within Bolivia's political system.

their constituencies.<sup>197</sup> Early theorizing stresses the importance of autonomous professional bureaucracies that are connected with their business communities to achieve economic growth (Johnson 1982, 315–317; Evans 1995).<sup>198</sup> Although these studies highlight the need for insulation from popular pressures to ensure growth, more recent theorizing has noted the importance of having more meaningful engagement of grassroots organizations with bureaucracies for achieving successful human development outcomes (Sandbrook et al. 2007; Evans 2010; Evans and Heller 2014).<sup>199</sup> Popular input is seen as important, but is likely to vary greatly across areas or state bureaucracies. In ministries whose policies affect well-organized popular constituencies in a direct or visible manner, there is generally more pressure from these groups to influence decisions.<sup>200</sup> In ministries whose policies affect more diffuse cross-sections of society rather than clearly defined constituencies, the pressure by collective actors is generally

---

<sup>197</sup> Chalmers Johnson (1982) raises this point in his study of the “Japanese model.” In particular, he highlights the synergy produced by having close interactions between state actors and industrial elites to achieve developmental goals. Peter Evans (1995) develops the concept of “embedded autonomy” to stress the importance of having bureaucracies that can operate autonomously from popular pressures but that are also sufficiently connected to their societies and particularly their business elites. In his view, these two elements are seen as necessary for a state to qualify as “developmental” (12).

<sup>198</sup> For a review of this literature, see Onis (1991).

<sup>199</sup> This is because the 21<sup>st</sup> century developmental state is conceived of as a capability-enhancing state, in contrast to its 20<sup>th</sup> century version, which was focused more on economic growth. Because policies that promote the capability of citizens require states to have accurate information and continuous feedback, the 21<sup>st</sup> century developmental state needs a less technocratic and more open approach to policy-making based on close ties between state agencies and broad cross-sections of civil society (Evans and Heller 2014).

<sup>200</sup> The research on land redistribution and agrarian reform is particularly useful here. It suggests that agriculture ministries and land reform agencies, whose policies generally reach large groups of clearly defined constituencies, tend to be bureaucracies highly contested by collective actors with competing interests regarding agrarian policy (Montgomery 1972; Cleaves and Scurrah 1980; Borrás Jr and Franco 2010). In addition, the literature suggests that in order to be successful in their goals, these ministries tend to establish close connections to their key beneficiaries – be these agricultural elites, small-scale entrepreneurs, or peasant farmers (Smith 1993). Similar arguments can be extended to other ministries dealing with production and industry generally, such as the ministry of mining and the ministry of labor.

more dispersed. These agencies tend to lack strong links with grassroots organizations for consultation and cooperation.<sup>201</sup>

To assess these arguments and evaluate the degree of grassroots influence at the level of the executive, this subsection draws on examples of policies developed by the ministries of rural development, mining, and economy, as well as the office of the vice presidency. When I was conducting fieldwork, my expectation was to find different levels of grassroots influence across government agencies. Thinking in terms of a continuum, I expected to find, at one extreme, little grassroots presence and influence in the ministry of economy and the office of the vice presidency. At the other extreme, the expectation was to find a more prominent presence and influence of powerful collective actors in the ministry of rural development and, to a lesser extent, in the ministry of mining.

Other scholars have already noted that the ministry of economy is “sealed” to the participation of collective actors (Stefanoni 2010: 161). My interviews with high-level officials within the ministry, including the minister himself, lend additional support to that observation: “I believe that people *have* to participate. But unfortunately the ministry of economy is a very technical one; and it has to be that way, don’t you think?” (interview with Luis Arce Catacora). As Chief of Staff María Nela Prada also commented, “there is an institutional inertia that tends to exclude collective actors from the exercise of power. We receive legislative proposals from social organizations, but we don’t work permanently with them. Their participation is not regular; it is not institutionalized” (interview with María Nela Prada). Despite this trend toward the marginalization of collective actors, they do have some degree of access to the Ministry and,

---

<sup>201</sup> The literature on social movement outcomes makes parallel arguments and lends additional support to the expectation that movement influence varies according to policy area (Amenta and Caren 2004, 462). For a comprehensive review of this literature, see Amenta et al. (2010).

in occasions, have worked on legislative proposals alongside. Bolivia's new pension law, for example, was developed in close dialogue between the Ministry of Economy and the Bolivian Workers Central (COB), the country's national trade union federation (interviews with Luis Arce Catacora and Pedro Montes). As a symbol of this state-society cooperation, the law was promulgated on December 10, 2010 at the COB's headquarters. However, this is more of an exception than a rule in the routine of this ministry.

A similar pattern of limited presence and influence of grassroots actors can be observed in the office of the vice presidency, which is an important producer of legislative proposals in the country. Collective actors are occasionally invited to present their demands and share their opinions on given proposals. However, their participation is not institutionalized and depends more on the good will of gatekeepers and other contingent factors than on firmly established rules and expectations. The office of the vice presidency coordinates the relations between the executive branch and the MAS representatives in Congress (particularly with the presidents of both legislative chambers), and occasionally between these and the collective actors that might be affected by a proposed legislation (interviews with Walter Melendres, Adolfo Mendoza, and Gabriela Montaña).

The ministry of rural development reveals a starkly different pattern. Since the rise to power of the MAS, powerful collective actors with a rural base, including peasant and indigenous organizations, have disputed the control of this ministry. On several occasions both factions have called for the resignation of various high-ranking officials, exerting enough pressure to succeed in some cases. Land issues are at the core of the dispute between



organizations with competing views on the agrarian question (Bottazzi and Rist 2012: 544).<sup>202</sup> At the beginning of Morales's mandate, peasant and indigenous factions converged around the issue of land reform and they configured a reform coalition that developed the Law of Communitarian Renewal of the Agrarian Reform.<sup>203</sup> The implementation stage, however, has been anything but smooth; tensions and power struggles emerged among these groups over the distribution, reach, and pace of the reform process. Almost five years after the reform, peasant organizations such as the CSUTCB and the CSCIB led mass mobilizations arguing that the reform was unfairly benefiting indigenous organizations in the lowlands and in the highlands and that it was creating a new class of indigenous "latifundistas" (interview with Rodolfo Machaca; see also Bottazzi and Rist 2012: 543). As a notable event, protests by the peasant faction forced the removal of vice-minister of land Alejandro Almaraz.<sup>204</sup> The decision to remove Almaraz from office reflected the power struggles and internal balance of power within the MAS, which favored the core peasant organizations vis-à-vis the noncore indigenous organizations (interviews with Alejandro Almaraz, Idón Chivi, Rodolfo Machaca, and Hugo Salvatierra). As further evidence of

---

<sup>202</sup> Peasant groups favor an individual-right property regime, and indigenous groups advocate a communal conception of land ownership. The central issue is that communal lands cannot be bought and sold.

<sup>203</sup> In addition to drafting the legislative proposal in collaboration with the vice-ministry of land (interview with Alejandro Almaraz), peasant and indigenous groups of the highlands and the lowlands helped to pass the enabling legislation for the Law of Renewal by exerting direct pressure in the streets when intransigent opposition forces controlled the Congress and threatened to block the government's planned reform (Bolpress 2006). This behavior is consistent with arguments in the social movement literature, which point to the importance of common enemies or "threats" in motivating actors with competing views to form reform coalitions (Van Dyke and McCammon 2010).

<sup>204</sup> Almaraz was in charge of implementing the reform. In an interview, he commented that the "real problem pushing for my forced resignation was the idea of a communitarian redistribution of land. Peasant organizations were losing out opportunities for the commercialization of land. Peasant leaders did not want to lose their business. And they did not want indigenous groups to have large estates that would not be used productively" (interview with Alejandro Almaraz). Salvatierra made a similar assessment (interview with Hugo Salvatierra).

this, the government called the CSUTCB to draft a new proposal for a land law that would put an end to “latifundio” (Los Tiempos 2011).

Over time, peasant groups have gained control over the ministry. Its social composition reveals the diversity of peasant-based groups in Bolivia, and key positions are staffed by grassroots leaders who represent civil society groups. Nemecia Achacollo, the head of the ministry since 2010, is a peasant woman with years of experience as a peasant union leader.<sup>205</sup> Interviews inside the ministry and with grassroots leaders reveal that collective actors have fairly easy access to the institution. And key legislative proposals have been developed in close dialogue between these actors and state officials.

An example is Law 144, the Law of Productive Revolution, which was passed on June 26, 2011. The legislative proposal, which at its core dealt with the issue of “food sovereignty” has had a long history (Kopp 2011: 156–168). Under the Morales government, the proposal was brought to the public agenda by the Unity Pact. It was based on a broad consensus reached by the country’s main rural-based national organizations.<sup>206</sup> These, which included both peasant and indigenous groups, agreed that food sovereignty should be a human right codified in the country’s new constitution (Kopp 2011: 178-180). Their proposal would then be introduced into the constitutional text almost verbatim. Frustrated because things in the countryside “remained the same for quite some time” after the approval of the new constitution, the CSUTCB took the lead and developed a legislative proposal to enable the newly gained right: “it became our time

---

<sup>205</sup> Achacollo served as the executive of the *Bartolinas* from 2004 until 2006. She then was elected MAS deputy, and served as such from 2006 until 2009.

<sup>206</sup> Providing spaces for discussion and also technical assistance, both national and international NGOs such as UNITAS and *La Via Campesina* played an important role in bringing together these organizations, which often have expressed different interests and understandings of what “food sovereignty” actually means (interviews with Xavier Albó and Walter Limache). Despite their disagreements they converged on a unified proposal to address the issue of food sovereignty.

to manage what happens in the countryside” (interview with Rodolfo Machaca). The proposal called for a “Decade of Communitarian and Productive Revolution” and it linked food sovereignty to rural poverty.

According to Víctor Hugo Vázquez, Bolivia’s vice-minister of rural development, “the CSUTCB proposal was compelling, but it was technically unviable as it was proposed to us” (interview with Victor Hugo Vázquez). He commented that it needed technical adjustments to make it feasible. To assist with that, the ministry invited all the affected sectors to a round of negotiations. The ministry provided the infrastructure and technical assistance for these dialogues. Engineer Germán Gallardo, who was closely involved in the process, commented that these meetings “combined technical work with pressure from below and popular participation” (interview with Germán Gallardo). Interviews with state officials within the ministry, with key representatives in Congress, and with the leadership of the grassroots actors involved in these negotiations concur in noting that the most influential group was the CSUTCB. At the other side of the spectrum, CONAMAQ, an organization that represents indigenous peoples in the highlands, distanced itself from the process by noting potential environmental concerns associated to the proposal (interview with Jesús Jilamita).<sup>207</sup> Their concerns were legitimate. After the legislative proposal went through the Ministry of Planning for some technical adjustments and modifications, it incorporated provisions easing the usage of transgenic seeds. In the eyes of CONAMAQ and other indigenous groups, these were detrimental for the

---

<sup>207</sup> Their distancing also coincided with a broader tension between the government and indigenous-based organizations over the government’s plan to build a highway through an indigenous territory. See following section on “negative or veto powers” for more information on this conflict.

environment and their more traditional ways of farming.<sup>208</sup> Despite the pressure these groups put in the streets, the legislative proposal was sent to Congress and was approved with little modifications (interview with Luis Alfaro).<sup>209</sup> It was, in the eyes of several representatives of indigenous organizations such as CONAMAQ and CIDOB, “a clear victory for the CSUTCB” (interviews with Jesús Jilamita, Rodolfo Machaca, and Lázaro Tacóo).

The ministry of mining is another highly disputed office. The key collective actors fighting for its control are the unionized mineworkers, who are represented by the Union Federation of Bolivian Mineworkers (FSTMB), and the cooperativist miners, who are represented by National Federation of Mining Cooperatives (FENCOMIN). The pressure exerted by these groups is determinant for shaping mining policies.<sup>210</sup> And mining policies generally reflect the balance of power between these competing mining sectors, rather than party professionalism or technocratic decision-making. At the beginning of Morales’s first mandate, Wálter Villarroel, a cooperativist miner and former president of FENCOMIN, became the minister of mining. This was the result of a pre-electoral alliance between the MAS and FENCOMIN, by which FENCOMIN would exchange electoral support for representation in Congress and in other state institutions (interviews with Ramiro Paredes, Freddy Ontiveros, and Adalid Rodríguez).<sup>211</sup> The alliance, however, broke in October 2006, when cooperativist miners and the unionized mineworkers of Huanuni clashed over the control of mining activities in the Posokoni hill, the richest tin mine site in Bolivia. The armed confrontations left 16 dead and

---

<sup>208</sup> The accusations of these groups were that the government was giving in to the pressures of sectors that did not participate in the negotiation stages, including big landholders and translational companies.

<sup>209</sup> MAS representatives from indigenous organizations such as CIDOB and CONAMAQ did not participate in the legislative sessions for the discussion of this law.

<sup>210</sup> For a parallel argument, see Fornillo (2008: 14).

<sup>211</sup> Their support was crucial for gaining electoral majorities.

more than 68 wounded (El Deber 2006a), forcing the resignation of Villarroel, who was accused of defending the interests of his sector and not the overall general interest (El Deber 2006b).<sup>212</sup> This helped to strengthen the strategic relationships between the unionized mineworkers and the government, particularly when Morales appointed a new minister with ties to Bolivia's nationalist left, and someone who more closely promoted their pro-nationalization agenda. But this agenda would encounter challenges from below. The MAS-FENCOMIN alliance would prove to be only *temporarily* broken.

Having become an increasingly larger group and one of Bolivia's principal sources of employment—particularly in the western departments of Oruro, Potosí, and La Paz—the cooperativist miners became a key pressure group within the governing coalition (Espinoza Morales 2010: 238–241).<sup>213</sup> During the process of constitutional reform, for example, they played an important behind-the-scenes role and negotiated directly with the executive; they thus obtained important victories for the sector, like the constitutional recognition of mining cooperatives as an economic actor in the mining industry (interviews with Ramiro Paredes, Freddy Ontiveros, and Andrés Villca).<sup>214</sup> In addition, through their combined legislative influence via their representatives in Congress and the pressure they exerted in the streets, they were able to push through various laws and decrees that benefit the sector, particularly in matters

---

<sup>212</sup> For some authors, Villarroel had an “excessive corporatist attachment” (Stefanoni 2010: 161).

<sup>213</sup> It is hard to find reliable data on this sector. However, access to FENCOMIN's internal databases, which was facilitated by FENCOMIN's Secretary of Commerce and Exports Adalid Rodriguez, revealed that there are over 100,000 active cooperatives in the country.

<sup>214</sup> See article 369 in Bolivia's new constitution.

of royalties and taxation.<sup>215</sup> Many in the government describe cooperativist miners as “strategic but uncomfortable allies.” This is because they are central to gain electoral majorities, but have also become dominant in the shaping of the mining policy agenda. Their pressure has made it virtually impossible to develop a more comprehensive mining law.<sup>216</sup> As a general rule, then, pressures from below are central to defining policies in the area of mining where Morales cannot impose his agenda freely. Instead, he has to negotiate constantly with competing sectors. When these sectors do not agree, there is more room for elite decision-making by pushing Morales to occupy an arbitration role. At the same time, this logic can also lead to a quasi-Social Darwinian “rule of the strongest”: decisions generally reflect the existing balance of power between competing groups.

My sketch of decision-making at the executive level reveals a more nuanced picture of the relationship between movements and the MAS than the one presented when I examined the parliamentary body. Although some ministries are “sealed” and offer little room for collective actors to exert meaningful influence, others are more penetrated by collective actors that engage in the generation of decisions. This is particularly clear in the case of ministries whose policies affect clearly defined constituencies, particularly grassroots actors rooted in production or economic activity. These have had significant influence on decision-making in matters of agrarian reform and mining policy, reflecting once again the internal balance of power within the MAS. If these groups are strongly organized and can mobilize large numbers of people, they are more likely to keep the government open and force it to negotiate sectoral policies successfully.

---

<sup>215</sup> Cooperative miners have been central actors in the negotiations of law 175, which authorizes the Bolivian Central Bank (BCB) to purchase gold to cooperative mines, and law 186, which eliminates the added-value tax to the internal commercialization of minerals and metals sold by cooperative mines.

<sup>216</sup> The need for a new mining law was established in the country’s new constitution, which has been in effect since 2009. At the time of this writing, in May 2015, the legislative proposal is still being debated.

## The Importance of Different Constellations of Power

Finally, we also need to examine the role of grassroots organizations under different constellations of power, a dimension that cuts across all of the above. Here it is useful to make an analytical distinction between two periods. The first period is between 2006 and 2009 and it coincides with Morales's first term in office, when the MAS did not control Congress and had a strong unified opposition entrenched in Bolivia's most prosperous eastern departments.<sup>217</sup> During this initial period, this opposition, backed by agribusiness elites, demanded regional autonomy and threatened to secede as a reaction against indigenous mobilization (Eaton 2007: 73). The second period starts in 2009, or when Morales was reelected president and the MAS won control over both legislative chambers.<sup>218</sup> This meant that the MAS would confront an atomized and much weaker opposition—both in Congress and in the streets. Since that time, a state of truce has characterized the relations between the government and economic elites.

During the first period, which was marked by high levels of polarization and stalemate, organizations allied with the MAS played a crucial role in decision-making by putting issues on the public agenda. The most notable of their contributions was the proposal for constitutional reform, which was developed by the peasant and indigenous organizations that configured the Unity Pact (interviews with Xavier Albó, Fernando Garcés, Walter Limache, Raúl Prada, and Adolfo Mendoza). Lacking an independent proposal generated by the party structure, MAS

---

<sup>217</sup> In the national election of December 2005, Evo Morales obtained 53.7 percent of the vote. Although these results guaranteed the MAS a majority in the Chamber of Deputies, where it won 72 out of 130 seats, they were not enough to guarantee a majority in the Senate, where the MAS obtained 12 out of 27 seats. Parties of the right won the additional seats, turning them into a majority in this legislative body. Obtaining 28.6 percent of the vote, Social and Democratic Power (PODEMOS) gained 13 seats; gaining 7.8 percent of the vote, the National Unity Front gained 1 seat; and obtaining 6.5 percent of the vote, the Revolutionary Nationalist Movement (MNR) gained 1 seat.

<sup>218</sup> The MAS won the 2009 election with 64.22 percent of the vote. The results allowed the MAS to have 88 deputies and 26 senators.

representatives adopted this draft as their own during the reform process, which pushed them to discuss “new” issues, such as alternative types of state, territorial and indigenous autonomies; natural resources; indigenous representation; and collective rights (Garcés 2010: 67–81). After this experience, the government also promoted other institutional innovations to facilitate a bottom up influence beyond the constituent assembly process. The most important was the National Coordinator for Change (Conalcam), which brought together the rural organizations that configured the Unity Pact, other urban organizations such as the Bolivian Workers’ Central (COB), *and* government officials (Mayorga 2011: 97). However, beyond becoming a space for debating and generating policy inputs, as its creators had intended (interviews with César Navarro and Hugo Moldiz), “it proved a useful instrument for mobilizing the government’s supporters against its adversaries, particularly in 2008, when political elites in the eastern departments threatened secession” (Crabtree 2013: 287). Once the pressures from the opposition eased, the articulatory power of Conalcam declined. And soon after it became defunct, with parts of indigenous organizations such as CIDOB and CONAMAQ moving into opposition against the government.

In addition to putting issues on the agenda, allied social organizations played a central role in the passage of highly contested policies during this period. Two key examples are the 2006 Law of Communitarian Renewal of the Agrarian Reform, which established that land must fulfill certain socio-economic functions (Bottazzi and Rist 2012: 540–541), and the 2007 Renta Dignidad, which added a non-contributory tier to Bolivia’s pension scheme (Anria and Niedzwiecki 2011: 19). While the former served as a mechanism for expropriating land from large landholders, the latter involved a redirection of revenues coming from the hydrocarbon sector, meaning that less of this money would be transferred to the regional governments. In



short, both policies affected the interests of the economic elites in the eastern departments, and this made them highly contentious. In both cases, legislative blockades by the political opposition representing those elite interests in Congress, and mobilizations by their allied groups in the streets, prevented the government from achieving the passage of its planned reforms. With the convergence of rural and urban organizations of the lowlands and the highlands around a common enemy, however, MAS supporters led a series of mass protests and counter-mobilizations. After days of sustained demonstrations in front of the congress, both laws were enacted. In both cases, the mobilization of allied groups played a decisive role in the passage of legislation by counterbalancing the pressure from the opposition.<sup>219</sup>

Morales's reelection in 2009 marked the beginning of a different period. The electoral results allowed the MAS to accumulate immense amounts of institutional power, particularly as it simultaneously won control over Congress (on this point, see Mayorga 2011: 56-61; also Crabtree 2011). While this broke with the institutional stalemate, the unexpected consequences of such an overwhelming electoral victory were twofold. First, it led to the strengthening of the leadership in relation to the grassroots; and second, it weakened the existing channels of bottom-up dialogue and articulation, like the Unity Pact and Conalcam. The absence of a strong institutionalized opposition, and the weakening of mobilized sectors representing their interests, also meant that social organizations allied to the MAS would play a different role under a different constellation of power. Specifically, it accentuated the tensions between the bottom-up and the top down logics that characterize the MAS (see Anria 2013; Crabtree 2013; Levitsky and

---

<sup>219</sup> Instances where social organizations allied to the MAS made *cercos*, or human fences, around the congress were indeed quite common during this period. A noteworthy *cercos* took place in February 2008, when allied organizations surrounded Congress preventing the entrance of members of the opposition and thus facilitate the passing of the law calling for the public referendum that would decide on whether the new constitution should be approved or not.

Roberts 2011) , by dispersing demand making. The following pages examine these dynamics in detail.

### **Negative Capacities and Veto Coalitions**

As political scientist Moira Zuazo commented, “Morales is sometimes a hostage of the social movements that sustain him in power” (interview with Moira Zuazo). This has become more evident after Morales’s reelection in 2009, when the MAS also won a clear majority of seats in both legislative chambers. Winning control of the Congress meant that for some time the MAS did not have to negotiate with intransigent opposition parties in order to pass legislation. The challenge, then, switched from negotiating in Congress to managing an increasingly heterogeneous governing coalition. Harmonizing the interests of core and noncore constituencies proved to be a difficult task. And as a result, the MAS has confronted increasing levels of discontent from within. There have been many instances where allied social movements clashed with the MAS government over policy issues. In some cases, moreover, the government has had to give in and reverse policies due to (often violent) mobilizations against their implementation. Why do some mobilizations succeed in reversing government policy while others fail?

The argument advanced here is that protests against government policy succeed depending on the strength of the veto coalition that mobilized popular movements manage to build. If a mobilized grassroots actor builds a broad veto coalition with multiple sectors of society, it is more likely to succeed in forcing policy change. If a mobilized grassroots actor acts alone or cannot build a strong veto coalition, then the government can more easily defeat it. The policies under consideration share some commonalities. From the government’s perspective, they are all intended to address pressing issues of general interest. Important economic and political reasons underpin them and are used by the government to justify the need for such

policies. However, their implementation directly affects the particularistic interests of some of the grassroots organizations and popular movements that support the MAS. From their perspective, these policies are thus seen as “anti-popular.”

Figure 4.1 summarizes the likely scenarios from the government’s point of view. In general, the support of the party’s organizational core is necessary for implementing anti-popular government proposals, as these groups can exert significant counter-mobilization power and “defend” the government. This, however, generally works if the veto coalition is weakly organized (Figure 4.1, Case 2). When the party’s organizational core does not align fully with the government and a powerful veto coalition is built, the government generally finds itself having to bow to popular pressures (Figure 4.1, Case 3).

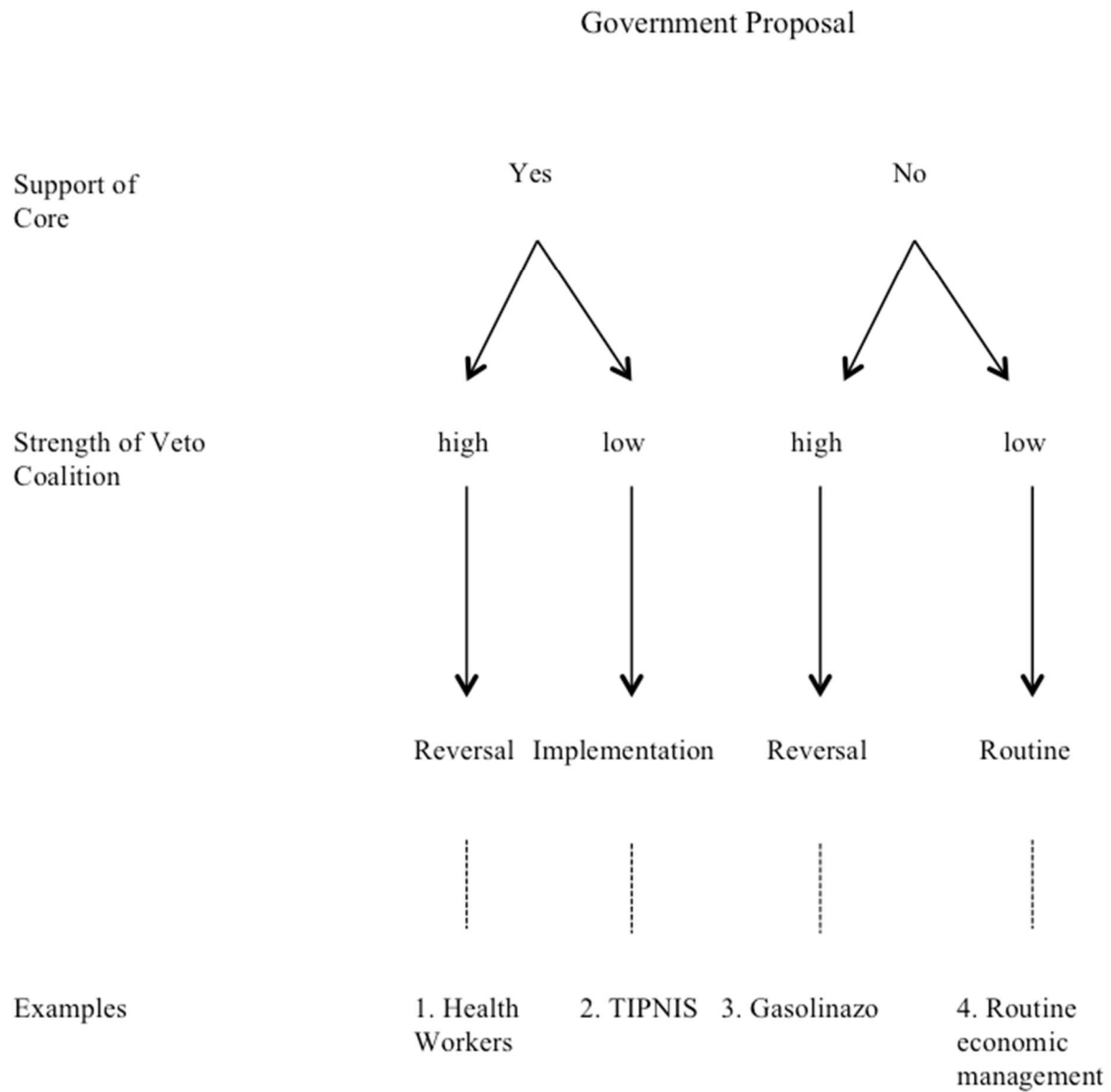
Sometimes, however, a strong veto coalition is able to block or modify government policies even if the party’s organizational core does support these policies. In other words, having the support of the core is not sufficient for the government to pass proposals that affect strongly organized popular constituencies; but it is necessary if the policy affects strongly organized constituencies. The case of the health workers conflict illustrates this pattern (Figure 4.1, Case 1). In a summit convened by the MAS in December 2011, popular movements allied to the government proposed an increase in working hours of doctors and health care workers, from 6 hours a day to 8 hours a day (Ministerio de la Presidencia and Ministerio de Comunicación 2011, 21). When the government sought to impose this measure via a presidential decree, the Decree 1126, doctors and health workers organized a series of widespread marches, strikes, and street blockades in Bolivia’s major cities, along with other urban sectors, like university students, transportation workers, police officers, and the Bolivian Workers Central (COB). Even though the coca growers and the peasant organizations allied to the government—the party’s

organizational core—supported and defended the policy on the streets, doctors and health care workers managed to protect the status quo (interview with Paulino Guarachi). The government was forced to reverse its decision after more than forty days of sustained strikes and mobilizations. It did so by, first, suspending the initial decree and, second, by issuing another presidential decree, the Decree 1232, and by promising to convene a summit to discuss the broader issue of health care reform (Cambio 2012).<sup>220</sup>

---

<sup>220</sup> This decree was the product of an agreement between the mobilized health care workers, university students, the COB, and the government.

Figure 4.1. Likely Decision-making Scenarios



The *Gasolinazo* crisis began on December 26, 2010, when the government canceled fuel subsidies by decree, in a country where gasoline had been heavily subsidized for many years. Coming as a surprise to most Bolivians, the decision quickly led to a massive increase in gasoline prices, estimated at 83 percent, as well as a general uncertainty among the population about prices and availability of basic goods, transportation prices, the stability of the government, and the next adjustment policies. The price increase was followed by popular revolts against the policy, including civic strikes, road blockades, and marches. It is interesting that the conservative right did not lead these mobilizations. Instead, mobilizations were led by sectors that had been traditional bastions of MAS support—such as neighborhood groups and informal sector workers, miners, and even coca farmers—in key urban areas and they demanded that Morales either annul the decree or resign. The mobilizations paralyzed virtually every major city in the country and eventually succeeded at forcing the policy to change. Protests forced the government to annul its own decree on the grounds that Morales was actually “ruling by obeying” the people.<sup>221</sup>

The idea of canceling the fuel subsidy had originally come from the executive branch, after a series of intense debates on the economic burden that the subsidy actually represents (interviews with Álvaro García Linera, Noel Aguirre, Luis Arce Catacora, Walter Delgadillo). The Ministry of Planning designed the regulatory decree, the Decree 748, which received no input from organized popular constituencies (interviews with Walter Delgadillo, Noel Aguirre, María Nela Prada Tejada). As the minister of economy, Luis Arce Catacora, commented in an

---

<sup>221</sup> In a public speech, Morales said: “I have understood the recommendations of various sectors—the workers, the unions, the provinces—and that’s why, in a meeting with the Vice President, the Minister of Foreign Relations, and the rest of the ministers, we have decided, following the principle of ruling by obeying the people, to annul the Decree 748 and the rest of the decrees that accompany that policy.”

interview: “removing the subsidy was a completely anti-popular measure, and we knew it, but it was absolutely necessary for the health of our economy. One merit of the government was to put the issue on the political agenda” (interview with Luis Arce Catacora). Many leaders of grassroots organizations allied to the government also commented that there was in fact some degree of consultation before the policy was announced (interviews with Isaac Avalos, Franklin Durán, Pedro Montes, Andrés Villca, Segundina Orellana, and Leonilda Zurita), but that it took the form of seeking legitimation of an already-made decision (interview with Rodolfo Machaca). Interviewees also concur in noting that in those meetings, they were instructed to communicate the decision to the social bases as a way to guarantee its implementation. But things did not work out as planned. To most Bolivians, the policy came as a shock, and it hurt their household economy.

When groups began to mobilize against the policy and a broad veto coalition was formed in key urban areas, members of the executive branch (including Evo Morales himself) convened emergency meetings with the coca growers to explain the rationale behind the policy and to ask for their support (interview with Walter Delgadillo). The assumption was that this sector, together with the other peasant organizations that constitute the party’s core, would align unconditionally with the government and that this would be sufficient to stop the mobilizations and ensure the viability of the policy. While the government and the leadership of coca growers in the Chapare region reached an agreement, it was not clear whether the rank and file, the members and affiliates, would comply uncritically (interview with Segundina Orellana). Peasant organizations like the CSUTCB defended the policy externally, but leaders commented in a series of interviews that “internally, we told the president to stop it; the policy was not really sustainable, because it was done with no real consultation, and was thus weakly designed from

the beginning” (interview with Rodolfo Machaca). The policy affected the members and affiliates of these organizations, too, particularly as prices of food and transportation incremented drastically overnight.<sup>222</sup> This revealed a tension between the leadership of the grassroots organizations that comprise the party’s organizational core and their social bases; while the former supported the policy, the latter did not. Having the leadership of social organizations on the government’s side does not automatically restrain the pressures from below in contemporary Bolivia.

While it would be inaccurate to say that coca growers in the Chapare and other peasant organizations that comprise the party’s core stopped the policy by themselves, their inability to align with the government unambiguously was necessary for the veto coalition to succeed. When these groups told the president to reverse the policy, it was clear that not even the closest allies would be able to defend it, and that not reversing it could lead to a severe governability crisis. As Vice President Garcia Linera commented in an interview: “we reversed it when we saw that it was in the general interest to do so” (interview with Álvaro García Linera).

The case of the Isiboro Sécore National Park and Indigenous Territory (TIPNIS) is more complex than the other two, but the logic of government decision and resistance in the streets is somewhat similar.<sup>223</sup> In this case, the Bolivian government made the decision to build a highway through the middle of a national park—a park that is also recognized as an autonomous indigenous territory.<sup>224</sup> The government argued that the highway was crucial for economic,

---

<sup>222</sup> Other interviewees, who prefer to remain anonymous, commented that because the policy led to a raise in the price of gasoline, a key input for the production of cocaine, coca growers had a clear incentive to reject it.

<sup>223</sup> The reconstruction of this ongoing conflict draws on newspapers coverage as well as on social conflict data generously provided by the *Fundación UNIR*.

<sup>224</sup> The planned highway would link the departments of Cochabamba and Pando.



social, and political reasons. Economically, the government argued, it would help to improve access to markets for the goods produced by agricultural producers in the region. Socially, it would help to improve the access to electricity and other public services in formerly neglected areas of the country. And politically, it was seen as important to advance the territorial integration of the country, as well as to break with the power of landholders and economic elites entrenched in the eastern departments, particularly in Beni and Pando (interview with Álvaro García Linera; see also García Linera 2012).<sup>225</sup> However, some indigenous communities living inside the TIPNIS mobilized against the highway plan arguing that they were not consulted prior to beginning the construction of the road.<sup>226</sup> Specifically, they claimed that the Bolivian government was violating international agreements ratified by the country and also the country's new constitution that enshrines the right of prior consultation. They also claimed that the road would lead to environmental damage and threaten their way of life.

The organizations that constitute the party's organizational core strongly backed the highway from the outset (interviews with Segundina Orellana, Omar Claros, Miguelina Villarroel, Rodolfo Machaca, and Concepción Ortiz).<sup>227</sup> But former government allies, including large indigenous movements in the eastern lowlands, like the Confederation of Bolivian Indigenous Peoples (CIDOB), and in the Andean highlands, like the National Council of Ayllus

---

<sup>225</sup> As García Linera commented: "as long as we do not have a highway connecting La Paz and Pando, large landholders will continue to hold political power in that region" (interview with Álvaro García Linera)

<sup>226</sup> Former minister of public works Wálter Degadillo commented: "of course we had done informal consultation work with the local leaders and organizations inside the TIPNIS—some of this work was even quite clientelistic and manipulative—and they had agreed on the construction of the highway. But then we started with the construction, and they rejected and politicized it openly" (interview with Walter Delgadillo)

<sup>227</sup> Particularly the coca growers in the Chapare region represented by the Six Federations of the Tropics of Cochabamba, and also the Confederation of Intercultural Communities of Bolivia (CSCIB).

and Marcas of Qullasuyu (CONAMAQ), organized widespread marches and protests to defend their collective rights and stop the construction of the highway, or to at least alter its route. The marches involved violent confrontations between indigenous communities represented by these organizations, on the one hand, and coca growers (and other peasant groups) on the other hand. Unlike the *Gasolinazo* crisis of December 2010, this time the government handled the conflict with violent repression in a rather confusing series of events, even though, in the end, it did temporarily suspend the project by reaching an agreement with the mobilized sectors opposing the highway. It did so by issuing a law, Law 180, which declared the TIPNIS an intangible territory and prohibited the construction of the highway through it.

But the organizations that constitute the party's core rejected this law on the grounds that it violated their rights of economic development. They organized road blockades and a counter march to La Paz, arguing that "whoever opposes the highway also opposes the economic progress of the region" and demanding to meet with the president to find a solution.<sup>228</sup> These groups demanded the abrogation of the Law 180, which prohibited the construction of the highway, and they also threatened to physically confront those groups who opposed the highway in a parallel march. The conflict ended when the organizations of the party's core arrived to La Paz, met with the presidents of both legislative chambers and members of the executive branch, and reached an agreement on a legislative proposal that would allow to implement a consultation procedure on whether to build the highway or not. The legislative proposal was then approved very quickly in Congress, becoming the Law 222, and ensuring that there would be a formal

---

<sup>228</sup> According to many actors in the political opposition, the government instigated this march and used the core organizations instrumentally. Although this is plausible, it is hard to demonstrate it empirically.

consultation.<sup>229</sup> The government proved to be responsive to the interests of the organizations that constitute the party's core.

Although critics may point out that this description overlooks some details, it still captures the general dynamics of the conflict. These are relevant because they reveal the intense struggles among the different sectors that attempt to shape policy-making and the internal balance of power among core and noncore constituencies.<sup>230</sup> Despite the sustained resistance of noncore organized indigenous constituencies and movements, and despite the temporary suspension of the construction of the highway through the national park, the government has not fully reversed its initial decision and instead has accommodated to the policy preferences of its core constituencies.<sup>231</sup> Opposition groups have not built a coalition strong enough to pressure the government to abandon the idea of the highway through the national park. Vice President García Linera commented: “if you look carefully, we have not reversed our policy. We have suspended the project temporarily, but will build the highway anyway because the decision is rooted on the idea of maintaining state sovereignty over the territory” (interview with Álvaro García Linera). That this position aligns with the policy preferences of coca growers (and other core peasant groups) is not accidental, however; it reveals that these are the key pressure groups shaping

---

<sup>229</sup> The process of consultation was a long and controversial one, and the results are summarized (Estado Plurinacional de Bolivia 2012).

<sup>230</sup> Though not central to the analysis in this chapter, the TIPNIS conflict has also exposed the government's *desarrollista* (developmentalist) policy agenda, which comes at the expense of indigenous and environmental concerns.

<sup>231</sup> This firm commitment to the highway, and the way in which the government managed the conflict by repressing anti-highway protesters, led to a deterioration of the relationship between the MAS and important indigenous movements that represent large numbers of highland and lowland indigenous peoples. For critics like Raúl Prada Alcoreza, who is a prominent intellectual and a former MAS representative to the Constituent Assembly, “the TIPNIS conflict has revealed that the MAS government is indeed anti-indigenous” (interview with Raúl Prada Alcoreza).

policy and that they are also among the most powerful actors within the governing coalition.<sup>232</sup> Their unambiguous support of the highway, coupled with a relatively weaker veto coalition that opposed it, meant that the government has had more maneuvering room, and the necessary support, to pursue and implement its desired policies. “If it doesn’t happen now,” García Linera said, “it will happen later.”<sup>233</sup>

Taken together, the three cases examined above show that although decision-making is undoubtedly centralized in the person of the president, Morales is not an all-powerful president and his government has to legitimize its decisions regularly with the social organizations and movements that provide support to the government. Organized popular sectors may not hold the reins of power directly, but they are not left at the margins of the decision-making process either; they can have some control over collective decision-making if circumstances are conducive. Specifically, they can place real limits on Morales’s authority by exerting pressure from below, which in certain cases can keep the MAS responsive to particular societal demands. Not every popular group has the same capacity to pressure the government from below and block or modify policy proposals, however; their success is contingent on the strength of the veto coalition they manage to configure, and it varies by policy issue. Governing in this highly reactive context, where the organizational legitimacy of the MAS and government decisions are generally contested in the streets, is not an easy task. On the one hand, these dynamics of decision-making

---

<sup>232</sup> In the interview with García Linera, he went as far as to comment that: “the idea with the highway is to boost the economic and political power of the peasant groups and other popular and indigenous groups, in relation to the landholders” (interview with Álvaro García Linera).

<sup>233</sup> Several high-level government officials commented that, keeping the consequences of the *Gasolinazo* in mind, the government could not afford to reverse this policy, even if it meant alienating the indigenous constituencies that oppose the highway. Otherwise, the government would be perceived as weak and permeable to all kinds of social pressures. Still, the government was able to firmly maintain its position because it counted with the unambiguous support of its core constituencies.

and popular resistance could lead to an improvement of the quality of the policies, but on the other hand they could also make it challenging to govern in the general interest, to maintain a degree of stability, and to carry out governing programs.<sup>234</sup>

## **Conclusion**

A surface-level analysis of the MAS as a governing movement-based party may initially lend unquestionable support to the Michelsian argument of party oligarchization. But such a conclusion would be a caricature of the MAS and it would fail to capture a richer and more nuanced understanding of the complex relationships between various social movements, the governing party, and the leadership authority. Decision-making in Bolivia's MAS is centralized in the hands of the president and a small—but varying—group of influential leaders. There is no question that Morales and trusted individuals occupy a central role in the policy process. However, there are elements in the structure of the MAS that work against those oligarchic tendencies. Most prominently, the MAS resists the consolidation of elite hierarchical structures and technocratic decision-making by allowing for the emergence of opposition among allied groups that put effective limits on the centralization of power and promote a degree of leadership accountability and responsiveness. The main story that emerged, then, is that of a movement-based party that allows for significant influence from below. While there are clear pressures pushing toward internal power concentration, including the centrality of Morales's leadership and the logics of exercising state power, constituent movements are far from being irrelevant in shaping the party's most important decisions.

---

<sup>234</sup> Addressing these issues would go well beyond the scope of this chapter, however.

This chapter has attempted to show that resistance to centralized leadership authority occurs at two related levels. If we firstly look at the “creative capacities” of the allied grassroots organizations to generate independent decisions by putting issues and priorities on the agenda and proposing solutions to them, the prospects for attenuating the trend toward oligarchization may initially look slim. Still, policy-making in contemporary Bolivia is a highly reactive and negotiated process open to some degree of societal input; as well, the capacity of the grassroots to generate decisions and formulate policy proposals varies by policy area and is contingent on the mobilization capacity of the groups pushing for reform. This chapter has shown that alongside the pressures toward the centralization of power associated with the function of governing a country, there are alternative patterns of decision-making in different policy areas. This is consistent with the expectations derived from the (old and new) developmental state literature and sociological approaches to social movement outcomes, which show that in policy areas where large numbers of well-organized people are directly and visibly affected in their productive roles there is generally more popular pressure for influencing these decisions. The MAS is permeable to these pressures. To prove this point, the chapter examined the influence of grassroots actors in the development of agrarian and mining policies and showed that some of the strongest and most well organized popular constituencies have indeed been influential in shaping the agenda and advancing their preferred policies through their active participation in and close interaction with the executive branch.

Finally, if we secondly examine the “negative capacities” of the grassroots organizations that form the MAS coalition by tracing their veto or counter-mobilization power, the prospects of mitigating the trend toward oligarchization look even more promising. It is here, where the top-down logic of governing the country meets the bottom-up logic of social mobilization that

characterizes the MAS since its origins, that the argument about oligarchization finds the biggest resistance to its full applicability. It is in this area, moreover, that oligarchic decision-making is most constrained in the case of the Bolivian MAS. As the chapter has shown, this outcome is a reflection of both the origins and history of the MAS as an organization. It is also the result of a deliberate organizational strategy that has rejected bureaucratic hierarchy since its first steps, and a reflection of the distribution of power that exists within the party and its allied groups—and also among these organizations themselves.

## CHAPTER 5: THE MAS IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

As the preceding chapters have shown, the Bolivian MAS is a case of a movement-based party that gradually shed some of its initial characteristics between its founding in the mid-1990s and its achievement of power in 2006. Yet, it remains different from other parties formed by social movements; it has followed a remarkably different organizational trajectory. Most movement-based parties that have made the transition to national power lend overwhelming support for the Michelsian trend toward oligarchy, almost always developing elite-dominated hierarchical structures that concentrate power and de-emphasize grassroots participation.

The literature on comparative political parties has observed that when parties win elections, institutionalize their structures, and increasingly occupy public office, their ties with allied social movements tend to become weaker and more intermittent. Grassroots participation in the making of collective decisions seems particularly hard to sustain as the social bases of parties grow and become more diverse, and as a result of new pressures that come from sectors well beyond the party's original social base. It is also challenging to sustain given other constraints such as domestic and external economic pressures that tend to push governing parties toward further centralization.<sup>235</sup> In turn, all this gives rise to a top-down logic of decision-making and to a gradual suppression of the bottom-up politics that might characterize a movement-based party early in its history, or when it is in the opposition.

---

<sup>235</sup> We might expect oligarchic tendencies under more stringent domestic and external economic constraints. This is because, at times, for instance, satisfying investors may require pushing aside the grassroots base.



The MAS trajectory does not fully conform to this pattern of organizational development, however. Indeed, the present study has demonstrated that the Bolivian MAS offers some insight into how party oligarchy can be mitigated in the context of governing a country. It has shown that, if circumstances permit, movement-based parties may hold an advantage over other parties to resist hierarchy and power concentration. The hybrid nature of these parties may encourage democratic control from below by allowing for the existence of opposition among allied groups that can check power from within and keep channels open for agenda setting from below. The MAS experience has demonstrated that the extent to which movement-based parties can mitigate the triumph of oligarchy heavily depends on the organizational strength, unity, and mobilizational capacities of allied movements.

This chapter examines the origins and development of two other left parties that emerged out of grassroots social movements, and that are in power in today's Latin America. Then, it compares them to the MAS. These parties are the Workers' Party (*Partido dos Trabalhadores*, PT) in Brazil, and the Broad Front (*Frente Amplio*, FA) in Uruguay. The comparative evidence from these two additional cases generates insight into the kinds of participatory and organization-building strategies have handled "the tension between governing and maintaining grassroots linkages" (Levitsky and Roberts 2011: 421).

Maintaining grassroots linkages, which is associated with the idea of "deepening" democracy, has been a historical goal of the Latin American Left. Comparative evidence allows us to see alternative ways of resolving this "reversed" Michelsian dilemma (i.e. how to maintain participation while having to govern), and to identify the roots of this variation. While the PT in power appears to have undergone a Michelsian shift in its character, in the sense that its internal structures concentrate power at the top and discourage grassroots input, the MAS and the FA

have remained more open and internally responsive, although in very different ways.

In reflecting on the differences between the three cases, four elements are most important: (1) certain organizational characteristics embedded in their “genetic model,” (2) their experience before gaining national power, (3) their mode of access to national power, and (4) the broader structural elements associated with their power base. As the present study argues, these four elements set parties into distinctive development trajectories and create incentives and constraints for organization building and for the promotion of participation in the political process when they govern.

### **The MAS in Comparative Perspective**

The MAS, an example of a movement-based party in power, was born of a rural social movement composed of coca producers and grew from a rich tradition of participatory politics found in local communities and base organizations in Bolivia’s Chapare region. It then expanded to Bolivia’s largest cities and became the country’s largest party in less than a decade (Chapter 2). Although the transition from being a rural movement to gaining national power was accompanied by efforts to control grassroots social movements from the top, movements in Bolivia have retained notable degrees of autonomy from the governing party and Chapter 3 has shown how social movement in Bolivia have maintained considerable influence in the nomination of candidates within the MAS. For social groups and individuals that had been historically marginalized and underrepresented in the political arena, this channel of participation represents an important advance toward inclusion and full citizenship. In the realm of national policy-making, there is no question that Morales and a small—but varying—group of trusted individuals occupy a central role; however, Chapter 4 has demonstrated that the bottom-up influence of collective actors on policy-making varies significantly by policy area, and that it is

difficult for the party in government to dominate its grassroots partners. In other words, there are some elements in the structure of the MAS and in the dynamics of social mobilization in the streets that mitigate the trend toward oligarchy. The bottom-up power of grassroots social movements embedded in the party's "genetic model" and the legacies of social mobilization associated with its ascent to power mean that social movements in Bolivia are still vibrant. At times the MAS government has tried, but it has not been able to suppress autonomous political initiative from its grassroots partners.

### **The Workers' Party**

The Brazilian Workers' Party (PT) was founded in 1980 "by labor leaders, intellectuals, and social movement activists" (Keck 1986: 68). After being in the opposition for over two decades, it won the presidency in 2002 and was then reelected three times, in 2006, 2010, and 2014. Over the period from its inception to the present, the PT has progressively been transformed from a "democratic socialist mass party" (Keck 1992: 247) into a type of party that resembles an "electoral-professional" organization (Ribeiro 2008; 2014; Hunter 2007; 2010). At a first glance, its developmental trajectory appears to lend clear support to the Michelsian argument about party oligarchization (Ribeiro 2008: 226).

### ***Origins, Formative Phase, and Transformation of Internal Governance***

In terms of its origin, the PT is a classic example of a movement-based party. Emerging under military rule as a political expression of grassroots groups in civil society, it has continued to maintain close links with a wide array of organized popular constituencies, particularly with organized labor. In its formative phase, however, the PT was "not just another labor party" (Guidry 2003) because its initial base went far beyond industrial labor to include "the organized left, Catholic activists, progressive politicians, intellectuals, and representatives of other social

movements” (Keck 1992: 7). It also incorporated “segments of civil society that did not identify themselves with a class perspective, such as feminist groups, gay movements, Afro-Brazilians, human rights advocates or environmentalists” (Gómez Bruera 2013: 29), becoming a “place of convergence” for various forces from the Left with distinctive origins (French and Fortes 2005: 17). The PT was also different from classic examples of labor parties because it was not conceived of as the political arm of a specific sector of the labor movement, and it did not establish formal institutional relations with unions. Although labor unions played a central role in the creation of the party, it “was not created by the unions qua organizations” (Keck 1992: 7).

The early formal separation between the unions and the party was an attempt to protect the autonomy of each union (Keck 1986: 76; 1992: 180). Accordingly, since its inception, it did not incorporate mechanisms of collective affiliation, and those who decided to join the PT did so on an individual “party member” basis. The PT has thus followed what Roberts (1998: 75) calls the “organic” model of party development. These are parties whose “organic relationship with mass organizations and social movements” provides “a common political space that links popular and political struggles while respecting their relative autonomy” (Roberts 1998: 277).

Much of the literature on the PT as a national-level organization has attempted to explain the extent to which the party represents something different in Brazilian—and more broadly Latin American—politics (Keck 1992; Samuels 2004; Hunter 2007; 2010; Meneguello and Amaral 2008; Amaral 2010). The goal here is not to assess this debate but to trace elements in the party’s formative phase and access to power that have set the party in its distinctive developmental path.

The early works of Meneguello (1989) and Keck (1992) are the essential references to trace the roots of the PT’s distinctiveness. Taken together, they stress three areas—links to

external groups, programmatic orientation, and internal organization—that can be traced back to the formative phase of the party. Keck (1992), for instance, argues that during its first decade the PT represented “an anomaly” in Brazilian politics due to its strong links to society, its programmatic appeals, and its focus on aggregating the interests of various grassroots groups rather than on performing electoral functions. Keck argues that,

[...] the Workers’ party was a novel development among Brazilian political institutions for several reasons: first, because it is set out to be a party that expressed the interests of workers and the poor at a political level; second, because it sought to be an internally democratic party; and finally, because it wanted to represent and be accountable to its members. All these conceptions have evolved a great deal since the party was founded, but all of them remain central elements in the party’s identity and are what make it an innovation (Keck 1992: 239).

Using Duverger’s (1954) classifications, others have characterized the PT as Brazil’s first “mass bureaucratic” party (Meneguello 1989: 33-34) on the basis of the pattern of party organization it adopted in its formative phase, including an articulated hierarchical structure, mass membership, strict requirements for membership, close links to organized groups in civil society, and a nationally centralized decision-making structure (see also Amaral 2010). The military regime’s bureaucratic regulations forced new parties to perform onerous registration tasks within a short period of time, and that heavily influenced the adoption of such organizational pattern. Heavy regulations pushed party builders into a process of what might be called “early bureaucratization” (my term; Nogueira-Budny 2013: 115, 117). Establishing a

bureaucratic, centrally organized party at the very onset of its existence was necessary to permit the party's initial survival and it also contributed to its exponential growth and future programmatic and organizational adaptations (Hunter 2010: 22; Nogueira-Budny 2013: 122). In short, it became a constitutive element of the party's "genetic model."

This organizational model was far from what PT founders had envisioned in the late 1970s. Their vision was a decentralized organization characterized by bottom-up leadership and decision-making structures—called "basismo" for the emphasis on base participation (Giudry 2003: 91)—that would be a break from the pattern of elitism that had long characterized Brazilian parties. The hallmark of this model were the party "base nuclei" ("núcleos de base"), which became an essential component of the PT's identity and also reflected the founders' intent to build an internally democratic party on the basis of a participating mass membership, despite the restrictions imposed by the military regime (Keck 1992: 103; Amaral 2010: 108). Base nuclei were small local groups of at least twenty-one party affiliates "organized by neighborhood, job category, workplace, or social movement" (Keck 1992: 104). They were to forge strong links with preexisting social movements and to promote an active and diffuse participation of party affiliates in internal party affairs.

*Petistas* had envisioned the base nuclei as spaces for the aggregation of interests rather than as organs focused on electoral competition. They were designed to serve "as the conduit between party and society to divulge and promote the party policies at the local level" (Nogueira-Budny 2013: 118). Although nuclei provided spaces for grassroots participation, their activities in their initial years were "closely linked to the efforts to legalize the party" (Amaral 2010: 110; see also Keck 1992: 106), and even though they provided spaces for collective deliberation, they lacked real influence on intraparty issues (Amaral 2010: 114). Over time,

particularly as the PT began to participate in (and to win) elections, these nuclei declined in importance in relation to the more hierarchical party congresses (“*congressos*”).

A centralized leadership structure would be useful to Campo Majoritário (Majority Group), the moderate faction that gained control over the party leadership in 1995. It would steer the party toward important internal transformations in a further centralizing direction (Ribeiro 2008: 160). The most relevant manifestation reflecting these changes was with the 2001 reform of the party statute. Until then, the party’s most important bodies for deliberation and consultation were the annual meetings (“*encontros*”) at each level of its structure, be it municipal, state, regional, or national (Partido dos Trabalhadores 1980). Their key function was (and still is) to discuss program, political strategy, tactics, alliance policy, and party-building strategies (Partido dos Trabalhadores 2001). In addition, until 2001, the annual meetings selected members of the directorates (“*diretórios*”) as well as delegates to be sent to higher-level meetings (Ribeiro 2008: 240-241). The latter would in turn select the party president. The annual meetings used to be truly representative and inclusive forums (Ribeiro 2008: 240; also 2014: 111; and Amaral 2010: 83).

But that changed. Approved “after years of conflict between the Campo Majoritário and the radical factions (with the dominant group imposing its ideas on all relevant issues)” (Ribeiro 2014: 101), the 2001 PT statute reduced the power of the base nuclei<sup>236</sup> and reformed the intra-party electoral system in ways that affected the internal dynamics of party meetings.

Most visibly, it introduced the PED (*Processo de Eleições Diretas*, or Direct Election Process) for the selection of party authorities at all levels, so that party authorities should “be

---

<sup>236</sup> Congresses (“*congressos*”) “started to resolve those issues whose responsibility initially resided within nuclei” (Nogueira-Budny 2013: 121).

elected by the direct vote of members” (Ribeiro 2014: 111), and it imposed a simple plurality internal voting system.<sup>237</sup> Annual meetings remained the highest-level decision-making bodies, but they now take place after the authorities are elected, which reduces their role as a body for intense internal negotiation.

While sponsors of this reform sold it as a way to deepen internal democracy and develop more inclusive decision-making processes, the adoption of the PED ended up increasing the decision-making autonomy of the party leadership by undermining collective actors and appealing directly to the affiliates (Ribeiro 2014: 112; Hunter 2010: 39-40). The reform made the party more inclusive, but it also promoted a participation of “low intensity” (Ribeiro 2008: 178). In addition, the PT structure became more open to new members<sup>238</sup> but less permeable to pressures from the bottom up, allowing the leadership to operate “less constrained by the more radical holdout [...] that sought ideological purity and rejected any form of institutional change” (Nogueira-Budny 2013: 125). In short, this new system gave increased power to preexisting hierarchies.<sup>239</sup> This in turn would allow the party leadership to shape the party’s future trajectory.

---

<sup>237</sup> Prior to this, party authorities were selected by delegates from annual national meetings (“*encontros*”). According to Ribeiro (2014: 111), “this process differed from Brazilian party law and the practice of other parties in the greater representativeness and inclusiveness of the meetings.” This is because “the criteria for participation gave greater weight to the ordinary members” in relation to the leadership. As a result, before 2001, “the PT structure was more permeable to pressure from the bottom up, from the rank and file on the leadership.” For a parallel argument, see Nogueira-Budny (2013: 121).

<sup>238</sup> Initially, the PT had strict requirements for affiliation and demanded a high level of commitment from members (Meneguello 1989: 33). Over time, after 2001, and especially after assuming national office in 2003, the PT gradually reduced the barriers of entry to join the PT—for example, by introducing collective affiliations during electoral campaigns—and eased member obligations. In part as a result of changes in norms and rules of membership, the party dramatically increased the number of affiliates (Amaral 2010: 66). For a detailed assessment of additional explanations driving the expansion of the PT’s affiliate base, see Amaral (2010: Chapter 2).

<sup>239</sup> According to Ribeiro (2008: 265, 267), the introduction of PED can be seen as an “illusionary” democratization—that is, a “false” democratization that only boosted the autonomy of the party’s top leadership, and one that transformed the PT from being a party of activists and militants into a party of



Beyond its centralized organization, since its foundation the PT has worked closely with a wide range of social movements, and it has also embraced a commitment to popular empowerment and participatory democracy. In 1984 the PT took a direct role organizing a broad-based coalition that brought millions of people into the streets to demand direct elections in order to accelerate the end of the military regime (“*Diretas já!*”). In terms of relationships with social movements, in the mid-1980s the PT helped to found the MST (*Movimento Sem Terra*, or Landless Movement) and an independent labor federation, the CUT (*Central Única dos Trabalhadores*, Unified Workers’ Central), although both organizations remained formally autonomous (Guidry 2003: 90). The links between these movements and the party were strengthened in the 1990s, when PT representatives actively pursued their demands in Congress (Baiocchi and Checa 2007: 420). In line with the PT’s emphasis on “basismo,” the party generated institutional innovations at the local level where, for instance, they won political office by introducing a wide array of participatory programs (Baiocchi 2003; Wampler 2007). A commitment to honest government and grassroots participation would become the trademarks of the PT way of governing, defining the party’s goal of popular empowerment and inclusion as it struggled to gain national power.

### ***The Road to Power: Legislative Opposition and Local Government***

The PT’s path to national power was indeed a long and rocky one. It followed a pattern of progressive growth from the local level to the national level in both legislative and executive elections. Along the way, it went from being predominantly urban to reaching out to rural areas (Ribeiro 2014: 88), and in 2002 Lula was elected president on his fourth try. By that time, the PT

---

voters. For the argument that the PED deepened internal democracy and represented a challenge to Michels’s Iron Law, see Meneguello and Amaral (2008) and Amaral (2010).

was a bureaucratic and centralized organization, and its rise to national-level power did not occur through the use of mobilizational campaign tactics.

The PT first ran for office in the 1982 mayoral elections, receiving only three percent of the national vote (Keck 1992: 143). In light of these below-expectation results, party builders decided to “return to the base,” or to strengthen the movement in relation to the party, since movement activity was seen as more conducive to social change than participation in institutions (Keck 1992: 153,164). Although the PT performed better in the 1985 mayoral elections, particularly in state capitals, the electoral breakthrough only occurred in 1988 (French and Fortes 2005: 19), when the party gained control of thirty-one municipalities, including state capitals and rural districts where the MST had been active (Keck 1992: 157). Increasing governing experience in states and cities led to a focus on institutional strategies as opposed to a strengthening of the social struggles (Lacerda 2002: 63). It also led the PT “to moderate its discourse, platform and political practices, in terms of public administration and/or its attitude toward other actors, such as in the political alliances it formed” (Ribeiro 2014: 89). Local experiences contributed to the growth of the party and expanded its social base. Staying loyal to the party’s basic political DNA, PT mayors combined pragmatism with institutional innovations to promote broad-based citizen involvement, such as participatory budgeting, which became the trademark of many PT administrations (Abers 2000; Baiocchi 2003; Nylen 2003). While the slogan “PT way of governing” was obviously a discursive tool, “it was rooted in something real: practical policies that expanded access to education, health, and housing and that improved the quality of services and goods provided” (French and Fortes 2005: 26).

The PT’s basist ethos shaped these local governments not only due to the participatory institutional innovations implemented by its mayors but also in the sense that PT leaders did not

fully abandon social mobilization strategies. Such strategies only worked under very specific circumstances that were not present in every municipality, however (on this point, see Gómez Bruera 2013: 81). Above all, as a general pattern, the party's increasing experience holding local level executive office provided a sort of "institutional school" for PT leaders that contributed to their pragmatism in office (Novaes 1993; Samuels 2004). Being elected to government positions but usually having a minority status in municipal chambers, forced PT officials to rethink the party's approach to electoral and legislative alliance making, which initially was restricted to like-minded parties on the left (Hunter and Power 2005: 129). The commitment to working with other political forces not only signaled moderation to voters, but it also helped to strengthen an internal coalition of party moderates who would then centralize party structures and steer the PT toward the ideological center (Samuels 2004: 1008). Finally, the growing experience holding subnational level office "generated incentives for the party to place greater emphasis on electoral and institutional activity and less emphasis on mobilizational and extra institutional struggles" (Samuels 2004: 1016). The relationships between the party and its social movement base would not necessarily be "weakened" or cooled down, but they would be altered in nature as the party increasingly held public office.

At the legislative branch, where the PT increased the presence of "working class men and women, both rural and urban ... including an unprecedented number of Afro-Brazilians, women, and labor and community leaders" (French and Fortes 2005: 19), the PT developed a "strategy aimed at furthering the party's distinctive profile and long-term growth" (Hunter 2010: 45). The most visible manifestation of this strategy was the anti-neoliberal policy orientation of PT representatives, who gradually moderated their views from advocating socialism and radical change to a pragmatic but progressive position aimed at reforming capitalism to protect the

interests of the underprivileged.<sup>240</sup> As well, another visible manifestation of the PT's legislative strategy was the party's "distinctive organizational characteristics of cohesion, loyalty, and discipline" (Hunter 2010: 55; see also Roma 2005). The PT exerted tight control over representatives and their legislative activity.<sup>241</sup> The experience in the legislative opposition progressively strengthened the party's position in representative institutions, and allowed the party to project itself onto the national political scene as a reasonable alternative to the status quo. The opposition role it played also "allowed the PT to consolidate grassroots support and build a strong organization over time" (Hunter 2010: 77). All these elements would become crucial for its electoral success in the 2002 presidential victory.

Local experiences of municipal administration and years of opposition in the legislative branch led to greater interaction between the party's union and social movement base and state institutions (Avritzer 2009: 9). Some of these movements, particularly in urban areas, "increasingly engaged in processes of negotiations with the state and deployed strategies that were less confrontational and disruptive" (Gómez Bruera 2013: 42). At the same time, however, "the original base of the PT, in terms of its social movement roots, was facing a deep crisis" (French and Fortes 2005: 26). This was particularly the case in regard to labor unions, as "the combined effects of economic stagnation, high unemployment rates, and productive restructuring drove unions into retreat" (French and Fortes 2005: 27). In light of these broader societal changes, the moderate party faction that now controlled the PT prioritized an institutional rather

---

<sup>240</sup> Amaral (2010) also notes a simultaneous process of ideological moderation among the PT rank and file. A parallel argument is found in Samuels (2004).

<sup>241</sup> In 2003, four representatives were expelled from Congress after opposing the PT's economic policy and its proposal for social security reform.

than a mobilizational strategy. Although social mobilization did not disappear from the stage, protest action decreased notably during the 1990s (Gómez Bruera 2013: 45).

Thus, the 2002 presidential campaign took place in a context of low-intensity mobilization, and it was designed when the PT enjoyed a situation of relative strength within representative institutions. The political learning made it clear that in order to ensure governability, the party would need to shift to the center and create a broader set of alliances than only with like-minded parties on the left. In 2002, the PT allied with the Center-Right Liberal Party, which provided José Alencar, a man with close ties to Brazil's business community, as the vice presidential candidate (Hunter 2007: 463).<sup>242</sup> In addition, the moderate sector led by Lula's faction (Campo Majoritário), a faction that by the early 2000s had become a cohesive, dominant coalition within the party, was able to adopt a professionalized approach for the presidential campaign. The most visible manifestation of this was the hiring of Brazil's leading PR expert, Duda Mendonça, to run the presidential campaign (Ribeiro 2014: 110; Hunter 2007: 464). This led to a move from activist-intensive campaigns, which were more characteristic during the PT's early experiences, toward a marketing-oriented campaign based on the personal appeal of Lula. This was also evidence that by the early 2000s the party leadership enjoyed significant levels of autonomy in relation to the rank and file: external experts directed the winning 2002 campaign and were not subject to any internal accountability mechanisms (Ribeiro 2014: 111). In other words, the centralization of power and professionalization of the party had already occurred.

The election of Lula was not the product of social mobilization. By 2002, the grassroots actors had been demobilized:

---

<sup>242</sup> This also reflects the balance of forces in Congress and the powerful influence of Brazilian domestic capital.

Lula's electoral victory occurred when social mobilization was not on the ascent (as would have been true if Lula had won in 1989 or 1994). Lula's election followed a decade in which mass activism had fallen off (with the notable exception of the Landless Workers' Movement, or MST), and the mass organizations built during the 1970s and 1980s were devastated by an economic liberalization that eliminated, for example, half of the industrial working class in Brazil [...] There is, however, one limited sense in which Lula's election can be seen as a victory for social movements. It is very much the triumph of a remarkable generation of leaders that grew out of the dynamic protest movements that brought an end to the military regime, even if the organizations they led no longer have the same dynamism as in the past (French and Fortes 2005: 24).

The image of demobilization is perhaps more accurate in the case of urban movements; the situation was different in the countryside, "where landless workers (MST and other new groups) expanded their efforts and remained active, although profound political disagreements would cool the relationship between the PT and the MST." Despite this nuance, what matters analytically is that when Lula's 2002 campaign was designed the PT was "stronger in the institutional field but weaker in its organic base" (French and Fortes 2005: 27). This allowed party moderates to gain distance from the party's social movement base, to de-emphasize the party's socialist programmatic platform and other more radical stances, and to embrace moderation. The party also adopted modern marketing technology, such as frequent polling, as an effort to develop more targeted appeals (Hunter 2010: 139). Attempts to install fear among potential Lula voters led Lula to release the "Letter to the Brazilian People" (da Silva 2002),

which signaled to the public (and to domestic and international market operators) the PT's commitment to work within the constraints of the prevailing economic model (Samuels 2004: 1004).<sup>243</sup> This could be seen as a part of an electoral strategy, as Hunter (2010) argues, and also as a platform to ensure governability when the PT assumed the presidency (Gómez Bruera 2013: 90). Either way, running on a platform that avoided socialist and confrontational rhetoric, Lula won 46.4 percent of the first-round vote, reaching 61.3 percent of the valid votes in the runoff election against PSDB candidate José Serra.

### *Exercise of National Governmental Power*

Once elected, Lula could not escape the general constraints of Brazilian politics: specifically, the highly fragmented nature of its political system that results from its open-list proportional representation electoral rules for legislatures (Power 2010). As when the PT started to accumulate local experiences of municipal administration, the PT came to national-level executive power with a weak position in both legislative chambers (Gómez Bruera 2013: 85, 91; also Hunter 2010: 147). As French and Fortes (2005: 28) note, “although the PT won the largest share of seats in the Chamber of Deputies, the Left was still outnumbered by Center-Right parties in the National Congress.” In such a weak parliamentary position, the PT could have opted to mobilize its social movement base—that is, to mobilize its base to promote at least certain progressive reforms by putting pressure on the legislative branch. However, the PT did not do so (Gómez Bruera 2013: 91, 92).<sup>244</sup> The main roadblock was the PT moderates, who

---

<sup>243</sup> According to Gómez Bruera (2013), the letter was “drafted by a small group of leaders within Lula’s entourage” (90) and lacked intraparty consensus before it was presented to the public. As such, many within the party saw it as an imposition from the top (fn. 24, p. 188).

<sup>244</sup> This was the strategy promoted by the most radical leftist factions within the PT, which had been marginalized from the party leadership since the mid-1990s. The opponents were the members of Campo Majoritário representing party moderates.

rejected mobilization because of “a fear of political and social instability” (Gómez Bruera 2013: 93). It is also plausible that a mobilization was not instigated because the party’s union and social movement base was not seen as having enough strength and mobilizational capacity to support such a strategy (Gómez Bruera 2013: 94). Driven by a moderate agenda, the Lula administration opted to engage in broad alliances across the political spectrum in order to ensure a parliamentary majority that would allow the PT-led government to pass its moderate initiatives in Congress and “get things done.”

Since Lula assumed the presidency, the PT has had a difficult time satisfying its social movement allies (Hunter and Power 2007). The orthodox macroeconomic policies, the lack of significant reform in health and education, and the timid approach to land reform (Hunter 2010: 148-149, 152, 153), together with the lack of creative forms of empowered popular participation initiatives at the national level (Samuels 2008), has led to “increasing conflict with, and isolation from, its base of support among social movements” (Baiocchi and Checa 2007: 411). This is not to say that the PT lacked mechanisms of participation at the national level, however, or to deny that there have been significant advances in term of the orientation of policies to the benefit of majorities, such as greater social protection, rising wages, and increased investment in education (Pogrebinschi 2012; French and Fortes 2012). Nevertheless, critics in academia, commentators on the Left, and PT moderates seem to agree that the PT-led government has not generated incentives to promote active grassroots participation in national decision-making (Gómez Bruera 2013: 120).

If the participation of grassroots actors in the formulation of policies has not been encouraged, their ability to block or modify government policy has been even less evident under the PT governments. The process of the passage of a highly contentious Social Security Reform



*(Reforma da Previdência)* illustrates this point. Put on the agenda as a way to reduce the structural deficit in Brazil's pension system, the PT proposal directly clashed with the interests of public service trade unions, a well-organized group within the Unified Workers' Central (CUT) and within the PT's base of support (Hunter 2010: 151; Hunter and Power 2005: 131). Although CUT leaders initially took a conciliatory approach and tried to negotiate with the government some of the sensitive issues of its proposal, "public sector unions ... took a hard line, formally requesting that the bill be withdrawn from Congress and eventually voting for a general strike" (Gómez Bruera 2013: 141). This forced the CUT leadership to support the strike, even though the CUT as an organization would not encourage demonstrations. Despite protests organized by public servants in Brasilia, "the government prevailed over the vociferous objections of important historical constituencies within the PT" (Hunter 2010: 151). The reform was passed in Congress with little modification in response to the pressures from below, even though it included "numerous concessions" made to other parties in Congress that were central "to obtain legislative backing" (Hunter and Power 2005: 131). The passage of a top-down reform that directly collided with the interests of a well-organized historical constituency was facilitated by the party's bureaucratized and centralized structure, two of the characteristics of its "genetic model."<sup>245</sup>

The Social Security Reform would not be the only instance where pressures from below did not force the party leadership to change its moderate policy orientation. A number of additional times social movements and minority groups that joined the PT during its formative phase "actively opposed the construction of large infrastructure projects" (Gómez Bruera 2013:

---

<sup>245</sup> A mechanism used by the PT was the punishment of dissidence. Those who refused agree to the proposal were expelled from the party. According to Nogueira-Budny (2013: 126-127), the mechanism of tight control over the party membership began shortly after the PT's foundation.

134) that directly affected their living conditions. For the most part, these challenges were placed on the grounds of environmental concerns. The PT-led governments have to a large extent succeeded in defending large infrastructure projects, despite this opposition. In general, the PT administrations have been impervious to challenges from below. Certainly, social movements allied with the PT have obtained some benefits from their association with the PT. While the MST achieved little progress in terms of land reform (Ondetti 2008), other movements have achieved increases in the minimum wage, and some advances in trade union legislation (Gómez Bruera 2013: 154, 162). In both of these instances, however, allied social movements did not mobilize autonomously; rather, they were called on by the PT leadership to show strength to opposition groups in Congress and skeptics within the party. Overall, as Gómez Bruera argues, “whenever significant changes took place the initiative of the party in government was by and far the main driving force. Under the PT administration it was the party in public office, and Lula in particular, that established the main tactics and strategies” (Gómez Bruera 2013: 163).

### ***Summary***

Some of the characteristics of the PT’s “genetic model” have had important implications for the party’s long-term trajectory. Specifically, the PT adopted in its formative moments a mass bureaucratic pattern of organization with hierarchical decision-making structures and strict party discipline, which would then facilitate the concentration of power. In addition, the fact that it gained national-level power after extensive experience at subnational levels (with coalition building) and with a highly professionalized campaign (rather than as a product of mobilization tactics), and that it inherited a weak position within Congress when coming to power in a context of low-intensity mobilization, have determined the party’s trajectory. Once in power, the party

did not instigate mobilizational strategies, pursuing instead a coalition-building strategy that had proven beneficial during earlier experiences.

This suggests that certain dimensions of the party's past can exert important pressures for the types of participatory projects and agendas parties can carry out once they are in power at the national level. The PT's "genetic model" is one of strong links with social movement allies that initially emphasized grassroots participation, but also one that has facilitated, even if unintentionally, the concentration of power at the top. The realization of this can not only be attributable to the "genetic model" but also to the party's experience in the rise to national-level power, particularly the experience of government at the subnational level. Although with the passage of time the PT has not completely sidelined its social movement allies, it has tended to suppress proactive social mobilization and to encourage the consolidation of a party leadership with increasing levels of autonomy (Ribeiro 2008; also 2014).

### **The Broad Front**

The development of the Broad Front (FA) is similar to that of the PT in several ways. Its roots can be traced to the 1960s, when diverse actors on the left—including labor leaders, established left parties, social movements, splinters of traditional parties, urban guerrilla organizations, and intellectuals—converged on the idea of creating a popular front. Unity was achieved by 1971, two years before a coup ushered in 12 years of military authoritarian rule. Similar to the PT, the FA spent most of its formative period in opposition to an authoritarian regime (1973-1984), becoming an opposition party during the post-authoritarian period (1985-2004) and then gaining national-level power in the 2004 presidential election and reelection in 2009. Over the period since its creation, the FA has progressively been transformed from a "labor-based" "mass party" into a type of party with a broader social base that approximates the

“electoral-professional” model (Luna 2014: 175). Unlike the PT, however, it has developed since its origins a type of organization that creates incentives and opportunities for power dispersion, and one that encourages grassroots input and mobilized participation. Notably, it has maintained such a structure even after the party assumed governmental power at the national level (Pribble 2008: 92, 94).

### ***Origins and Formative Phase***

Founded in 1971 “as a coalition of five fractions that included Communists, Socialists, Christian-democrats, sectors spitting from both traditional parties, and leftist independents” (Luna 2006: 416) and reflecting its diverse origins, the party initially had a fractionalized structure, and became a place of convergence for many groups on the Left with different organizational identities (Giorgi 2011). Although the number of fractions has fluctuated over time (Caetano et al. 2003: 15), the four major ones include the Communist Party (PC), the Socialist Party (PS), the Popular Participation Movement (MPP), and the Uruguay Assembly (AU). All four have leaders with varied origins, organizational structures, and grassroots following (Luna 2014: 179-180, 192-196). The early adoption of a fractionalized structure, which is a central feature of the party’s “genetic model” that was kept alive during the military authoritarian period, has created incentives against the centralization of power in several ways. Specifically, it has forced competing fractions to engage in internal negotiations before reaching decisions, and it has created incentives for competition for party leadership. According to Pribble (2008: 95), “This internal competition, in turn, presents political elites with incentives to build organic ties with base organizations so as to institutionalize each fraction’s power.” Pribble argues that this situation “leads to the strengthening of [intraparty] mechanisms for consultation

and participation.”

The FA was not formed *by* social movements, but it has maintained close links with organized labor and the student movement, and it has drawn extensive support from them since its early years. These early connections were crucial for the party to develop an organizational and an activist base during military authoritarian period, when some groups within the party led clandestine opposition to the military regime. Although party builders respected the relative autonomy of mass organizations and social movements, it was clear at the time of the creation of the FA that the Communist Party had significant influence in the labor movement, and that the Socialist Party had more influence among the student movement and the urban-intellectual strata (Luna 2006: 416). According to Luna (2006), moreover, the FA developed early on a “historical brotherhood” with organized labor, which is visibly “manifested in the party’s adoption of the union peak organization’s platform as the keystone of its historical programmatic bases,” in “the continuous interaction between union and party leaders,” and in “the use of the union movement as a transmission belt for the party” (Luna 2006: 417). In addition, the relationship between organized labor and the party can be observed in the social composition and evolution of the FA’s parliamentary group, which has a significant presence of union leaders in key positions (Luna 2014: 181). Over time, however, the labor movement has progressively gained autonomy from the FA, particularly from the PC and the PS, and became more radicalized in relation to the party leadership (Luna 2014: 182). This last factor would then become a source of conflict between the party and its social movement base when the FA made the transition to administering local governments.

Since its origins, the FA sought to be an internally democratic party. Accordingly, it developed an organization with multiple rules and mechanisms of consultation between base

organizations and the party elite (Pribble 2008: 93). These would provide a degree of institutionalization of grassroots input over party platforms, electoral strategies, government plans, and policy orientations (Pribble 2008: 94). It would also provide the party leadership with incentives to seek broad-based consensus when making decisions (Caetano et al. 2003: 9). This last point is especially important, as the FA (unlike the PT) introduced an internal electoral system requiring absolute majorities, which further complicates decision-making and reduces the autonomy of the leadership (Caetano et al. 2003: 15, 16). Although the degree of consultation and deliberation has tended to decrease over time, “the party continues to hold-on to some characteristics from its origins” (Pribble 2008: 92). These mechanisms have allowed the FA to maintain close links with its original leftist base of support, and to promote mobilized participation of allied groups. The parallel construction of a national network of territorial base committees as spaces for deliberation and collective decision-making has also allowed the party to generate a large and committed activist base. Taken together, these two elements would define the party’s project of popular empowerment as it struggled to gain national power.

### ***The Road to Power: Legislative Opposition and Local Government***

The FA first ran for office in the 1971 presidential election and received close to 20 percent of the vote (Lanzaro 2011). The party then spent eleven of its formative years under military authoritarian rule, “with zero access to public office, very little access to media, and the pervasive threat of arrest and exile” (Van Dyck 2013: 373). In clandestine opposition, the FA developed a strong organizational foundation that allowed the party to survive and then to become an important actor in the pacted transition. The FA’s organizational strength was clearly visible in 1983, when Uruguay democratized. The FA received 21.3 percent of the vote in the

ensuing 1984 election.<sup>246</sup> As with the PT, the FA did not come to national-level power rapidly after its foundation. The electoral expansion of the party was slow, gradual, and built on solid organizational foundations. Its vote share grew steadily at the local and the national levels. Its presidential candidate since 1994, Tabaré Vázquez, only won the 2004 presidential elections after several attempts. Along the way, the FA went from being predominantly urban-based to reaching out to rural areas and increasingly catchall in orientation. By the time it captured the presidency, the FA was a highly institutionalized and professionalized leftist party.

As in the case of the PT, the experience in the legislative opposition, and the governing experience at the subnational level contributed to the FA's electoral growth. The long-standing role as an opposition party in Congress allowed the party to develop a strategy aimed at differentiating itself from Uruguay's dominant parties, the Blancos and the Colorados, which had dominated Uruguayan politics for almost two centuries. This occurred in a context where the Import Substitution Industrialization (ISI) model was in crisis, and parties in power were seeking to engage in neoliberal reforms. In that context, the most visible manifestation of the FA's differentiation was the anti-neoliberal orientation of its representatives, who became a veto coalition largely due to the party's organizational structure and mobilizing capacity. It defended the interests of the ISI beneficiaries. This last element allowed representatives in Congress "to mount aggressive resistance to proposed [market-oriented] legislation" proposed by the dominant parties while preserving party discipline in Congress (Pribble 2008: 96).

Also similar to the PT, the experience in legislative opposition gradually strengthened the party's position in representative institutions, served as an "institutional school" for its

---

<sup>246</sup> The Colorado Party, which won the election, received 41.2 percent of the vote and the National Party received 35 percent.

representatives and strengthened its participation in institutional struggles. It also allowed the party to present itself in the national arena as a credible political alternative. As social discontent with the dominant parties and their policies grew over time, all of these elements would be crucial for the FA's electoral success in the presidential election of 2004.

That the FA was successful in opposing several reformist attempts had much to do with the cohesiveness of its congressional delegation, but also with institutional factors that facilitated the mobilization of its grassroots base. The use of mechanisms of direct democracy made it possible for the FA to build coalitions of grassroots actors and challenge reformist attempts in areas such as the privatization of public companies, the reform of the social security system, the budget for public education, and even the time limits for labor claims (Altman 2002: 619). Among some social groups, the FA's opposition to reform strengthened the party's position as a credible alternative to the status quo. In addition, the frequent mobilization of activists in attempts to block neoliberal reforms through direct democracy devices at the national level allowed the FA to maintain a vibrant activist base between elections.

At the time that the FA consolidated its position as an alternative to Uruguay's dominant parties and became a powerful actor resisting reform attempts, the FA embraced ideological moderation, even if it did not abandon its commitment to a statist model (Yaffé 2005: 95). According to Luna (2014: 252), the party gradually "changed from a Marxist mass party to an electoral-professional one [...] while still providing consistent opposition to neoliberal reforms." There are several explanations for this. According to Cason (2000), Uruguay's 1996 constitutional reform, which instituted presidential runoffs, forced the party leadership to engage in pragmatic alliance making to broaden the party's constituency. According to Luna (2014), the FA's ideological moderation began earlier in the 1990s in response to both electoral constraints



and the constraints of the party's internal structures. The electoral constraints are associated with the idea that neoliberal reforms had imposed limits on radical leftist platforms. Internally, the shift toward the ideological center was a consequence of both the internal balance of power within the FA, which after the fall of the Berlin Wall favored the moderate party fractions (led by Tabaré Vázquez) in relation to the more radical fractions (broadly led by Danilo Astori), and contributed to the election of moderate *frenteampelistas* in city government (Luna 2007). If the party's central challenge was to perform well electorally at the national level while maintaining strong links to its core constituency of unions and other civil society organizations, elected officials at the local level needed to signal voters they could govern effectively while defending its historical commitments.

As with the PT, local experiences of public administration also led to a focus on electoral and institutional activity as opposed to the strengthening of mobilizational and extra institutional strategies. The increasing experience of *frenteampelista* mayors (Tabaré Vázquez, and Mariano Arana) governing Montevideo contributed to their pragmatism in office and to the strengthening of their position in intraparty affairs, which allowed them to circumvent organizational constraints and steer the FA toward the center. All this did not necessarily sever the relationships between the party and its union and social movement base, however. Indeed, as Luna (2014) notes, this governmental experience also contributed to the strengthening of the links between the party and grassroots actors by developing a “close to the people administration” (246) in Uruguay's capital.<sup>247</sup> To achieve this, it implemented an administrative decentralization process that enabled activists in local committees to engage meaningfully in public deliberations and in

---

<sup>247</sup> That Montevideo is the country's largest district and home to about half the electorate meant that even though participatory experiences were less ambitious in Uruguay than in Brazil some of these experiments engaged a proportionally larger population, and were thus more salient.

social policy provision, bringing them increasingly closer to the state. According to Luna's (2014) interview evidence, this helped the urban poor to mobilize between elections, to promote grassroots input in regards to resource allocation, and to expand the territorial reach of the organization. The influence of the party's "genetic model," which placed heavy emphasis on consultation with the bases, shaped not only these experiences of local participation but also the governing dynamics. In several occasions, the *frenteamplista* governments of Montevideo clashed with unions over aspects of policy when their interests were not taken into account (Luna 2006: 417).

A tension became apparent: while the growing power of moderates within the FA and the ensuing move toward the ideological center would appear to point in the direction of centralization of party structures, the FA's promotion of grassroots input and the labor movement-party dynamics in power would point in the direction of power dispersion.

The tensions between these two logics increased as the FA pursued national-level power. Unlike the PT, the Frente did not develop a cohesive dominant coalition that could control the organization from the top. Its internal voting system prevented the emergence of such a configuration, as noted above. This contrast is worthy of further elaboration. Given the FA's diverse origins, from the beginning its leaders sought to develop an internal system of checks and balances to promote consensus building and prevent power concentration and entrenchment. In this spirit, it established early on the criterion of absolute majorities for deciding on certain issues such as the inclusion of new groups into the party (Caetano et al. 2003: 16). This form of decision-making, which is generally considered slower and less efficient than simple plurality systems, has become even slower as the FA has added more layers by progressively

incorporating new groups into its structures.<sup>248</sup>

The FA's most important bodies for deliberation and consultation are the National Council (*Plenario Nacional*, NC) and the Political Committee (*Mesa Política*, PC). While the former performs more of a deliberative role and one of its key functions is to develop the FA's governing plan, the latter is the political arm of the party and performs more of a monitoring and oversight function. The party is also made up of small-scale territorial units, known as base committees (*Comités de Base*), which have proliferated since the mid-1980s and forge close links with the party's rank and file. The leadership of the NC is elected every five years (two years before the presidential elections) through a system of open primaries, and it assumes the representation of both party fractions and base committees. Its hierarchical structure is comprised of "the president and vice president of the party, 72 representatives of the distinct fractions and groups that make up the party, 36 representatives from the Montevideo local committees, 36 representatives from the departmental committees, and six citizen-militants" (Pribble 2008: 93). This mixed system of representation has prevented control by one dominant group. Over time, however, it has tended to over-represent the fractions that invest more heavily in territorial strategies (Caetano et al. 2003: 17).<sup>249</sup>

Despite this tendency, party institutions have remained important in internal negotiations. The characteristics of the party's procedures and voting system meant that internal changes—like

---

<sup>248</sup> The PT also adopted a strict majoritarian structure in its formative phase (Nogueira-Budny 2013: 125), but unlike the FA it deepened its commitment to majoritarianism in internal reforms down the road. For instance, in 2001 the party introduced a simple plurality internal voting system (Amaral 2010: 145-156). As a consequence of this internal change, "a simple majority in a direct vote for the leadership is sufficient to impose the line of the dominant group (with a minimum of subsequent amendments) on the entire party" (Ribeiro 2014: 111).

<sup>249</sup> Historically, there has been routinized alternation of power within the party. However, since the MPP gained control of the leadership in 2002 there has been less alternation, which points in the direction of centralization.

the move toward the ideological center and the scope of electoral alliance making—were slow processes; they were also intensely debated and challenged by the more radical fractions. While amidst these transformations unions remained confrontational and occasionally disruptive, the moderate FA leadership sought to strengthen electoral alliances instead of mobilizing the party’s organic base to grow electorally.<sup>250</sup>

Its commitment to institution building became apparent in 2002, when the party supported the incumbent “at a time when it could have forced his removal by promoting street riots like those seen in Argentina” (Luna 2014: 244). Confronting an adverse domestic situation, the FA built electoral alliances with like-minded parties of the left and with other center-left forces that contributed to the FA’s gradual electoral success. The most visible of these alliances was in 2002, when New Majority (NM), which included splinter groups from the traditional parties and of the FA itself, merged with the FA and contested elections together (Yaffé 2005: 105).

### ***Exercise of National Governmental Power***

As with the PT, by the time the FA came to power it had already become a more professional organization and had abandoned its more radical Marxist and anti-capitalist rhetoric. Unlike the PT however, in 2005 it enjoyed a much stronger position in Congress (Lanzaro 2011). This meant that the FA could pursue its historical commitments without facing an intransigent legislative opposition. It also meant that to get things done the FA did not have to engage in deal-making with conservative parties, and that it did not have to mobilize its social base to put

---

<sup>250</sup> The alliance making strategy had started earlier, when Vázquez formed the Progressive Encounter (EP) in 1994 as an effort to build “a macro-center-left coalition” for the 1994 election (Luna 2014: 244-245). EP was formed by splinter groups of the two traditional parties, as well as by fractions within the FA itself that had separated from it. Between 1994 and 2005, FA-EP contested elections alongside as allies.

pressure on Congress. Thus, the key for understanding the Frente's policy-making dynamics appears to lie more in the internal power struggles and negotiations among the actors that constitute the FA than in the halls of Congress. Although the FA has a dense set of formal rules and structures that regulate internal affairs (Caetano et al. 2003: 15-20), popular leaders like Tabaré Vázquez and José "Pepe" Mujica have often managed to circumvent these when they deemed it necessary for the office-seeking success of the party (Luna 2014).

As with the PT, internal party organs are well institutionalized, but for the most part they do not generate policies or relevant decisions beyond defining the contours of the government program. It is therefore more useful to look at the relations between the FA and its constitutive units for insight into how decision-making processes actually work. According to Huber and Stephens (2012: 203), the close relations between the FA and organized interest groups meant that policy initiatives under the FA have "tended to be more sweeping in some areas" such as in health-sector reform and in labor relations, but also were "heavily constrained in others (education reform) where their allied unions were stakeholders." In other words, under the FA governments, policy-making appears to be highly negotiated inside the governing coalition and not an imposition from the top. Policy-making under the FA requires consultation and consensus building among a wide array of organizations, a pattern that is embedded in the party's "genetic model." The balance of power among competing actors within the FA can reduce the options for government proposals and can put limits on centralized decision-making. In addition, the extent to which grassroots groups can influence policy varies significantly across policy areas.

Bogliaccini (2012) provides further insight on these last points through his analysis of tax reform and labor reform under the FA governments. These reforms showcase the strength of the FA's historical alliance with organized labor, and how this gave leverage to labor in shaping

decisions that directly affected their interests. The tax reform was one of the most important policy reforms of the FA, which can be seen as an attempt to fulfill a central aspect of the Frente's campaign promises since the 1990s (Bogliaccini 2012: 156). Submitted to Congress by President Vázquez and Economy Ministry Astori, the government initiative triggered harsh internal divisions among the fractions that comprise the FA, which have different redistributive preferences and grassroots following. This led to six months of intense negotiations inside the governing coalition and often involved strikes and demonstrations in the streets. It was opposition from within, particularly organized labor in alliance to the MPP fraction led by Pepe Mujica, what slowed down and constrained the reform process, as neither opposition parties nor organized business represented a significant obstacle to the FA (Bogliaccini 2012: 158). The result was a reform that included the input and incorporated the preferences of organized labor, even if it also introduced elements pushed from the top by Vázquez (Bogliaccini 2012: 161).

The dynamics of labor reform were different, but they also help to show the extent to which internal structures can prevent power concentration and how decisions are actually made. In that instance, labor was instrumental in bringing the reinstatement of wage councils into the legislative agenda (Bogliaccini 2012: 148). These had been suspended during the right-wing administration of Lacalle (1990-1995), and were not modified during the administrations of Sanguinetti (1995-2000) and of Battle (2000-2005). Coming from labor, the proposal to reinstate wage councils did not generate strong divisions inside the FA and was instead passed quickly after it was sent to Congress, since it reflected the consensus among groups within the FA. The reinstatement of wage councils, which was an instance where the grassroots shaped the agenda, can be seen as a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it "achieved not only a more coordinated process of wage setting and an improvement of wages, but also an increase in

unionization” (Huber and Stephens 2012: 186). It has also increased the ability of labor to shape political decisions collectively, and to institutionalize grassroots input on decision-making. On the other hand, critics can see such pattern of institutionalized participation as promoting the demobilization of allied groups.<sup>251</sup>

The image of demobilization was only partially accurate, however. According to Pribble (2008: 94), “during the party’s first experience ruling the country at the national level, there have been several instances in which FA base organizations have opposed government policy and called for a different course of action.” An example of this includes the mobilizations against the free trade agreement with the United States, which forced Vázquez to abandon the negotiations. According to Pribble’s interviews there is also an important degree of consultation in the area of social policy, and a principled resistance to technocratic decision-making. While the passage of time and experience in government may have led to a decrease of “organic” consultation with base organizations, this aspect “continues to be a defining characteristic and has important effects for policy outputs since the government cannot rely on autonomy from the party when formulating proposals” (Pribble 2008: 94).

### ***Summary***

Some of the characteristics of the Frente’s “genetic model” have had a long-lasting impact on its developmental trajectory. The FA emerged from plural origins and adopted early on a fractionalized structure with a proportional electoral system and created incentives for power dispersion that (1) are deeply embedded in the party’s DNA, and that (2) have influenced the party’s behavior over time. The accumulated experience at the subnational level had the

---

<sup>251</sup> This critique comes mostly from the Communist Party, whose representatives seem to be “unwilling to abandon the capitalist critique” (Bogliaccini 2012: 164), and see such policies as “reformist.”

short-term effect of strengthening party moderates, who would use their new power to circumvent party structures and steer the Frente's platform toward the center as a part of an office-seeking strategy. This strategy allowed the party to grow electorally in a gradual and sustained manner. The experience of local administration also contributed to the increasing pragmatism of FA leaders, who once in local-level office projected an image of responsible government and willingness to compromise with other forces.

At the same time, however, FA leaders in office did not abandon their historical commitments to their base of support in labor and other civil society organizations. The leaders instead mobilized them between elections through direct democracy devices. That the FA maintained a "brotherhood" with unions and social movements became clear when it came to power at the national level in 2005. While the party enjoyed a strong legislative position in both chambers, the biggest challenge to policy-making came from within. The party's "genetic model" is one of close links with labor unions and social movement allies, and one that has created incentives for the leadership to seek broad-based consensus before reaching decisions. While the passage of time and experience in government may have encouraged the emergence of a cohesive party elite with increasing levels of autonomy that can often circumvent party structures and resist pressures from below, policy-making under the FA still encourages grassroots input and requires a substantial deal of intraparty negotiation.

### **Comparing the Cases**

What insights does this comparative historical analysis yield? On the basis of an examination of three left parties with close links to movements, unions, and other popular organizations in Latin America, we can say that certain dimensions of a party's past can have lasting implications for the party's long-term development and for the types of participatory



projects and agendas parties can carry out once they are in power at the national level. Specifically, elements embedded in their “genetic model,” historical factors associated with their roads to power, and structural factors associated with their power base matter a great deal, for they put left parties in distinctive organizational trajectories. When combined, these three elements create particular sets of incentives and constraints for organization building and for the promotion (or not) of grassroots participation in the political process when these parties govern.

Left parties with close ties to organized popular constituencies vary in the degree to which their internal structures disperse power (Levitsky and Roberts 2011: 12). Parties can be said to disperse power when their internal structures both (1) put limits on the exercise of power by the party leadership, and (2) encourage grassroots participation and input on collective decision-making. Notwithstanding some salient differences, the MAS in Bolivia and the FA in Uruguay are examples of organizations whose internal structures disperse power among their grassroots support base. They are also examples of party organizations in which the party leadership often finds itself needing to consult and negotiate with a wide array of competing intraparty constituencies and of organizations that allow social mobilization from below to occur. By contrast, the internal structures of the PT in Brazil have facilitated the concentration of power among a small group of political elites and have given rise to an increasingly autonomous and unaccountable party elite. The PT is also an example of a party that has gradually suppressed social mobilization from below, a classic case of a movement-based party that confirms the triumph of party oligarchization. This variation, as I argue in the pages that follow, is rooted in their distinctive origins, experiences before coming to power, and structural conditions.

### ***Historical Elements***

#### ***Origins and Internal Structures***

All three parties emerged in different historical periods: the FA in the early 1970s, the PT in the early 1980s, and the MAS in the mid-1990s. They were also formed under different types of regimes: the FA at the beginning of an authoritarian regime, the PT in the latter years of a military dictatorship, and the MAS during a formally democratic regime. Yet, despite the different historical contexts and regime types in which they were founded, all three have quite similar roots in organized civil society: all three were formed as labor- or movement-based parties seeking to represent the interests of previously marginalized groups. Since their inception, they have sought to build internally democratic organizations to permit broad-based channels of consultation and coordination between their constitutive units in base organizations and the party leadership. In short, all three parties approximated the “organic” model of party development in their formative phase: they emphasized grassroots organization; they forged close relationships with mass organizations, social movements, and community-based organizations while respecting their relative autonomy; and they participated in elections while at the same time engaging in contentious bargaining in the pursuit of programmatic goals.

Two elements embedded in their distinctive “genetic model” are worth further elaboration. The first element relates to the bureaucratic development of each party (i.e. bureaucratic vs. loose). The second relates to the initial level of centralization (i.e. the extent to which internal structures generated incentives for grassroots consultation, and the effects of their internal voting rules on intra party affairs). Despite being plural in its origins, the PT developed a bureaucratic pattern of organization with a clearly defined code of rights and duties for party members, and effective bureaucracies of enforcement. This allowed the party to survive in an adverse context. While party founders envisioned a decentralized organization characterized by bottom-up leadership and decision-making structures, its original internal structures pushed the

party in a centralizing direction. Subsequent internal rule changes such as the use of direct elections for the selection of party authorities (to be elected by the direct vote of members) and the introduction of a simple plurality voting system for intra-party affairs since 2001, have further aggravated preexisting hierarchies and facilitated the control of a dominant faction over the life of the party.

Also diverse in its origins, the FA developed early on a bureaucratic organization with clearly defined membership rights and obligations, and one with dense rules and mechanisms that promoted institutionalized grassroots participation. Over time, party rules and procedures have remained important for grassroots consultation and for internal negotiation between fractions in search of majorities. Unlike the PT, moreover, the FA's internal voting system has prevented the possibilities for control by a dominant fraction within the party, even if the routinized alternation of the leadership in national bodies has tended to decrease in recent years.

Finally, the MAS emerged out of the autonomous social mobilization of vibrant social movements and a rich tradition of participatory politics found in local communities and base organizations. In keeping with these features, the MAS promoted grassroots participation by engaging in regular consultations between the leadership and its grassroots base in what is a decentralized and loose structure (on these points, see also Harten 2011: 69–70). Moreover, since its early days it has resisted bureaucratization developing neither clearly defined membership rights and obligations nor effective bureaucracies to ensure that these are met systematically.

### ***Roads to National Power***

The degree of power concentration can also be explained by the parties' distinctive roads to national-level power, and by the broader context in which they assumed national office.

Table 5.1 shows that all three parties underwent some sort of ideological moderation, from an advocacy of socialism to a more pragmatic position of reforming capitalism to protect the interests of the underprivileged. This move toward the center, which varied in intensity among the cases, was as a reflection of an office-seeking strategy and a result of their experience in subnational governments. In the process, as the table also shows, they have all increased their pragmatism and expanded the scope of their alliances, often pushing their internal structures in the direction of power concentration.

Table 5.6 Dimensions for Comparison Across Cases

	<b>Ideological moderation</b>	<b>Broader Alliance Making</b>	<b>Concentration of Power</b>		<b>De(mobilization)</b>	
			Before assuming national power	After assuming national power	Before assuming national power	After assuming national power
<b>MAS</b>	Medium	High	Medium	Medium	Low	Medium
<b>PT</b>	High	High	High	High	Medium	High
<b>FA</b>	High	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium

These similarities, however, mask important differences across the cases. The PT and the FA gained national-level power after extensive experience at subnational and legislative levels,

while the MAS had far less experience operating within these institutions.<sup>252</sup> The experience at the local level in the first two cases had the effect of strengthening party moderates, who would use their increased power to centralize authority. The extent to which they could do so varied considerably. Often leading minority governments, PT mayors could circumvent internal opposition and engage in broad alliances across the ideological spectrum in order to “get things done.” Constrained by its historical allies, the FA resisted this pattern and generally allied with like-minded forces on the left. Although the experience in local government led to a focus on institutional strategies as opposed to a strengthening of the social movements, a situation that pointed their structures in the direction of power concentration, both parties promoted broad-based citizen involvement, pointing in the direction of power dispersion. Participatory programs at the municipal level were far less ambitious in Uruguay than in Brazil (Cameron, Hershberg, and Sharpe 2012). Nevertheless, their implementation took place in Uruguay’s capital, which helped to foster a “close to the people administration” in a politically important locale (Luna 2014: 246).

The PT and the FA came to power when social mobilization was not in ascent, unlike the case when the MAS gained power in Bolivia. The first two followed a broadly similar “institutional path” to national office (Levitsky and Roberts 2011). Both parties “participated regularly in elections, gaining representation in legislatures and municipal governments” and they contended power “within relatively institutionalized party systems that contained strong centrist and conservative parties” (Levitsky and Roberts 2011: 405, 406). By the time they gained national power, both parties had professionalized and well institutionalized party

---

<sup>252</sup> Levitsky and Roberts (2011: 406) argue that the MAS followed a “crisis-outsider” path to power, but the argument is insufficiently nuanced and it overlooks the shorter, but still relevant experience of the MAS in representative institutions and municipal governments prior to its ascent to national power.

structures developed over long years in opposition (Hunter 2010). They varied in the extent to which their internal structures concentrated or dispersed power, however. By the time the PT captured the presidency it had far more centralized structures (under the control of the moderate Campo Majoritário faction led by Lula) than when the FA assumed national power. The Frente's internal rules discouraged control by a dominant group.

In addition, the ascent to power of the PT and the FA was not the product of sustained social mobilization. Rather, according to Levitsky and Roberts (2011: 406), it took place “via routine turnover, in a context where democratic institutions were not in crisis,” which meant that their access to power was not premised on doing away with the existing order and re-founding of the state, unlike Bolivia. While this is generally accurate, it fails to capture notable differences in terms of the institutional position they inherited once they captured national office. This is also important because it shaped the organizational structures of these governing parties in ways that encouraged diverging patterns of power concentration or dispersion.

That the FA won a legislative majority in both chambers meant that it did not face incentives to find centrist coalitional partners to get things done, and that it could maintain strong ties to labor unions and other grassroots groups. The most salient governing challenge, therefore, came from within its own political camp. Internal dynamics encouraged Frente governments to negotiate potentially controversial reforms and policy initiatives with the party's factions, thereby generating incentives and opportunities in the direction of dispersion. By contrast, the PT came to power with a much weaker position in Congress. This meant that one of the biggest governing challenges was to generate a legislative majority to pass laws. And so the PT responded to divided government by engaging in pragmatic alliance making with parties of the Center and even the Center-Right—a pattern it had found useful in its experiences of local

administration, and one that could only be pursued once the more radical factions committed to bottom-up politics had declined in influence. Ultimately, this need to maintain coalitional deals pushed its internal structures toward further centralization and eroded connections to grassroots allies (for a parallel argument, see Handlin and Collier 2011: 157–158).

The MAS captured national office when social mobilization was in ascent (as it would have been the case had the PT won the 1989 or the 1994 election), and in a context of widespread crisis (Silva 2009: 142-143). This situation gave Morales and the MAS not only an incentive for policy reform, but also “a mandate for radical change” (Levitsky and Roberts 2011: 408) that would shape their ways of relating to the grassroots.

Indeed, the MAS won national-level power by promising to convene a constituent assembly that would re-write the country’s constitution and re-create the Bolivian state, a task for which social mobilization tactics would be essential to overcome the resistance from the guardians of the old order. This was far from the agenda in Brazil and Uruguay. Although the MAS gained office by a wide margin, it did not gain control of Congress<sup>253</sup> and faced a rather strong opposition that was backed by powerful economic interests in Bolivia’s Half Moon (*Media Luna*), composed by the eastern departments of Tarija, Pando, and Beni, and led by the economically powerful Santa Cruz department. Once in power, the MAS responded to legislative gridlock by encouraging social mobilization from its own organizational partners. Thus, pledging that the MAS would “govern by obeying” (Anria 2010: 109), it relied on the strength and mobilization capacity of allied groups to exert pressure on the legislative branch and to counterbalance the power of political and economic elites in the *Media Luna* that threatened succession via a wide array of institutional and noninstitutional mechanisms (Eaton 2007; see

---

<sup>253</sup> The MAS won a slight majority in the lower chamber, but was particularly weak in the Senate.

also Chapter 4). This strategy to break a stalemate created incentives and opportunities for power dispersion and mobilized grassroots participation, and it was only encouraged by the crisis context in which the MAS captured office (Levitsky and Roberts 2011).

Some may also argue that domestic and external economic pressures would inevitably give rise to party oligarchy—specifically, that oligarchic tendencies might be aggravated under more stringent domestic and external economic pressures. However, economic crises and severe constraints do not have uniform effects on internal governance structures. If we take a look at ideological or policy issues, these three statements might hold true: the crisis context allowed the MAS to carry out a more “radical” project of state transformation; the absence of a crisis—but threat of potential crisis—contributed to the ideological moderation of the PT, and the aftermath of a severe crisis largely set the policy agenda for the FA in Uruguay. But policy or ideological issues do not dictate internal party governance. At one extreme, in Brazil, internal structures moved in the direction of centralization *before* the PT even made it to power. At the other extreme, in the case of the MAS in Bolivia, the crisis encouraged reliance on social mobilization strategies. This tells us that economic crises and severe constraints might have different effects, and that these are in turn contingent on previous organizational strategies that condition parties’ responses to such constraints.

### ***Structural Elements: Strength of Civil Society***

Finally, the degree of power concentration is also shaped by structural elements associated with the strength of civil society. A densely organized and mobilized society can serve as a potential power base for parties. Existing social networks and the degree of social mobilization can provide invaluable resources to political parties and contribute to their empowerment. In addition, a dense civil society can play an important party-building role by



generating pressures from below and putting limits to the authority of the party leadership. In other words, a highly organized and mobilized society is more difficult to dominate from the top.

In the absence of comparable data on union and organizational density for these three countries, one way to evaluate this issue is to look at the relationship between partisan engagement and participation in associational life (Handlin and Collier 2011: 147). Such an approach can tell us a great deal about these parties' potential for mobilization, and about the kinds of pressures from below they might confront. Using survey data from 2006-7, Handlin and Collier (2011) examine this issue by looking at union-based and community based participation and party-society linkages among left parties. They find that in Brazil the links between the governing PT and both unions and community-based organizations is surprisingly low. The proportion of PT partisans who participate in unions and in community-based organizations is presented in Tables 5.2 and 5.3 respectively. This finding is surprising given the origins and history of the PT, but unsurprising if we consider Brazil's large size and the PT's organizational development outlined above. As Handlin and Collier (2011, 151) note, "it is possible that the notion of a highly active and PT-linked civil society accurately describes some regions of the country on which monographic studies have focused but that characterization does not hold on a national level." In such a context, where associational activity on a per capita basis appears to be low, it seems more likely that oligarchic tendencies will prevail within the governing party.

Table 5.7. Importance of unions among left partisans (percent of left partisans participating in meetings of unions)

	Brazil*	Uruguay*	Bolivia
At least once a month Left partisans	5	12	31

At least once a year			
Left partisans	11	18	50

*Notes:* Data for Brazil and Uruguay are responses to the question: “Do you attend meetings of a union at least once a week, once or twice a month, once or twice a year, or never?” *Source:* LAPOP 2006-7

\* Percentages reported in Handlin and Collier (2011: 148).

Data for Bolivia reflect responses to the questions: “Do you attend meetings of an association of professionals, merchants, manufacturers or farmers at least once a week, once or twice a month, once or twice a year, or never?” and “Do you attend meetings of a grassroots territorial organization (OTB) at least once a week, once or twice a month, once or twice a year, or never?” I used this approach because LAPOP did not ask whether Bolivians attend union meetings. The term OTB is also a generic name for associations and collectivities like ayllus, neighborhood associations, and rural unions (Lucero 2008: 134).

Consequently, when combined, these two questions serve as a proxy for participation in meetings of unions. Responses were considered positive if the respondent answered affirmatively to either one of the questions, or both. In the latter case, the respondent was counted as a participant in union meetings only once.

Table 5.8. Importance of community-based organizations among left partisans (percent of left partisans participating)

	Brazil*	Uruguay*	Bolivia
At least once a month			
Left partisans	9	12	41
At least once a year			
Left partisans	18	18	65

*Notes:* Data for Brazil and Uruguay are responses to the question: “Do you attend meetings of a community or group for community improvement at least once a week, once or twice a month, once or twice a year, or never?” *Source:* LAPOP 2006-7.

\* Percentages reported in Handlin and Collier (2011: 150).

Data for Bolivia are responses to the questions: “Do you attend meetings of a community or group for community improvement at least once a week, once or twice a month, once or twice a year, or never” and “Do you attend meetings of a neighborhood association at least once a week, once or twice a month, once or twice a year, or never?” LAPOP did not ask this question in Brazil and Uruguay, but these last organizations are central to social and political life in Bolivia. Responses were considered positive if the respondent answered affirmatively to either one of the questions, or both. In the latter case, the respondent was counted as a participant in community-based organizations only once.

Uruguay reveals a different pattern. Tables 5.2 and 5.3 portray a relatively more densely organized and vibrant civil society. This should be interpreted with some caution. The proportion of FA partisans who participate in union meetings and in community-based organizations is

higher than in Brazil, but these numbers still make up a small number of those who voted for the governing left party. What is a particularly salient difference between these two cases is that the FA appears to have a stronger union-party relationship (Handlin and Collier 2011: 150). This is consistent with the arguments developed in this chapter, which showed that the FA governments often encountered intense pressures from its support base in unions. Indeed, both the Vázquez and the Mujica governments found themselves having to negotiate policies and reforms with strong labor unions, in ways that put limits to centralized decision-making and pushed the FA governments to expand participation.

A striking difference is revealed when one looks at the case of Bolivia. Levels of participation in both unions and community organizations are higher among left partisans, which indicate a densely organized society and high degrees of citizen mobilization and participation. This high rate of participation is consistent with recent characterizations of Bolivia with deep historical roots (Gray Molina 2008; Lazar 2008; Vergara 2011; Crabtree 2013). The existence of such a dense civil society has allowed the MAS to build from existing social networks and quickly grow electorally, as shown in Chapter 2, and it has also facilitated the large-scale election of representatives of grassroots organizations to Congress via their links to the MAS, as seen in Chapter 3. As Vergara states,

Since the social organizations that have helped to enhance MAS are widely expanded and have strong local presence, it is not surprising that [the] MAS has succeeded in aggregating interests from multiple levels of political competition (Vergara 2011: 83-84).

At the same time, such a robust civil society can provide fertile grounds for the generation of multiple pressures from below that can in turn disperse power and keep open channels for agenda setting from below, as shown in Chapter 4. In other words, structural characteristics associated with the strength of Bolivian civil society make power dispersion more likely.

## **Conclusion**

The analysis of the cases presented in this chapter provides evidence about how different left parties with close ties to unions, social movements, and other popular constituencies organize power when they govern, and specifically how they deal with the Michelsian tension of having to govern while maintaining grassroots input. Four elements were identified as crucial to explaining diversity within the subset of cases analyzed above: features associated with the parties' "genetic model" and early institutional development, their experience before gaining national-level power, their mode of access to power, and structural elements associated with their power base. When combined, these elements create distinctive configurations of incentives and constraints for organization building and they shape the types of participatory projects parties can pursue when in office.

In short, the success of strategies for maintaining and expanding grassroots input while governing—the degree to which they can prevent or attenuate the trend toward oligarchization—is heavily contingent on institutional, historical, and structural factors that shape and constrain the participatory projects of the Left. When seen in comparative perspective, the conditions for a shift from a more "formal" democracy to a more "participatory" democracy (Huber, Rueschemeyer, and Stephens 1997) might seem more favorable in Bolivia and Uruguay than in Brazil. The actual outcome, however, will depend on the unity, strength, and mobilizing capacity

of allied movements, and whether they manage to retain a capacity to shape the agenda and affect the making of collective decisions.

## CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

There have been several important cases of movement-based parties that rose rapidly in popularity and were able to attain national power in new democracies. This development calls for a new theoretical understanding of their internal politics, one that helps us move beyond the stereotype of an inevitable “iron law” of oligarchy toward a more nuanced understanding of new and, arguably, more fluid and participatory forms of organization. As multiple studies document, the exercise of state power creates strong incentives in the direction of power concentration, pulling party elites away from the grassroots. Whether, to what extent, and how governing movement-based parties can defy this trend has important consequences. Where they resist it more forcefully, they can enhance the voice and political influence of traditionally excluded groups and citizens, boosting their participation in organized politics. Thus, resisting oligarchization is not only important for the politics of the parties themselves, but also for creating favorable conditions that may allow for a move from “formal” democratic practices toward more “participatory” kinds of democracy (see Huber, Rueschemeyer, and Stephens 1997).

This study has examined the options for movement-based parties to challenge the trend toward oligarchization. The question of the sources of variation, both within and between parties, in terms of patterns of power distributions has been on the agenda of comparative politics for decades. Yet, despite its long lineage and importance, it remains insufficiently understood and poorly theorized. It remains central in the study of Latin America, where dominant personalities

in politics do not have a good track record when it comes to building strong organizations that can limit their power and autonomy (Huber and Stephens 2012: 266). The sudden wave of countries electing leftist governments in Latin America between 1998 and 2007 has exhibited remarkable diversity with regard to the character of their organizational bases (Cameron and Hershberg 2010). Some of the organizational bases are clear examples of movement-based parties and include, among others, the MAS in Bolivia, the PT in Brazil, the FA in Uruguay, the FMLN in El Salvador, and the FSNL in Nicaragua. This development prompted scholars to investigate patterns of power concentration or dispersion within parties in attempts to classify the existing varieties of left governments (Levitsky and Roberts 2011) and, also, to study the effect of party organizational factors on normatively important policy outcomes, like social welfare policies (Pribble 2013).

The present study has developed a framework that sheds light on the question of why some movement-based parties in Latin America develop more top-down structures designed to preserve and enhance the power of party elites, while others develop bottom-up organizations that admit more influence from the grassroots. The framework focuses on the impact of two dimensions: historical legacies and structural factors. Specifically, the analysis of the MAS provides evidence that organizational structures and practices adopted early on, the experiences before coming to power, and the mode of access to power – the historical legacies – shape organizational development down the road. They can facilitate the emergence of opposition among allied groups that check power from within and keep open channels for agenda setting from below. The strength or density of civil society organizations – a structural condition – is also influential in shaping internal party governance in ways that can potentially generate pressures from below and constraints on the exercise of power by the central leadership. Through

a comparative within-case examination of the MAS, this study identifies conditions of social and political structure where the Michelsian trend toward oligarchization does not fully hold. The MAS is a substantively important case for examining this question because it is an anomaly, a case that deviates from the established wisdom. Thus, by identifying the conditions most likely to lead to greater grassroots control over party decision-making, this study offers a series of testable hypotheses that contribute to an age-old debate in the literature on comparative political parties and, also, to the study of the Latin American left.

Parties make several decisions. Amongst the most important ones are choices with regard to the candidates who will use their label in elections and choices with regard to policies they will pursue when in power. The comparative within-case analysis of the MAS provided strong evidence of the conditions most likely to lead to greater grassroots control over these two areas of party decision-making. Chapter 3 examined the candidate selection procedures in different districts of Bolivia and at different electoral levels, finding that in contexts where civil society is strong, united, and politically aligned with the MAS, grassroots organizations can effectively impose their choices for MAS candidates. Where civil society is weakly organized, by contrast, top-down elite choices are more likely to prevail.

In the Bolivian case, greater control by grassroots organizations in candidate selection procedures has also translated into greater substantive input into policy-making. Chapter 4 examined the degree of grassroots impact on policy-making, finding that the capacity of grassroots groups to set agenda items, priorities, and actions vary by policy area and is contingent on the mobilization capacity of allied groups in civil society. In policy areas where large numbers of well-organized people are directly and visibly affected in their productive roles there is generally more popular pressure for influencing these decisions. Thus, in policy areas



such as agrarian and mining policies, some of the strongest and most influential groups that wielded power in candidate selection (like peasant groups, unions, and cooperative miners) also managed to shape the agenda and actions adopted by the party in power. In addition, Chapter 4 examined the capacity of allied groups to challenge, block, or modify party decisions, finding that where mobilized groups are able to build a broad-based veto coalition with multiple sectors of society, then the veto coalition is more likely to force a policy change. In other words, the political leverage of constituent movements is contingent on their ability to mobilize across constituencies and link their claims broadly. The main story that emerged, then, is one of a movement-based party that allows for significant influence from below. While there are clear pressures pushing toward internal power concentration, including the centrality of Morales's leadership and the logics of exercising state power, constituent movements are far from being irrelevant in shaping the party's most important decisions. Fundamentally, policy-making under Bolivia's MAS is not insulated from popular pressures. Rather, it is best characterized as a highly reactive and negotiated process open to some degree of societal input – a contentious bargaining game between the MAS in power and its constituent social movements.

### **Generalizability of the Findings**

To what extent can these findings be generalized and my theoretical framework made applicable to other cases? The lessons are two-fold. First, from the comparative within-case analysis of candidate selection, the most robust instances of grassroots control over party decision-making are in contexts or districts where there is a high density of organization and the great majority of grassroots groups are united in support of the MAS. In Bolivia, the first structural characteristic – a high level of social organization – is more likely to be observed in rural districts than in urban areas. While this characteristic may be unique to certain rural

communities in only some parts of Latin America, particularly in the Andean sub-region, the findings cannot be disregarded as irrelevant. The Bolivian model may not be immediately applicable to other countries; however, the finding that civil society strength and the nature of political alignments can shape degrees of grassroots control over candidate selection is an intriguing and testable hypothesis that can be used to study other cases with similar characteristics to those of the MAS.

Second, similar reflections can be drawn from the analysis of policy-making. The most robust instances of grassroots substantive influence are those where mobilized allied groups challenge unpopular policies and force policy changes. Success in blocking or modifying legislation is influenced first by historical legacies. The legacy of social mobilization – the fact that some of the social movements that brought the MAS to power contributed to the overthrow of unpopular governments – meant allied social movements retained considerable autonomy from the MAS, and they remained vibrant after the party gained power. Even if their leaders support or are co-opted by the party in power, the legacy of social mobilization means they cannot always guarantee the compliance of their grassroots base with the government's policies. This situation has forced the MAS to step back and negotiate important policies with the stronger and more influential movements, preventing attempts to concentrate power. Success in challenging government policies is influenced, secondly, by structural and political characteristics associated with the mobilizational capacity of allied groups, and with the nature of their political alignments between the party and civil society. This particular combination of historical and structural factors is not necessarily found in all other cases of movement-based parties. It will most likely be observed in a smaller subset of cases of young movement-based parties that (1) came to power when social mobilization was in ascent, looking more like social-

movement organizations than like established political parties, and that (2) operate in weakly institutionalized contexts. The cases of Solidarity (*Solidarność*) in Poland and the African National Congress (ANC) in South Africa are good comparative examples.

The comparative-historical analysis developed in Chapter 5 strengthened the evidentiary base for the theoretical claims about the importance of historical and structural explanations. The analysis reinforced the usefulness of the theoretical framework for understanding power distributions inside movement-based parties. As a result, there are reasons to believe it can be useful for understanding and comparing the organizational trajectories of a broader set of movement-based parties, independent of their stage of development and mode of access to power. The cases of the PT and the FA share common attributes with the MAS. All of them are left parties formed by grassroots social movements; they all came to national power after a series of failed attempts; and they were all re-elected for several consecutive terms. When compared with the MAS, however, they came to national power in a different stage of organizational development (as established parties rather than as movements), and they also experienced different organizational trajectories once in power. While over time Brazil's PT has lost much of its initial bottom-up participatory *élan*, thus experiencing a Michelsian shift in its character, the Uruguayan FA and the Bolivian MAS have maintained more vibrant grassroots linkages and have retained a more participatory ethos. In reflecting on the factors accounting for their different organizational trajectories, Chapter 5 highlighted the theoretical relevance of both historical elements (certain characteristics embedded in their "genetic" models, their experience before coming to power, the mode of access to power) and structural factors (the strength of civil society) in explaining diverging outcomes.

Overall, then, the within country and the comparative evidence presented in this study point to the need to reconsider the role that (1) early organizational development and (2) variation in density of civil society organizations play in the internal politics of governing movement-based parties. While the first analytical dimension has been broadly recognized as important in the party organization literature (Panebianco 1988), more recent research on parties largely ignores or fails to measure the significance of civil society strength. Yet, as this study has demonstrated, variation in density of civil society organization is central for understanding variation in power distributions within and between movement-based parties. Although the theoretical framework advanced in this study has been built inductively and has been based on the experiences of a small subset of cases in Latin America, it offers a first step toward more nuanced understandings of the internal dynamics of movement-based parties more generally – an approach that is likely to travel to other cases and places.

The comparison with other cases provides a good starting point for testing the explanatory power of my theoretical framework and, also, for identifying complementary explanations. There are cases, such as the ANC in South Africa, where high levels of density of civil society organizations and citizen mobilization prior to assuming power did not translate into greater grassroots control over party decision-making once in power. Part of this, as the research of Evans and Heller (2014) indicates, may have to do with the logic and degrees of domestic political competition and the exercise of undisputed (or hegemonic) power. This dimension of competition may be a relevant addition to the theoretical framework when it travels to other contexts, or when it is used to study longer-term organizational trajectories than the ones analyzed here.

## Significance of the Findings

A central contribution of this study consists in the finding that movement-based parties do not develop uniformly, following an “iron law.” Rather, they are remarkably flexible organizations whose boundaries with allied groups in civil society tend to be fluid and deliberately blurred. Movement-based parties look and operate differently in different structural contexts, based on the kinds of connections they establish with the organized social constituencies from which they draw support. This finding informs a long-standing theoretical debate over the conditions shaping power distributions inside parties, and informs more contemporary debates about the sources of variation within and between Latin American left parties, particularly those with a social movement base.

The rise to power of left parties, movements, and leaders in Latin America since 1998 has generated a variety of scholarly analyses of the causes that enabled the resurgence of the left.<sup>254</sup> Along with explaining the causes, much ink has been spilled in the development of classificatory schemes. Taking into account differences in policy orientation and attitudes toward liberal democracy, some scholars have classified the left into the “good” and the “bad” types (Castañeda 2006), while from a similar standpoint others have identified a “moderate” and a “contestatory” left (Weyland, Madrid, and Hunter 2010). This literature, which advances the “two lefts” thesis, tends to group together President Morales in Bolivia, President Chávez (and now Maduro) in Venezuela, President Correa in Ecuador, and President Ortega in Nicaragua in the “bad” or “contestatory” strand of the left, whereas the “good” left has governed in countries like Brazil (under several PT presidencies), Uruguay (under several FA presidencies), and Chile (under the

---

<sup>254</sup> See, for instance, Cleary (2006); Roberts (2007); Weyland (2009); Luna (2010); Murillo, Oliveros, and Vaishnav (2010); Baker and Greene (2011); Flores-Macías (2012); Queirolo (2013).

leadership of the *Concertación*). Other scholars have rejected the dichotomization of the left on the grounds that it does not capture the diversity within each category (Cameron and Hershberg 2010).

Using organizational factors as classification criteria, other scholars developed more empirically accurate typologies. On the one hand, for authors like Levitsky and Roberts (2011), the diverse lefts can be classified based on age of the party (or the political movement) and the degree to which it concentrates or disperses political authority. When combined, these two dimensions create four varieties of left parties: the populist left (Venezuela under Chávez and Ecuador under Correa), the populist-machine left (Argentina's PJ), the movement left (Bolivia's MAS), and the institutionalized left (Uruguay's FA, Brazil's PT, and Chile's PS). While the first two concentrate political authority in the hands of dominant leaders and have few checks from below, the last two disperse power and are more likely to be responsive to their grassroots base. On the other hand, Pribble (2013: 178) develops yet another party typology focused on two dimensions: (1) whether internal rules promote internal democracy and foster close ties with society and (2) whether parties develop programmatic or non-programmatic appeals.<sup>255</sup> When combined, these two dimensions yield four party types: constituency-mobilizing, electoral-professional, charismatic movement, and non-programmatic electoral. Both typologies represent welcome correctives to the previous classifications. They also have something in common: they distinguish the lefts on the basis of the concentration of power – whether power is concentrated in the hands of party elites, or even a single leader, versus resting in the hands of allied groups in civil society to which the leadership remains accountable. In both typologies, the movement-

---

<sup>255</sup> This typology applies to parties on *both* the left and the right.

based parties examined in this study – the MAS, the PT, and the FA – are classified as power-dispersing organizations.

Classifying those three cases as power-dispersing organizations is an important first step toward understanding emerging patterns of party-society linkage. Yet, the classification is accurate only if we look at broad national-level trends, as it only captures the *predominant* linkage strategy pursued by each party. As a result, it remains insufficiently nuanced and, in particular, may distort our understanding of what occurs at subnational levels within each party. Thus, the present study has not attempted to come up with a new classificatory scheme of left parties, but to explain the sources of variation in grassroots participation and power distributions within and between a subset of cases. The finding that structural variation in civil society strength is an important determinant of within- and between-case power distributions is theoretically of great significance. It offers insight into the question of why parties (particularly movement-based parties) operate differently in different contexts and why they invest differently in party structures across constituencies. Other authors have made similar arguments, but they have looked at the relationship between parties and voters (Luna 2014). Instead, this study has looked at the relationship between parties and organized social constituencies. The evidence and analysis suggest that the operation of parties cannot be seen as a mere reflection of formal institutional rules governing a country, nor is it simply dictated by a party's ideological orientation. While these are important, they do not fully explain sources of variation within movement-based parties, and also between them. In this way, this study refines existing arguments about the factors shaping the organization and behavior of parties. In so doing, it adds both an extra layer of nuance to the existing classifications of left parties in today's Latin

America, and an explanation of why such parties, far from being uniform actors, pursue mixed linkages with different social constituencies.

The findings presented in this study also suggest that contemporary efforts to “deepen” or “democratize” democracy, a central goal of the Latin American left (Roberts 1998: 3), are heavily conditioned by historical and structural factors. While it has been widely recognized that achievements in democratic deepening by expanding participation and enhancing government responsiveness have been modest and varied (Levitsky and Roberts 2011: 418), the combination of historical and structural factors helps to explain some of that variation. Specifically, it helps to explain why some left parties, like the PT in Brazil, have developed as more hierarchical, top-down organizations that tend to distance themselves from organized social constituencies and de-emphasize grassroots participation, whereas others, like the MAS and the FA, have managed to maintain more vibrant linkages, albeit with varying degrees of institutionalization. Out of the three cases, moreover, the MAS remains a remarkably different case of a movement-based party, whose experience seems favorable for enabling a shift from purely “formal” democratic practices to a more “participatory” form of democracy. As this study has suggested, however, whether the Bolivian left turn results into a sustained project of deepening democracy will likely depend on the continued strength, unity, and mobilizational capacity of allied groups in civil society.

The findings about the theoretical importance of civil society strength merit some additional elaboration. The present study has shown that, enabled by historical legacies and strengthened by a context of heightened social mobilization, organized actors have been crucial in keeping the MAS open to societal input and responsive to popular concerns, in ways that are not evident in the comparative cases, particularly in Brazil. Though that is the story of the MAS as of this writing, it is likely that the party, just re-elected to a third four-year presidential term,



will experience a Michelsian shift in character if it becomes a hegemonic power holder. Thus, one possible scenario is that it will become increasingly centralized, with more power in the hands of Morales and trusted individuals and less political space for democratic participation of allied social movements. This is the path followed by the ANC in South Africa, which transitioned from an anti-apartheid movement organization into being that country's undisputed governing party (Heller 2009; Marais 2011; Evans and Heller 2014). While this is a *possible* outcome, heavily driven by the logics of the exercise of undisputed (or hegemonic) power, it does not diminish the significance of the findings in this study. The analysis has specified the set of conditions that work for and against power centralization and the mechanisms that can contribute to the maintenance of vibrant party-society linkages. In looking for those attributes and patterns in the MAS the study set forth the necessary conditions for enabling greater control of the grassroots over party elites and party decision-making. Thus, the framework presented in this study sheds light on two issues related to the relationship between left parties in power and grassroots participation in contemporary Latin America: (1) why some parties with origins in (and close connections to) grassroots social movements manage this classic dilemma differently, and (2) why the same party may pursue different linkages across social constituencies and invest unevenly in party organization.<sup>256</sup>

Finally, the findings presented in this study have implications for the study of parties beyond Latin America. The pressures toward power concentration while governing are by no means unique to parties in the region. This is particularly problematic for left movement-based

---

<sup>256</sup> For an argument on why parties might invest unevenly in party organization based on a within-case study of the Brazilian PT, see Van Dyck (2014). For a broader argument based on the experiences of post-communist parties in East and Central Europe, see Tavits (2013). Both studies regard electoral considerations as the key driver for differential investments on party organization.

parties, which, at least in principle, tend to emphasize grassroots participation as an organizational project, and as a way of boosting popular sovereignty in the making of decisions. Whether they can remain open to societal input once they form governments has been the subject of heated debates among students of parties, especially the Greens. The experiences of these parties in power has shown that success in achieving and maintaining vibrant grassroots connections has been mixed at best (Frankland, Lucardie, and Rihoux 2008). For the most part, however, approximating this goal has proven to be elusive, and many of these parties have turned into elite-professional organizations (Jachnow 2013). Much of this can be explained by the fact that the logic of territorial representation pushes party leaderships to focus on multiple issues beyond the party's core concern, which involves coalition-building, and this tends to discourage consultation with the grassroots (Kitschelt 2006). The evidence provided in this study suggests that this need not be the same fate for all parties with a movement base, particularly for those which, by their own origins in diverse social movements, are able to incorporate a broader set of issues, actors, and demands. Moreover, the evidence suggests that resisting a Michelsian transformation into elite-professional organizations is contingent on the power of organization and the continuous strength, unity, and mobilizational capacity of allied groups.

### **Issues for Further Research**

The findings in this study provide several directions for future research. The pages that follow focus on two broad areas where more systematic research could significantly improve the existing knowledge: (1) the factors that account for variation in density of civil society organizations and those that promote or hinder density of synergetic connections between parties, movements, and states; and (2) the dynamics of mass political incorporation in post-adjustment societies.

### *Movement-Party-State Connections*

One potential avenue for further research would involve a more systematic treatment of the conditions that both facilitate and inhibit vibrant movement-party-state connections over time. Why do they get strong and why do they grow apart in some cases and not in others? To begin dealing with this puzzle, one of the most obvious questions that can be asked from this study starts with the Bolivian case: will the trends observed in this study be maintained in the long run? If the MAS is still seen as a positive case of a party that has retained vibrant connections to groups in civil society after assuming power, it would be interesting to examine clearly negative cases to develop more compelling theoretical explanations of variance. Even among cases in Latin America, explaining variation is challenging; the data on party and civil society organizations and party-society connections over time is scarce. In the absence of such data, the goal of theoretical development can be advanced through case-oriented comparative research of contemporary and historic cases. If variation within Latin America calls for more rigorous comparative research, a cross-regional perspective further reinforces this point. As mentioned, the ANC in South Africa could be a good start, for it is a case where such connections have severely deteriorated over time. As an unambiguously negative case, its analysis would allow an exploration of the full range of variation in the outcome of interest.

Exploring this variation is not merely an academic exercise; it has practical implications. As the literature on power-resources theory has made abundantly clear, left parties closely linked with popular sector organizations tend to push public policy in a more progressive, universalistic, and redistributive direction, even if there is significant cross-case and historical variation (Korpi

1978; Stephens 1979; Hicks 1999; Huber and Stephens 2001; Huber and Stephens 2012). By contrast, parties with weaker ties to such groups tend to be less progressive and sweeping in their policy initiatives (Pribble 2013). Other related research emphasizes the importance of strong party-society connections as providing the political foundations for building effective state policy that expands human capabilities and, ultimately, leads to effective states (Lee 2012; Evans and Heller 2014). If social movements are seen as the starting point of strong parties and state effectiveness, there is high potential payoff for research into the factors that promote or hinder density of civil society organizations and synergetic movement-party-state relations. This is because such a research program can help unpack the factors that explain variation in development-related policy.

To date, there is little systematic comparative research to explain variation in density of civil society organization and movement-party-state linkages. The explanation of the inner workings of the MAS presented here, as well as the comparative analysis of the PT and the FA, provides a preliminary map of the territory of these dynamics as a step toward theory building. Additional comparative research can broaden the intellectual dialogue, leading to a cumulative process of theoretical development on a pressing issue with clear policy implications. Looking at the conditions that promote or inhibit movement-party-state connections in a more systematic fashion (by examining both contemporary and historical cases and exploring variation by policy areas) can raise new questions about the possibilities and challenges that progressive social change in the twenty-first century represents. It can also help identify additional explanatory factors that may contribute to strengthen or weaken those links that are not easily detected with a single case study approach over a short period of time. This is a worthy research program, one that deserves further attention and more systematic analysis.

### *Political Inclusion in Latin America's Post-Adjustment Era*

Another area for further research relates to the question of how the findings in this study relate to broader debates about Latin America's second historical process of mass political incorporation (Roberts 2008; Luna and Filgueira 2009; Reygadas and Filgueira 2010), and how this second period differs from the first labor-incorporating period described by Collier and Collier (1991). The first period occurred during the early stages of import substitution industrialization (ISI) in the twentieth century. Class-based actors, particularly labor movements (and peasants in some countries), were crucial actors in the expansion of rights in the civic and social arenas. In terms of the institutional expressions of popular power, the mobilization of these groups "encouraged the formation of the first mass party organizations in the region, which often forged organic linkages to labor and/or peasant unions and drew on their human and organizational resources" (Roberts 2008: 333). In the wake of the 1980s debt crisis, the implementation of structural adjustment policies resulted in deindustrialization, the demobilization of these groups, and the emergence of new social actors that attempted to defend the interests of popular sectors (Kurtz 2004). If structural adjustment policies meant the de-incorporation or exclusion of popular sectors, social resistance to market reforms since the 1990s opened up a second period of mass incorporation, a new phase of inclusion marked by a new set of actors and more varied institutional expressions. Seen from this angle, the Bolivian MAS, the focus of this study, is an institutional expression of Latin America's second period of incorporation.

A growing literature on the effects of neoliberalism shows that grassroots groups, in the Bolivian case particularly the peasant and indigenous movements, suffered from political exclusion as market reforms advanced and liberal democracies consolidated (Silva 2009: 28). The literature on democratization offers insight into how this exclusion happened. O'Donnell (1994) shows how popular groups became irrelevant in the policy-making process during much of the 1990s, giving rise to what he called "delegative democracies." These functioned on the basis of highly concentrated executive power. In order to advance neoliberal reforms, presidents governed with little consideration for the interests, demands, and priorities of popular groups "constrained only by the hard facts of existing power relations and by a constitutionally limited term in office" (O'Donnell 1999: 164). Complementing this view, the literature on social movements and parties claimed that social mobilization in neoliberal Latin America was difficult due to social fragmentation and rising inequality (Roberts 1998; Murillo 2001; Kurtz 2004).

In spite of the conclusions of this early literature, there were areas where popular groups found ways to make their voices heard, such as the environment, human rights, and indigenous politics (Oxhorn 1995; Eckstein 2001; Yashar 2005). As Silva (2009: 29) notes, "as long as they kept property issues off of their agendas, these groups found the liberal democratic state to be more inclusive toward their interests." As seen in Chapter 2, favorable legislation, like the 1994 Law of Popular Participation (LPP) in Bolivia, opened new institutional spaces at the local level and facilitated the political mobilization of indigenous peoples (Van Cott 2005: 69). In addition to devolving greater administrative responsibilities to subnational units and to shifting budget resources to municipal levels, the LPP "also sought to build more formal ties between local governance and the existing civil society, which already formed a dense network of community ties" (Boulding 2014: 55). The law created institutional opportunities for civil society – including

indigenous groups, peasant unions, and urban and rural neighborhood associations – to participate in decision-making processes at the local level, for instance by engaging in the elaboration and oversight of municipal development plans (Kohl 2003). It also established that civil society representation should be based on territory rather than on corporate or functional lines. As a result of the LPP, the government quickly recognized nearly 15,000 pre-existing grassroots territorial organizations, whose new functions would be to provide checks and balances to municipal governments (Boulding 2014: 56). Whether the LPP was designed from the top or introduced in response to pressures from below, it was a major change that created opportunities for the inclusion of traditionally underrepresented groups into organized politics.

Groups like the *cocaleros* (coca growers) in Bolivia used these opportunities to strengthen their organization – they also formed a new political party, the MAS, with which they began to participate in elections at the local level. Their electoral strength was initially constrained to the central Chapare region of Cochabamba (Ballivián 2003), where their leaders became elected authorities. Enabled by the LPP, initial success in local elections in the Chapare region contributed to initiating a trend toward the inclusion of indigenous and peasant groups into the formal political process. It was through establishing connections with the MAS (and other new, but less successful, parties) that a wider array of popular sector movements and organizations (composed of indigenous peoples, neighborhood association, pensioners, artisans, and street vendors, among others) would then muscle their way into executive and legislative branches of the state. If favorable legislation, like the LPP, created opportunities for inclusion, the formation of a new party like the MAS served as a vehicle for its realization on a large-scale.

This trend would accelerate as the MAS grew bigger and gained power at the national level. As the present study has shown, its experience in power has led to significant changes in

the political arena. Changes are particularly evident in the increased power and access to the state of indigenous peoples and peasant-farming groups, and in their massive inclusion in governing and in representative institutions at all levels. As Chapter 3 demonstrated, greater grassroots control over the selection and recruitment of candidates has been consequential in Bolivia's political process: it has led to large-scale participation by individuals and previously under-represented groups at the highest level of representation in the country (Vergara 2011: 84). As Chapter 4 demonstrated, moreover, greater influence over candidate selection outcomes has also translated into enhanced political influence over agenda setting and the policy-making process more broadly. Grassroots impact on policy-making, as the chapter further demonstrated, can occur through two mechanisms: (1) via *representation* or influence from within the state (by infiltrating state institutions and bureaucracies), and (2) via *contestation* or influence from without (by exerting pressure in the streets). This is not to say popular groups have complete control over the national agenda. Rather, it is to suggest that even if the leadership in power may have "delegative" or centralizing tendencies, popular sector interests, demands, and priorities have become increasingly harder to ignore. Contestation has historically played a central role in Bolivia's political life (Gray Molina 2008: 124). In Bolivia's first period of incorporation, it led to the development of corporatist channels of interest intermediation, which provided representation and material benefits for previously excluded groups.<sup>257</sup> Whether the emerging patterns of representation described in this study, and the projection of grassroots groups into the state, will translate into greater and long-lasting control of public institutions by popular sectors is still an open question, the answer to which will require time and further investigation.

---

<sup>257</sup> This point is further elaborated elsewhere (Anria and Cyr 2015).



The literature on the Latin American left raises a related and yet unresolved issue. Whether explicitly or implicitly, it is framed in the form of a tension between the respect of liberal-democratic forms and the attempts to promote popular sector inclusion (Weyland, Madrid, and Hunter 2010: 142). In this literature, some leftist governments, like the one by Morales in Bolivia, have boosted the political influence of previously excluded groups, this at the cost of undermining horizontal accountability and of their functioning on the basis of expanded executive power. While there is some truth to this idea, the present study has offered an alternative analytical lens through which we can study this tension. It has stressed the importance of looking at the broader organizational fields in which post-adjustment governments are embedded and their different accountability dynamics. The Morales government may have boosted the influence of previously excluded groups and at the same time undermined liberal institutions and horizontal accountability. However, this is not to say liberal institutions and popular sector inclusion cannot coexist easily. Both elements can be articulated, but this might require longer time horizons. Accountability of the executive to Congress can coexist easily with popular sector inclusion, to the extent that popular groups are represented in Congress and perform oversight functions. Accountability to the judiciary might be more complicated in the short run, since people from previous administrations mostly control this institution, but in the long run this might also be possible to the extent that popular sectors get a foothold in the judiciary. In short, there is not necessarily a tradeoff between popular sector inclusion and horizontal accountability, but they may be in tension for a considerable time – until the newly included groups have gained a foothold in all parts of the political system and state apparatus. Whether that will be the case in Bolivia's political process remains to be seen.

In addition, to say that the Morales government has undermined horizontal accountability is not to say that he can govern “as he sees fit.” As the present study has shown, some of the biggest constraints on Morales’s “delegative” tendencies come from the mobilization of groups in his own political camp. Given the patterns of political inclusion described above, this type of mobilization can be interpreted as attempts to defend the principles and promises of political inclusion. Whether in the Bolivian case such groups will be able to keep pressuring the government to have their demands and interests included in policy formulation is an empirical issue, the answer to which will depend on their continued strength, unity, and mobilization capacity.

All this in turn suggests that in addition to conceiving of movement-based parties like the MAS simply as *ad hoc* electoral vehicles, we should theorize about them as promising instruments for the successful inclusion into politics of popular groups that have traditionally been on the margins of the political power game. To understand emerging patterns of representation and political inclusion in today’s Latin American democracies – which include new social actors and have more varied institutional expressions than in earlier phases of incorporation – we need more systematic comparative research on the internal life of movement-based parties. This study has presented a first step toward explaining variation in party-society linkages among three of such cases, but this could be expanded to include a more systematic assessment of other institutional expressions of popular power in Latin America’s second period of mass incorporation, like the political movements led by Hugo Chávez (and now Nicolás Maduro) in Venezuela, and Rafael Correa in Ecuador. If the first period of mass incorporation, which corresponded to the growth of ISI, led to the development of labor-based parties in much of the region, the second period, which is more associated with post-ISI economies and more

rural settings, has encouraged the formation of mass parties with a more eclectic set of civil society organizations as their core constituencies. On the basis of the present study, it appears as if having a more diversified base (the “Bolivia” model) can have important political effects. It can generate diffuse pressures and play a central role in (1) preventing Michelsian shifts in the character of allied parties and (2) shaping patterns of popular sector inclusion. While other scholars have reached similar conclusions on the first pattern by looking at cases outside the region, like Kerala (Heller 2005), more comparative research is needed on the second pattern to fully assess the kinds of institutional legacies of Latin America’s second period of incorporation.

## APPENDIX A: LIST OF CITED INTERVIEWS

The following list provides the names, position (at the moment of the interview), and date of interview of all interviewees cited in this study, who also agreed to disclose their names and positions. The interviewees not cited in this study, as well as those who did not explicitly consent to have their names and positions disclosed, are not included in this list.

Aguirre Ledezma, Noel. Vice Minister of Alternative and Special Education; former Minister of Planning and Development. La Paz, Bolivia, February 8, 2013.

Albarracín, Emiliana. MAS Councilwoman of the Municipality of Villa Tunari. Villa Tunari, Bolivia, March 15, 2013.

Albó, Xavier. Cofounder of the Center for Investigation and Promotion of Peasants (CIPCA). La Paz, Bolivia, December 5, 2012.

Alfaro, Luis. MAS Deputy for Tarija; MAS Delegate to the Constituent Assembly. La Paz, Bolivia, January 24, 2013.

Almaraz, Alejandro. Former Member of the MAS's National Directorate; former Vice Minister of Land. Cochabamba, Bolivia, March 11, 2013.

Ávalos, Isaac. MAS Senator for Santa Cruz; former Secretary General of CSUTCB. La Paz, Bolivia, August 30, 2012.

Benavides, Jean-Paul. Academic. Cochabamba, Bolivia, March 25, 2013.

Blanco, Bertha. Executive Member of the National Confederation of Peasant, Indigenous, and Native Women of Bolivia (CNMCIQB-BS); MAS Councilwoman of the Municipality of El Alto. La Paz, Bolivia, August 20, 2008.

Brockmann, Erika. Former MIR Senator and former MIR Deputy for Cochabamba. La Paz, Bolivia, October 5, 2012.

Burgoa, Carlos Hugo. Bolivian Consul in Tacna, Chile; former Secretary of the MAS's National Directorate. La Paz, Bolivia, April 11, 2013.

Cabrera, Justa. Indigenous Activist; President, National Confederation of Bolivia's Indigenous Women (CNMIB). Santa Cruz, Bolivia, May 8, 2013.

Cassía, Walter. Journalist; Director of Sovereignty Radio [Radio Soberanía]. Villa Tunari, Bolivia, March 18, 2013

Catacora, Luis Arce. Bolivia's Minister of Economy (2006-present). La Paz, Bolivia, May 5, 2013.

Centellas, Ximena. Advisor of the MAS's National Directorate. La Paz, Bolivia, October 31, 2012.

Chávez, Walter. Former MAS Campaign Manager; Journalist and Former Director of the fortnightly Mad Toy [Juguete Rabioso]. La Paz, Bolivia, December 9, 2012 and May 1, 2013.

Chivi, Idón. Director of Studies and Projects at the Ministry of Communication; former Advisor to CONAMAQ; member of the Presidential Representation to the Constituent Assembly (REPAC). La Paz, Bolivia, December 3, 2012.

Choque, Lidia. Former MAS-Santa Cruz President, Santa Cruz; Executive Member of the National Confederation of Peasant, Indigenous, and Native Women of Bolivia (CNMCIOB-BS). Santa Cruz, May 16, 2013.

Claros, Omar. Secretary General, Six Federations of the Tropic of Cochabamba. Villa Tunari, Bolivia, March 18, 2013.

Condori, Modesto. Peasant Leader; MAS Founding Member. La Paz, Bolivia, October 31, 2012.

Cordova Eguivar, Eduardo. Academic. Cochabamba, Bolivia, March 13, 2013.

Cuadros, Diego. Former Director of Territorial Organization, Ministry of Autonomy. La Paz, Bolivia, February 23, 2013.

Delgadillo, Walter. Minister of Public Works, Services, and Housing. Cochabamba, Bolivia, April 1, 2013.

Delgado, Rebeca. MAS Deputy for Cochabamba; MAS Delegate to the Constituent Assembly. La Paz, Bolivia, April 23, 2013.

Durán, Franklin. President, Confederation of Transport Drivers (Transport Union). La Paz, Bolivia, April 17, 2013.

Escóbar, Filemón. Former Leader of the FSMTB (Union Federation for Bolivian Mining Workers); former MAS Senator for Cochabamba; founding member of the MAS. Cochabamba, Bolivia, March 26, 2013.

Espinoza, Erasmo. MAS Councilman of Villa Tunari; President of the Municipal Council of Villa Tunari. Villa Tunari, Cochabamba, March 15, 2013.

Ferreira, Reymi. MAS Candidate for the Mayorship of Santa Cruz; Academic. Santa Cruz, Bolivia, May 9, 2013.

Gallardo, Germán. Planning Director, Ministry of Rural Development and Land. La Paz, Bolivia, January 10, 2013.

Garcés, Fernando. Academic; Consultant to the Unity Pact [Pacto de Unidad]. Cochabamba, Bolivia, March 8, 2013.

García Linera, Álvaro. Bolivia's Vice-President (2006-present). La Paz, May 4, 2013.

García, Fernando. Academic; United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in Bolivia. La Paz, Bolivia, September 3, 2012.

Guarachi, Paulino. Former Secretary General of CSUTCB. La Paz, Bolivia, September 14, 2012.

Guarayos, Samuel. President, MAS-La Paz Departmental Directorate. La Paz, Bolivia, July 28, 2008.

Guillén, Néstor. Community Leader, FEJUVE-El Alto. La Paz, Bolivia, April 9, 2013.

Guzmán, Orlando. Advisor, CONALCAM. La Paz, Bolivia, August 26, 2008.

Henríquez, Ricardo. MAS Councilman of the Municipality of Villa Tunari. Villa Tunari, Bolivia, March 15, 2013.

Huanca, Felipa. Executive Secretary of the La Paz Departmental Federation of Peasant, Indigenous, and Native Women of Bolivia (FDUMCIOPL-BS); Secretary General, National Confederation of Peasant, Indigenous, and Native Women of Bolivia (CNMCIOB-BS); MAS Candidate for Governorship of La Paz. La Paz, Bolivia, February 13, 2013.

Huanca, Luis. Former Executive, FEJUVE-El Alto. El Alto, Bolivia, August 13, 2008.

Iporre, Iván. Director, Plurinational School of Public Administration (EGPP); MAS Campaign Manager; former Personal Assistant of Evo Morales. La Paz, Bolivia, November 14, 2012.

Jilamita, Jesús. Advisor, CONAMAQ. La Paz, Bolivia, February 5, 2013.

Laruta, Carlos Hugo. Leader of National Unity [Unidad Nacional]. La Paz, Bolivia, February 6, 2013.

Limache, Walter. National Coordinator, Nina Program, Union of Institutions of Social Work and Action (UNITAS). La Paz, Bolivia, January 18, 2013.

Loayza, Román. Former MAS Deputy for Cochabamba; MAS delegate to the Constituent Assembly. Author interview. La Paz, Bolivia, July 22, 2008.

Loayza, Sergio. MAS Deputy for Beni; Former Vice President of the MAS's National Directorate. La Paz, November 5, 2012.

Machaca, Miguel. Former MAS Deputy for El Alto; former President of MAS-El Alto Regional Directorate. La Paz, Bolivia, August 18, 2008.

Machaca, Rodolfo. Executive Secretary, CSUTCB. La Paz, Bolivia, January 17, 2013.

Mamani Paucara, Adrián. Executive Secretary, Red Ponchos [Ponchos Rojos]. La Paz, Bolivia, April 19, 2013.

Mamani, Abel. Former President, FEJUVE-El Alto; former Minister of Water. La Paz, Bolivia, February 19, 2013.

Mamani, Feliciano. Mayor of the Municipality of Villa Tunari. Villa Tunari, Bolivia, March 16, 2013.

Melendres, Walter. Director of Legislative Administration, Office of the Vice Presidency. La Paz, Bolivia, January 24, 2013.

Mendoza, Adolfo. MAS Senator for Cochabamba. La Paz, Bolivia, November 29, 2012.

Mercado, Manuel. MAS Campaign Coordinator. La Paz, Bolivia, February 27, 2013.

Michel, Sebastián. Vice Minister of Communications. La Paz, Bolivia, April 2, 2013.

Moldiz, Hugo. Minister of Government. La Paz, Bolivia, September 26, 2012.

Montaño, Gabriela. MAS Senator for Santa Cruz; President of the Senate, La Paz, Bolivia, February 28, 2013

Montes, Pedro. Former Executive Secretary, Bolivian Workers' Central (COB). La Paz, Bolivia, April 21, 2013.

Morales, Gerardo. Former Vice Minister of Basic Services; Councilman of El Alto. El Alto, Bolivia, August 9, 2008.

Navarro, César. Vice Minister of Coordination with Social Movements. La Paz, Bolivia August 23, 2012 [Also interviewed in August 27, 2008]

Nina, Fanny Juana. Former President, FEJUVE-El Alto. El Alto, Bolivia, April 22, 2013.

Núñez, Dionicio. MAS founding member; former MAS deputy for La Paz. La Paz, November 22, 2012.

Ontiveros, Freddy. Advisor, FENCOMIN. La Paz, Bolivia, October 25, 2012.

Orellana, Segundina. President, Coordinator for the Women of the Tropic (Cocamtrop); Secretary General, Six Federations of the Tropic of Cochabamba. Villa Tunari, Bolivia, March 18, 2013.

Ortega, Isabel. Vice Minister of Indigenous Justice; former MAS Deputy; MAS Founding Member. La Paz, Bolivia, November 29, 2012.

Ortíz, Concepción. Vice President, MAS National Directorate. Santa Cruz, Bolivia, November 6, 2012.

Paredes, Ramiro. Member, Plurinational Electoral Organ; Advisor, FENCOMIN. La Paz, Bolivia, October 15, 2012.

Parra, Elvira. Executive Member, National Confederation of Peasant, Indigenous, and Native Women of Bolivia (CNMCIQB-BS); MAS Delegate to the Constituent Assembly. La Paz, Bolivia, August 14, 2008.

Patana, Edgar. Mayor, El Alto; former Executive Secretary, Regional Workers' Central of El Alto (COR-El Alto). El Alto, Bolivia, April 29, 2013.

Patzi, Félix. Former MAS Candidate for the Governorship of La Paz. La Paz, Bolivia, November 28, 2012.

Paucara, Bernabé. Mayor of the Municipality of Achacachi. La Paz, Bolivia, January 14, 2013.

Peredo, Antonio. MAS Senator for La Paz. La Paz, Bolivia, August 21, 2008.

Pinto, Juan Carlos. National Director, Intercultural Service of Democratic Strengthening (SIFDE), Plurinational Electoral Organ (OEP); Member of REPAC. La Paz, Bolivia, September 7, 2012.

Poma, Martha. MAS Senator for La Paz. La Paz, Bolivia, February 14, 2013.

Prada Alcoreza, Raúl. Former MAS Delegate to the Constituent Assembly; former Vice Minister of Strategic Planning; Member of the Comuna Group [Grupo Comuna]. La Paz, Bolivia, January 29, 2013.

Prada Tejada, María Nela. Chief of Cabinet, Ministry of Economy. La Paz, Bolivia, February 1, 2013.

Quezada, Marcelo. Bolivian Ambassador to Paraguay; Campaign Advisor for the 2002 Elections. La Paz, Bolivia, July 11, 2008.

Quiroga, José Antonio. Editor, *Nueva Crónica y Buen Gobierno*; former MAS Candidate for the Office of the Vice Presidency (2002). La Paz, Bolivia, July 18, 2008.



Quiroz, José. President, MAS-Santa Cruz. Santa Cruz, Bolivia, May 21, 2013.

Revollo, Marcela. MSM Deputy. La Paz, Bolivia, February 18, 2013.

Rodriguez, Adalid. Secretary of Commerce and Exports of FENCOMIN. La Paz, Bolivia, October 25, 2012.

Rojas, Eugenio. MAS Senator for La Paz. La Paz, Bolivia, September 21, 2012.

Rojas, Roberto. MAS Deputy for La Paz/El Alto. La Paz, Bolivia, April 11, 2013.

Romero, Asterio. Secretary General, Governorship of Cochabamba; Union Leader. Cochabamba, Bolivia, March 25, 2013.

Salazar, Fernando. Academic. Cochabamba, Bolivia, March 13, 2013

Salazar, Julio. MAS Senator for Cochabamba; *Cocalero* Union Leader. La Paz, Bolivia, December 7, 2012.

Salvatierra, Hugo. MAS Founding Member; former Minister of Rural Development, Agriculture and the Environment. Santa Cruz, Bolivia, May 15, 2013.

Sanjinez, Tito. Vice President, MAS-Santa Cruz Urban Directorate. Santa Cruz, Bolivia, May 8, 2013.

Sifuentes, Nélica. MAS Senator for Chuquisaca; Vice President of the Senate; Finance Secretary, MAS National Directorate. La Paz, Bolivia, October 18, 2012.

Siles, Hugo. MAS Councilman for Santa Cruz. Santa Cruz, Bolivia, May 14, 2013.

Silva, Jorge. MAS Councilman for La Paz; Vice President, Federation Bolivian Municipalities (FAM); MAS Campaign Coordinator; former MAS deputy for La Paz. La Paz, January 25, 2013.

Soruco, Freddy. MAS Councilman for Santa Cruz. Santa Cruz, Bolivia, May 8, 2013.

Tacóo, Lázaro. CIDOB Leader; Spokesperson of the Second TIPNIS Anti-Road March. Cochabamba, Bolivia, March 4, 2013.

Torres, Edgar. Union Leader, Special Federation of Peasant Workers of the Tropics of Cochabamba. Cochabamba, Bolivia, March 18, 2013.

Torrico, Gustavo. Former MAS Deputy for La Paz. La Paz, Bolivia, July 29, 2008.

Vázquez, Victor Hugo. Vice Minister of Rural Development. La Paz, Bolivia, January 9, 2013.

Villarroel, Miguelina. MAS Deputy for Cochabamba; Union Leader, Special Federation of the Yungas of the Chapare. La Paz, Bolivia, February 21, 2013.

Villca, Andrés. MAS Senator for Potosí; Former President of FENCOMIN. La Paz, Bolivia, August 30, 2012.

Villca, Juan de la Cruz. MAS Founding Member; former Executive Secretary of CSUTCB. La Paz, Bolivia, October 16, 2012.

Zeballos, Rodolfo. Advisor, MAS-Santa Cruz Urban Directorate. Santa Cruz, Bolivia, May 7, 2013.

Zuazo, Moira. Academic, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Foundation. La Paz, Bolivia, August 29, 2012.

Zurita, Leonilda. Coca Grower and Leader of the Six Federations of the Tropic of Cochabamba; Secretary of Foreign Relations, MAS National Directorate, La Paz, 6 November 2012.

## REFERENCES

- Abers, Rebecca. 2000. *Inventing Local Democracy: Grassroots Politics in Brazil*. Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Adcock, Robert, and David Collier. 2001. "Measurement Validity: A Shared Standard for Qualitative and Quantitative Research." *American Political Science Review* null (03): 529–46. doi:10.1017/S0003055401003100.
- Albó, Xavier. 2006. "El Alto, La Vorágine de Una Ciudad Única." *Journal of Latin American Anthropology* 11 (2): 329–50.
- . 2008. *Movimientos Y Poder Indígena En Bolivia, Ecuador Y Perú*. La Paz, Bolivia: CIPCA.
- Albro, Robert. 2005a. "Indigenous in the Plural in Bolivian Oppositional Politics." *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 24: 433–53.
- . 2005b. "The Water Is Ours, ¡carajo!: Deep Citizenship in Bolivia's Water War." In *Social Movements: An Anthropological Reader*, June Nash (ed.), 249–71. Oxford and Cambridge: Basil Blackwell.
- Aldrich, John H. 1995. *Why Parties?: The Origin and Transformation of Political Parties in America*. University of Chicago Press.
- Alenda, Stéphanie. 2003. "Dimensiones de La Movilización En Torno a Conciencia de Patria : Hacia Un Modelo Explicativo de Un Caso de Neopopulismo Boliviano." *Revista de Ciencia Política* 23 (1): 119–35.
- Allison, Graham. 1969. *Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis*. Menasha, WI: American Political Science Association.
- Alonso, Sonia, and Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser. 2015. "Spain: No Country for the Populist Radical Right?" *South European Society and Politics* 20 (1): 21–45. doi:10.1080/13608746.2014.985448.
- Altman, David. 2002. "Popular Initiatives in Uruguay: Confidence Votes on Government or Political Loyalties?" *Electoral Studies* 21 (4): 617–30.
- Amaral, Oswaldo. 2010. "As Transformacoes Na Orgaiacao Interna Do PT Entre 1995 E 2009." Ph.D Dissertation, Campinas: Universidade Estadual de Campinas, Instituto de Filosofia e Ciências Humanas.
- Amenta, Edwin, and Neal Caren. 2004. "The Legislative, Organizational, and Beneficiary Consequences of State-Oriented Challengers." In *The Blackwell Companion to Social*

- Movements*, ed. David A. Snow, Sarah A. Soule, Hanspeter Kriesi, 461–88. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Amenta, Edwin, Neal Caren, Elizabeth Chiarello, and Yang Su. 2010. “The Political Consequences of Social Movements.” *Annual Review of Sociology* 36 (June): 287–307. doi:10.1146/annurev-soc-070308-120029.
- Aminzade, Ronald. 1995. “Between Movement and Party: The Transformation of Mid-Nineteenth-Century French Republicanism.” In *The Politics of Social Protest: Comparative Perspectives on States and Social Movements*, Ed. J. Craig Jenkins and Bert Klandermans, 167–98. Minneapolis, MI: University of Minnesota Press.
- Anria, Santiago. 2009. “Informal Institutions and Party Organization: A Case Study of the MAS.” M.A. Thesis, Vancouver: Simon Fraser University.
- . 2010. “Bolivia’s MAS: Between Party and Movement.” In *Latin America’s Left Turns: Politics, Policies, and Trajectories of Change*, Eds. Maxwell A. Cameron and Eric Hershberg, 101–26. Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- . 2013. “Social Movements, Party Organization, and Populism: Insights from the Bolivian MAS.” *Latin American Politics and Society* 55 (3): 19–46. doi:10.1111/j.1548-2456.2013.00201.x.
- Anria, Santiago, Maxwell A Cameron, Agustín Goenaga, Carlos Toranzo, and Moira Zuazo. 2010. “Bolivia: Democracia En Construcción.” In *Democracia En La Región Andina: Diversidad Y Desafíos*, Maxwell A. Cameron and Juan Pablo Luna (eds.), 243–72. Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos.
- Anria, Santiago, and Jennifer Cyr. 2015. “Governing for the Long-Haul: Coalition Building and Power Sharing in ‘Revolutionary’ Bolivia.” Working Paper.
- Anria, Santiago, and Sara Niedzwiecki. 2011. “Social Movements and Social Policy: The Case of the Renta Dignidad.” Manuscript. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Department of Political Science.
- Arbona, Juan M., and Benjamin Kohl. 2004. “La Paz–El Alto.” *Cities* 21 (3): 255–65.
- Ardaya, Gloria. 2003. *Diputados uninominales: otra forma de representación*. La Paz, Bolivia: Plural Editores.
- Avritzer, Leonardo. 2009. *Participatory Institutions in Democratic Brazil*. Washington, DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Baiocchi, Gianpaolo. 2003. *Radicals in Power : The Workers’ Party (PT) and Experiments in Urban Democracy in Brazil*. London ;New York: Distributed in the USA exclusively by Palgrave.

- Baiocchi, Gianpaolo, and Sofia Checa. 2007. "The Brazilian Workers' Party: From Local Practices to National Power." *Working USA* 10 (4): 411–30.
- Baker, Andy, and Kenneth F. Greene. 2011. "The Latin American Left's Mandate: Free-Market Policies and Issue Voting in New Democracies." *World Politics* 63 (1): 43–77.
- Ballivián, Salvador Romero. 2003. *Geografía Electoral de Bolivia: Así Votan Los Bolivianos*. ILDIS.
- Bartolini, Stefano. 2000. *The Political Mobilization of the European Left, 1860 – 1980: The Class Cleavage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.  
<http://ebooks.cambridge.org.libproxy.lib.unc.edu/ebook.jsf?bid=CBO9780511521560>
- Bille, Lars. 2001. "Democratizing a Democratic Procedure: Myth or Reality? Candidate Selection in Western European Parties, 1960-1990." *Party Politics* 7 (3): 363–80. doi:10.1177/1354068801007003006.
- Bogliaccini, Juan. 2012. "Small Latecomers into the Global Market [electronic Resource] : Power Conflict and Institutional Change in Chile and Uruguay." Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.
- Bolleyer, Nicole. 2011. "The Organizational Costs of Public Office." In *New Parties in Government: In Power for the First Time*, ed. Kris Deschouwer, 17–44. London and New York: Routledge.
- . 2012. "New Party Organization in Western Europe: Of Party Hierarchies, Stratarchies and Federations." *Party Politics* 18 (3): 315–36. doi:10.1177/1354068810382939.
- Bolpress. 2006. "Tierras: El Gobierno Concerta Con Prefectos Y Los Indígenas Alistan Una Marcha." <http://www.bolpress.com/art.php?Cod=2006102513>.
- Borras Jr, Saturnino M., and Jennifer C. Franco. 2010. "Contemporary Discourses and Contestations around Pro-Poor Land Policies and Land Governance." *Journal of Agrarian Change* 10 (1): 1–32. doi:10.1111/j.1471-0366.2009.00243.x.
- Bottazzi, Patrick, and Stephan Rist. 2012. "Changing Land Rights Means Changing Society: The Sociopolitical Effects of Agrarian Reforms under the Government of Evo Morales." *Journal of Agrarian Change* 12 (4): 528–51. doi:10.1111/j.1471-0366.2012.00367.x.
- Boulding, Carew. 2014. *NGOs, Political Protest, and Civil Society*. Cambridge University Press.
- Brady, Henry E, and David Collier. 2004. *Rethinking Social Inquiry: Diverse Tools, Shared Standards*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

- Bruhn, Kathleen. 1997. *Taking on Goliath : The Emergence of a New Left Party and the Struggle for Democracy in Mexico*. University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press.
- Burchell, Jon. 2001. "Evolving or Conforming? Assessing Organisational Reform within European Green Parties." *West European Politics* 24 (3): 113–34. doi:10.1080/01402380108425455.
- Burgoa, Carlos, and Modesto Condori. 2011. "El Caminar Histórico Del Instrumento Político, 1995-2009." Unpublished manuscript. La Paz, Bolivia.
- Caetano, Gerardo, Juan Pablo Luna, Jaime Yaffé, and Rafael Piñeiro. 2003. "La Izquierda Uruguaya Y La Hipótesis Del Gobierno. Algunos Desafíos Político-Institucionales." *Análisis y Propuestas*. Friedrich Ebert Stiftung.
- Cambio. 2012. "El Gobierno Acatará Lo Que Decida La Cumbre." *Cambio*, May 8, sec. Especial Mobilización por la Salud.
- Cameron, Maxwell A, and Eric Hershberg. 2010. *Latin America's Left Turns: Politics, Policies, and Trajectories of Change*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers,.
- Cameron, Maxwell A, and Kenneth E. Sharpe. 2010. "Andean Left Turns: Constituent Power and Constitution Making." In *Latin America's Left Turns: Politics, Policies, and Trajectories of Change*, Eds. Maxwell A. Cameron and Eric Hershberg, 61–80. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Cameron, Maxwell, Eric Hershberg, and Kenneth Evan Sharpe. 2012. *New Institutions for Participatory Democracy in Latin America : Voice and Consequence*. 1st ed. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Carbone, Giovanni. 2008. *No-Party Democracy? : Ugandan Politics in Comparative Perspective*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Carey, John M. 1996. *Term Limits and Legislative Representation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Carey, John M, and Matthew Soberg Shugart. 1995. "Incentives to Cultivate a Personal Vote: A Rank Ordering of Electoral Formulas." *Electoral Studies* 14 (4): 417–39. doi:10.1016/0261-3794(94)00035-2.
- Carty, R. Kenneth. 2004. "Parties as Franchise Systems The Stratarchical Organizational Imperative." *Party Politics* 10 (1): 5–24. doi:10.1177/1354068804039118.
- . 2013. "Are Political Parties Meant to Be Internally Democratic?" In *The Challenges of Intra-Party Democracy*, ed. William P. Cross and Richard S. Katz, 11–26. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Cason, Jeffrey W. 2000. "Electoral Reform and Stability in Uruguay." *Journal of Democracy* 11 (2): 85–98. doi:10.1353/jod.2000.0032.
- Castañeda, Jorge G. 2006. "Latin America's Left Turn." *Foreign Affairs* 85 (3): 28. doi:10.2307/20031965.
- Chandra, Kanchan. 2004. *Why Ethnic Parties Succeed : Patronage and Ethnic Head Counts in India*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Cleary, Matthew R. 2006. "Explaining the Left's Resurgence." *Journal of Democracy* 17 (4): 35–49. doi:10.1353/jod.2006.0058.
- Cleaves, Peter, and Martín J Scurrah. 1980. *Agriculture, Bureaucracy, and Military Government in Peru*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.
- Collier, Ruth Berins, and David Collier. 1991. *Shaping the Political Arena : Critical Junctures, the Labor Movement, and Regime Dynamics in Latin America*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.
- Collins, Jennifer. 2006. "Democratizing Formal Politics: Indigenous and Social Movement Political Parties in Ecuador and Bolivia, 1978-2000." Ph.D Dissertation, Department of Political Science, University of California, San Diego.
- Coppedge, Michael. 1994. *Strong Parties and Lame Ducks : Presidential Partyarchy and Factionalism in Venezuela*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press.
- Costa, Jimena. 2008. "Los Poderes Fácticos de La Coyuntura." In *Los Actores Políticos En La Transición Boliviana*, ed. Horst Grebe López, 105–38. La Paz, Bolivia: Instituto Prisma.
- Crabtree, John. 2011. "Electoral Validation for Morales and the MAS." In *Evo Morales and the Movimiento Al Socialismo in Bolivia: The First Term in Context*, Ed. Adrian J. Pearce, 117–42. London: Institute for the Study of the Americas.
- . 2013. "From the MNR to the MAS: Populism, Parties, the State, and Social Movements in Bolivia since 1952." In *Latin American Populism in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Carlos de la Torre and Cynthia J. Arnson, 269–93. Washington, DC: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Cross, William, and Richard S. Katz. 2013. *The Challenges of Intra-Party Democracy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Cross, William P. (William Paul), and Jean-Benoît Pilet. 2013. *The Selection of Political Party Leaders in Contemporary Parliamentary Democracies : A Comparative Study*. New York: Routledge,.

- Cyr, Jennifer. 2012. "From Collapse to Comeback? The Fates of Political Parties in Latin America." Ph.D Dissertation, Northwestern University.
- Da Silva, Luiz Inácio Lula. 2002. "Carta Ao Povo Brasileiro." International Institute for Social History. [http://www.iisg.nl/collections/carta\\_ao\\_povo\\_brasileiro.pdf](http://www.iisg.nl/collections/carta_ao_povo_brasileiro.pdf).
- De la Torre, Carlos. 2013. "In the Name of the People: Democratization, Popular Organizations, and Populism in Venezuela, Bolivia, and Ecuador." *European Review of Latin American and Caribbean Studies* 95: 27–48.
- Deschouwer, Kris. 2008. *New Parties in Government : In Power for the First Time*. London ;New York: Routledge.
- Do Alto, Hervé. 2006. "Un Partido Campesino-Indígena En La Ciudad: Liderazgos Barriales Y Facciones En El Movimiento Al Socialismo (MAS) En La Paz, 2005-2006." *Bolivian Studies Journal* 13: 63–86.
- . 2007. "El MAS-IPSP Boliviano." In , edited by Karin Monasterios, Pablo Stefanoni, and Hervé Do Alto. *Reinventando La Nación En Bolivia: Movimientos Sociales, Estado Y Poscolonialidad*. La Paz, Bolivia: Plural Editores.
- . 2011. "Un Partido Campesino En El Poder: Una Mirada Sociológica Del MAS Boliviano." *Nueva Sociedad* 234 (julio-agosto): 95–111.
- Do Alto, Hervé, and Pablo Stefanoni. 2010. "El MAS: Las Ambivalencias de La Democracia Corporativa." In *Mutaciones En El Campo Político Boliviano*, 305–63. La Paz, Bolivia: UNDP.
- Downs, Anthony. 1957. *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. 1st edition. New York: Harper and Row.
- Dunkerley, James. 2007. "Evo Morales, the 'Two Bolivias' and the Third Bolivian Revolution." *Journal of Latin American Studies* 39 (01): 133–66. doi:10.1017/S0022216X06002069.
- . 2013. "The Bolivian Revolution at 60: Politics and Historiography." *Journal of Latin American Studies* 45 (02): 325–50. doi:10.1017/S0022216X13000382.
- Duverger, Maurice. 1954. *Political Parties, Their Organization and Activity in the Modern State*. London, Methuen; New York, Wiley: Methuen.
- Eaton, Kent. 2007. "Backlash in Bolivia: Regional Autonomy as a Reaction against Indigenous Mobilization." *Politics & Society* 35 (1): 71–102. doi:10.1177/0032329206297145.
- Eckstein, Susan. 2001. *Power and Popular Protest : Latin American Social Movements*. Berkeley: University of California Press. <http://search.lib.unc.edu?R=UNCb3932886>.



- El Deber (Santa Cruz). 2006a. "La Población Minera Continuó Sangrando," October 7 edition.
- . 2006b. "Cambian Al Ministro de Minería," October 7 edition.
- Ellner, Steve. 2013. "Social and Political Diversity and the Democratic Road to Change in Venezuela." *Latin American Perspectives*, February, 0094582X13476002. doi:10.1177/0094582X13476002.
- Escóbar, Filemón. 2008a. *De La Revolución Al Pachakutí: El Aprendizaje Del Respeto Recíproco Entre Blancos E Indios*. La Paz, Bolivia: Garza Azul.
- . 2008b. *De la revolución al Pachakuti: el aprendizaje del respeto recíproco entre blancos e indios*. Garza Azul.
- Espinoza Morales, Jorge. 2010. *Minería Boliviana: Su Realidad*. La Paz: Plural Editores.
- Esposito, Carla, and Walter Arteaga. 2006. *Movimientos Sociales Urbano-Populares En Bolivia: Una Lucha Contra Le Exclusion Social, Politica, Y Economica*. UNITAS – Programa Desarrollo del Poder Local.
- Estado Plurinacional de Bolivia. 2012. *Informe Final Del Proceso de Consulta Previa, Libre E Informada a Los Pueblos Moxeno-Trinitario, Yuracaré Y Chimane Del Territorio Y Parque Nacional Isiboro Sécure (TIPNIS)*. La Paz, Bolivia: Iskra Editores.
- Evans, Peter B. 1995. *Embedded Autonomy: States and Industrial Transformation*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- . 2010. *The Challenge of 21st Century Development: Building Capability - Enhancing States*. New York: United Nations Development Programme.
- Evans, Peter B., and Patrick Heller. 2014. "Human Development, State Transformation and the Politics of the Developmental State." In *The Oxford Handbook of the Transformations of the State*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Fabricant, Nicole. 2012. *Mobilizing Bolivia's Displaced [electronic Resource] : Indigenous Politics & the Struggle over Land*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
- Farthing, Linda, and Benjamin Kohl. 2010. "Social Control Bolivia's New Approach to Coca Reduction." *Latin American Perspectives* 37 (4): 197–213. doi:10.1177/0094582X10372516.
- Farthing, Linda, and Benjamin H. Kohl. 2014. *Evo's Bolivia : Continuity and Change*. First edition. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.

- Field, Bonnie N, and Peter M Siavelis. 2008. "Candidate Selection Procedures in Transitional Politics A Research Note." *Party Politics* 14 (5): 620–39. doi:10.1177/1354068808093393.
- Flores-Macias, Gustavo A. 2012. *After Neoliberalism?: The Left and Economic Reforms in Latin America*. Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press.
- Fornillo, Bruno. 2008. "Encrucijadas Del Cogobierno En La Bolivia Actual. Un Análisis Sociopolítico de La Experiencia Del Movimiento Al Socialismo En El Poder (2006-07)." Informe final del concurso: Gobiernos progresistas en la era neoliberal: estructuras de poder y concepciones sobre el desarrollo en América Latina y el Caribe. Programa Regional de Becas CLACSO.
- Foweraker, Joe. 1995. *Theorizing Social Movements*. 1ST ed. Pluto Press.
- Foweraker, Joe, and Todd Landman. 2000. *Citizenship Rights and Social Movements: A Comparative and Statistical Analysis*. Oxford University Press.
- Frankland, E, Paul Lucardie, and Benoît Rihoux. 2008. *Green Parties in Transition : The End of Grass-Roots Democracy?*. Farnham, England: Ashgate.
- French, John D., and Alexandre Fortes. 2005. "Another World Is Possible: The Rise of the Brazilian Workers' Party and the Prospects for Lula's Government." *Labor* 2 (3): 13–31. doi:10.1215/15476715-2-3-13.
- . 2012. "Nurturing Hope, Deepening Democracy, and Combating Inequalities in Brazil: Lula, the Workers' Party, and Dilma Rousseff's 2010 Election as President." *Labor* 9 (1): 7–28. doi:10.1215/15476715-1461059.
- Fundemos. 1998. *Opinión Y Análisis. Tomo II, Datos Estadísticos Municipales 1987–1995*. La Paz: Fundemos.
- Fung, Archon, and Erik Olin Wright. 2003. "Countervailing Power in Empowered Participatory Governance." In *Deepening Democracy: Institutional Innovations in Empowered Participatory Governance*, ed. Archon Fung and Erik Olin Wright, 259–89. London: Verso.
- Gallagher, Michael, and Michael Marsh. 1988. *Candidate Selection in Comparative Perspective : The Secret Garden of Politics*. London ; Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage Publications.
- Garcés, Fernando. 2010. *El Pacto de Unidad Y El Proceso de Construcción de Una Propuesta de Constitución Política Del Estado: Sistematización de La Experiencia*. La Paz, Bolivia: Preview Gráfica.

- . 2011. “The Domestication of Indigenous Autonomies in Bolivia: From the Pact of Unity to the New Constitution.” In *Remapping Bolivia: Resources, Territory, and Indigeneity in a Plurinational State*, ed. Nicole Fabricant and Bret Gustafson, 46–67. Santa Fe, NM: School for Advanced Research Press.
- García Linera, Álvaro. 2006. “El Evismo: Lo Nacional-Popular En Acción.” *Revista OSAL: Observatorio Social de América Latina* enero-abril (19).
- . 2009. *Biografía Política E Intelectual: Conversaciones Con Pablo Stefanoni, Franklin Ramírez Y Maristella Svampa*. La Paz, Bolivia: Le Monde Diplomatique.
- García Linera, Álvaro, Marxa Chávez León, and Patricia Costa Monje. 2004. *Sociología de Los Movimientos Sociales En Bolivia*. La Paz, Bolivia: Plural Editores.
- Gerring, John. 2007. *Case Study Research: Principles and Practices*. Cambridge ;New York: Cambridge University Press,.
- Gibson, Edward L. 1992. “Conservative Electoral Movements and Democratic Politics: Core Constituencies, Coalition Building, and the Latin American Electoral Right.” In *The Right and Democracy in Latin America*, ed. Douglas A Chalmers, María Carmo Campbello de Souza, and Atilio A Borón, 13–42. New York: Praeger.
- . 1996. *Class and Conservative Parties: Argentina in Comparative Perspective*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- . 1997. “The Populist Road to Market Reform: Policy and Electoral Coalitions in Argentina and Mexico.” *World Politics* 49 (3): 339–70.
- Gill, Lesley. 2000. *Teetering on the Rim: Global Restructuring, Daily Life, and the Armed Retreat of the Bolivian State*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Giorgi, Ana Laura de. 2011. *Las tribus de la izquierda en los 60: bolches, latas y tupas : comunistas, socialistas y tupamaros desde la cultura política*. [Montevideo, Uruguay]: Editorial Fin de Siglo.
- Glenn, John K. 2003. “Parties out of Movements: Party Emergence in Postcommunist Eastern Europ.” In *States, Parties, and Social Movements*, ed. Jack A. Goldstone, 147–69. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Goldfrank, Benjamin. 2011. “The Left and Participatory Democracy: Brazil, Uruguay, and Venezuela.” In *The Resurgence of the Latin American Left*, ed. Steven Levitsky and Kenneth M. Roberts, 162–83. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Goldstone, Jack A. 2003. *States, Parties, and Social Movements*. Cambridge University Press.

- Gómez Bruera, Hernán. 2013. *Lula, the Workers' Party and the Governability Dilemma in Brazil*. New York: Routledge.
- Gray Molina, George. 2008. "State-Society Relations in Bolivia: The Strength of Weakness." In *Unresolved Tensions: Bolivia, Past and Present*, ed. John Crabtree and Laurence Whitehead, 109–24. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.
- . 2013. "Bolivia: Keeping the Coalition Together." In *Constructing Democratic Governance in Latin America*, 4th Edition, 158–76. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Grisaffi, Thomas. 2013. "'All of Us Are Presidents': Radical Democracy and Citizenship in the Chapare Province, Bolivia." *Critique of Anthropology* 33 (1): 47–65. doi:10.1177/0308275X12466681.
- Guarachi, Angel. 2012. "Morales Suspends Application of the Supreme Decree 1126 and Calls for a Summit on Public Health." *La Razón*, May 4, sec. Sociedad.
- Guidry, John A. 2003. "Not Just Another Labor Party: The Workers' Party and Democracy in Brazil." *Labor Studies Journal* 28 (1): 83–108. doi:10.1177/0160449X0302800105.
- Guillermoprieto, Alma. 2006. "A New Bolivia?" *The New York Review of Books*, August 10. <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2006/aug/10/a-new-bolivia/>.
- Handlin, Samuel, and Ruth Berins Collier. 2011. "The Diversity of Left Party Linkages and Competitive Advantages." In *The Resurgence of the Latin American Left*, ed. Steven Levitsky and Kenneth M. Roberts, 139–61. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Harmel, Robert, and Kenneth Janda. 1982. *Parties and Their Environments: Limits to Reform?*. New York: Longman.
- Harten, Sven. 2011. *The Rise of Evo Morales and the MAS*. London: Zed Books.
- Hazan, Reuven Y., and Gideon Rahat. 2010. *Democracy within Parties: Candidate Selection Methods and Their Political Consequences*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Heller, P. 2009. "Democratic Deepening in India and South Africa." *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 44 (1): 123–49. doi:10.1177/0021909608098679.
- Heller, Patrick. 2005. "Reinventing Public Power in the Age of Globalization: The Transformation of Movement Politics in Kerala." In *Social Movements in India: Poverty, Power and Politics*, Ed. Raka Ray and Mary Katzenstein, 79–106. New York: Rowman & Littlefield.

- . 2009. “Democratic Deepening in India and South Africa.” *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 44 (1): 123–49. doi:10.1177/0021909608098679.
- Hicks, Alexander M. 1999. *Social Democracy and Welfare Capitalism: A Century of Income Security Politics*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.
- Hirschman, Albert O. 1970. *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and States*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Hochstetler, Kathryn. 2008. “Organized Civil Society in Lula’s Brazil.” In *Democratic Brazil Revisited*, Ed. Peter Kingstone and Timothy Power, 33–53. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press.
- . 2013. “Social Movements in Latin America.” In *Routledge Handbook of Latin American Politics*, Ed. Peter Kingstone and Deborah Yashar, 237–48. New York: Routledge.
- Huber, Evelyne. 1980. *The Politics of Worker’s Participation: The Peruvian Approach in Comparative Perspective*. New York, NY: Academic Press.
- Huber, Evelyne, Charles Ragin, and John D. Stephens. 1993. “Social Democracy, Christian Democracy, Constitutional Structure and the Welfare State.” *American Journal of Sociology* 99 (3): 711–49.
- Huber, Evelyne, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and John D. Stephens. 1997. “The Paradoxes of Contemporary Democracy: Formal, Participatory, and Social Dimensions.” *Comparative Politics* 29 (3): 323–42.
- Huber, Evelyne, and John D. Stephens. 2001. *Development and Crisis of the Welfare State : Parties and Policies in Global Markets*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.  
<http://search.lib.unc.edu.libproxy.lib.unc.edu?R=UNCb3943648>.
- . 2012. *Democracy and the Left: Social Policy and Inequality in Latin America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Hunter, Wendy. 2007. “The Normalization of an Anomaly: The Workers’ Party in Brazil.” *World Politics* 59 (3): 440–75.
- . 2010. *The Transformation of the Workers’ Party in Brazil, 1989-2009*. Cambridge University Press.
- Hunter, Wendy, and Timothy J. Power. 2005. “Lula’s Brazil at Midterm.” *Journal of Democracy* 16 (3): 127–39. doi:10.1353/jod.2005.0046.
- . 2007. “Rewarding Lula: Executive Power, Social Policy, and the Brazilian Elections of 2006.” *Latin American Politics & Society* 49 (1): 1–30.

- Huntington, Samuel P. 1968. *Political Order in Changing Societies*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Hylton, Forrest, and Sinclair Thomson. 2007. *Revolutionary Horizons: Past and Present in Bolivian Politics*. London ; New York: Verso.
- Immergut, Ellen M. 1992. *Health Politics: Interests and Institutions in Western Europe*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.
- Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas (INE). 2001. *Bolivia: Características de La Población*. La Paz: INE.
- Jachnow, Joachim. 2013. “What’s Become of the German Greens?” *New Left Review* 81 (May-June): 95–117.
- Johnson, Chalmers A. 1982. *MITI and the Japanese Miracle: The Growth of Industrial Policy, 1925-1975*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Jones, Mark P. 2008. “The Recruitment and Selection of Legislative Candidates in Argentina.” In *Pathways to Power: Political Recruitment and Candidate Selection in Latin America*, ed. Peter M. Siavelis and Scott Morgenstern, 41–75. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press.
- Kalyvas, Stathis N. 1996. *The Rise of Christian Democracy in Europe*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Katz, Richard S. 2001. “The Problem of Candidate Selection and Models of Party Democracy.” *Party Politics* 7 (3): 277–96. doi:10.1177/1354068801007003002.
- Katz, Richard S., and Peter Mair. 1995. “Changing Models of Party Organization and Party Democracy The Emergence of the Cartel Party.” *Party Politics* 1 (1): 5–28. doi:10.1177/1354068895001001001.
- . 2009. “The Cartel Party Thesis: A Restatement.” *Perspectives on Politics* 7 (04): 753–66. doi:10.1017/S1537592709991782.
- Keck, Margaret E. 1986. “Democratization and Dissension: The Formation of the Workers’ Party.” *Politics & Society* 15 (1): 67–95. doi:10.1177/003232928601500104.
- Keck, Margaret E. 1992. *Workers’ Party and Democratization in Brazil*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry : Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

- Kirchheimer, Otto. 1966. "The Transformation of the Western European Party Systems." In *Political Parties and Political Development*, ed. Joseph LaPalombara and Myron Weiner, 177–200. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Kitschelt, Herbert. 1989a. *The Logics of Party Formation: Ecological Politics in Belgium and West Germany*. Cornell University Press.
- . 1989b. "The Internal Politics of Parties: The Law of Curvilinear Disparity Revisited." *Political Studies* 37 (3): 400–421. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9248.1989.tb00279.x.
- . 1994. *The Transformation of European Social Democracy*. Cambridge University Press.
- . 2000. "Citizens, Politicians, and Party Cartellization: Political Representation and State Failure in Post-industrial Democracies." *European Journal of Political Research* 37 (2): 149–79. doi:10.1111/1475-6765.00508.
- . 2006. "Movement Parties." In *Handbook of Party Politics*, ed. Richard S. Katz and William Crotty, 278–90. Sage Publishers.
- Kitschelt, Herbert, Kirk A Hawkins, Juan Pablo Luna, Guillermo Rosas, and Elizabeth J. Zechmeister. 2010. *Latin American Party Systems*. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Kohl, Benjamin. 2003. "Democratizing Decentralization in Bolivia The Law of Popular Participation." *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 23 (2): 153–64. doi:10.1177/0739456X03258639.
- Kohl, Benjamin H., and Linda C. Farthing. 2006. *Impasse in Bolivia : Neoliberal Hegemony and Popular Resistance*. London ; New York: Zed Books.
- Komadina, Jorge. 2013. "Culturas Políticas, Democracia Interna Y Conflicto En El Movimiento Al Socialismo." In *Partidos Políticos Del Estado Plurinacional: Estructuras Y Democracia Interna*, Andamios, 7–44. La Paz, Bolivia.
- Komadina, Jorge, and Celine Geffroy. 2007. *El Poder Del Movimiento Politico. Estrategia, Tramas Organizativas E Identidad Del MAS En Cochabamba (1999-2005)*. La Paz, Bolivia: CESU; DICYT-UMSS; Fundacion PIEB.
- Koole, Ruud. 1996. "Cadre, Catch-All or Cartel? A Comment on the Notion of the Cartel Party." *Party Politics* 2 (4): 507–23. doi:10.1177/1354068896002004004.
- Kopp, Adalberto J. 2011. *Organizaciones Indígenas Campesinas Y Soberanía Alimentaria: Contexto Boliviano E Internacional*. La Paz, Bolivia: CESA.
- Korpi, Walter. 1978. *The Working Class in Welfare Capitalism: Work, Unions, and Politics in Sweden*. London ; Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

- Kurtz, Marcus J. 2004. *Free Market Democracy and the Chilean and Mexican Countryside*. Cambridge University Press.
- Lacerda, Alan D. 2002. "O PT E a Unidade Partidária Como Problema." *Dados* 45 (1): 39–76.
- Langston, Joy. 2008. "Legislative Recruitment in Mexico." In *Pathways to Power: Political Recruitment and Candidate Selection in Latin America*, ed. Peter M. Siavelis and Scott Morgenstern, 143–63. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press.
- Lanzaro, Jorge Luis. 2011. "Uruguay: A Social Democratic Government in Latin America." In *The Resurgence of the Latin American Left*, ed. Steven Levitsky and Kenneth M. Roberts, 348–74. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Laruta, Carlos Hugo. 2008. "Organizaciones Y Movimientos Sociales En El Proceso Político Actual - Diciembre 2005 a Junio 2008." In *Los Actores Políticos En La Transición Boliviana*, ed. Horst Grebe López, 67–104. La Paz, Bolivia: Instituto Prisma.
- Lazar, Sian. 2006. "El Alto, Ciudad Rebelde: Organisational Bases for Revolt." *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 25 (2): 183–99.
- . 2008. *El Alto, Rebel City*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- LeBas, Adrienne. 2011. *From Protest to Parties : Party-Building and Democratization in Africa*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Lee, Cheol-Sung. 2012. "Associational Networks and Welfare States in Argentina, Brazil, South Korea, and Taiwan." *World Politics* 64 (03): 507–54. doi:10.1017/S0043887112000111.
- Lehoucq, Fabrice. 2008. "Bolivia's Constitutional Breakdown." *Journal of Democracy* 19 (4): 110–24. doi:10.1353/jod.0.0023.
- Leon, Cedric de. 2013. *Party and Society*. 1 edition. Polity.
- Levitsky, Steven. 2001. "Inside the Black Box: Recent Studies of Latin American Party Organizations." *Studies in Comparative International Development* 36 (2): 92–110. doi:10.1007/BF02686211.
- . 2003. *Transforming Labor-Based Parties in Latin America : Argentine Peronism in Comparative Perspective*. Cambridge, U.K. ; New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Levitsky, Steven, and Maxwell A. Cameron. 2003. "Democracy without Parties? Political Parties and Regime Change in Fujimori's Peru." *Latin American Politics and Society* 45 (3): 1–33.
- Levitsky, Steven, and James Loxton. 2013. "Populism and Competitive Authoritarianism in the Andes." *Democratization* 20 (1): 107–36.



- Levitsky, Steven, James Loxton, and Brandon Van Dyck. n.d. "Introduction: Challenges of Party-Building in Latin America." In *Party-Building in Latin America*, ed. Steven Levitsky, James Loxton, Brandon Van Dyck, and Jorge Domínguez.
- Levitsky, Steven, and Kenneth M. Roberts. 2011a. *The Resurgence of the Latin American Left*. 1st ed. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Levitsky, Steven, and Lucan A. Way. 1998. "Between a Shock and a Hard Place: The Dynamics of Labor-Backed Adjustment in Poland and Argentina." *Comparative Politics* 30 (2): 171–92. doi:10.2307/422286.
- Lijphart, Arend. 1971. "Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method." *The American Political Science Review* 65 (3): 682–93. doi:10.2307/1955513.
- Linz, Juan. 2006. "Robert Michels and His Contribution to Political Sociology in Historical and Comparative Perspective." In *Robert Michels, Political Sociology, and the Future of Democracy*, ed. Juan J. Linz, with a bibliography by H. E. Chehabi, 1–80. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.
- Lipset, Seymour, James S. Coleman, and Martin A. Trow. 1977. *Union Democracy: The Internal Politics of the International Typographical Union*. New York: Free Press [1956].
- Lipset, Seymour M., and Stein Rokkan. 1967. "Cleavage Structure, Party Systems, and Voter Alignments: An Introduction." In *Party Systems and Voter Alignments*, ed. Seymour Martin Lipset and Stein Rokkan, 1–67. New York: The Free Press.
- Los Tiempos. 2011. "Evo Morales Anuncia Nueva Ley de Tierras Para Eliminar El Latifundio En Bolivia." *Los Tiempos*, August 2.
- Loxbo, Karl. 2013. "The Fate of Intra-Party Democracy Leadership Autonomy and Activist Influence in the Mass Party and the Cartel Party." *Party Politics* 19 (4): 537–54. doi:10.1177/1354068811407583.
- Lucero, Jose. 2008. *Struggles of Voice: The Politics of Indigenous Representation in the Andes*. Pittsburgh, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press.
- Luna, Juan Pablo. 2006. "Programmatic and Non-Programmatic Party-Voter Linkages in Two Institutionalized Party Systems: Chile and Uruguay in Comparative Perspective." Ph.D Dissertation, Department of Political Science, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.
- . 2007. "Frente Amplio and the Crafting of a Social Democratic Alternative in Uruguay." *Latin American Politics and Society* 49 (4): 1–30. doi:10.1111/j.1548-2456.2007.tb00390.x.

- . 2010a. “Segmented Party–Voter Linkages in Latin America: The Case of the UDI.” *Journal of Latin American Studies* 42 (02): 325–56. doi:10.1017/S0022216X10000465.
- . 2010b. “The Left Turns: Why They Happened and How They Compare.” In *Latin America’s Left Turns: Politics, Policies, and Trajectories of Change*, Ed. by Maxwell A. Cameron and Eric Hershberg, 23–40. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- . 2014. *Segmented Representation: Political Party Strategies in Unequal Democracies*. Oxford University Press.
- Luna, Juan Pablo, and Fernando Filgueira. 2009. “The Left Turns as Multiple Paradigmatic Crises.” *Third World Quarterly* 30 (2): 371–95.
- Madrid, Raúl L. 2008. “The Rise of Ethnopolitism in Latin America.” *World Politics* 60 (03): 475–508. doi:10.1017/S0043887100009060.
- . 2011. “Bolivia: Origins and Policies of the Movimiento Al Socialismo.” In *The Resurgence of the Latin American Left*, ed. Steven Levitsky and Kenneth M. Roberts, 239–59. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- . 2012. *The Rise of Ethnic Politics in Latin America*. 1st ed. Cambridge University Press.
- Magaloni, Beatriz. 2006. *Voting for Autocracy: Hegemonic Party Survival and Its Demise in Mexico*. Cambridge University Press.
- Mahoney, James. 2010. “After KKV: The New Methodology of Qualitative Research.” *World Politics* 62 (1): 120–47.
- Mainwaring, Scott, and Edurne Zoco. 2007. “Political Sequences and the Stabilization of Interparty Competition Electoral Volatility in Old and New Democracies.” *Party Politics* 13 (2): 155–78. doi:10.1177/1354068807073852.
- Mair, Peter. 2013. *Ruling the Void : The Hollowing of Western Democracy*. London: Verso.
- Mamani, Julio, and Rafael Archondo. 2010. *La Acción Colectiva En El Alto: Hacia Una Etnografía de Las Organizaciones Sociales*. El Alto, Bolivia: Gregoria Apaza.
- Marais, Hein. 2011. *South Africa Pushed to the Limit: The Political Economy of Change*. London ; New York: Zed Books.
- Mayorga, Fernando. 2011. *Dilemas*. La Paz: CESU/Plural Editores.
- Mayorga, René Antonio. 2006. “Outsiders and Neopopulism: The Road to Plebiscitary Democracy.” In *The Crisis of Democratic Representation in the Andes*, edited by Scott Mainwaring, Ana M Bejarano, and Eduardo Pizarro Leongómez, 2006th ed., 132–67. Sanford, California: Stanford University Press.

- McDonnell, Duncan. 2013. "Silvio Berlusconi's Personal Parties: From Forza Italia to the Popolo Della Libertà." *Political Studies* 61 (April): 217–33. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9248.2012.01007.x.
- McGuire, James. 1997. *Peronism without Perón : Unions, Parties, and Democracy in Argentina*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- McKenzie, Robert. 1955. *British Political Parties; the Distribution of Power within the Conservative and Labour Parties*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Meneguello, Rachel. 1989. *PT: A Formação de Um Partido, 1979-1982*. São Paulo: Paz e Terra.
- Meneguello, Rachel, and Oswaldo Amaral. 2008. "Ainda Novidade: Uma Revisão Das Transformações Do Partido Dos Trabalhadores No Brasil." Occasional Paper Number BSP-02-08. Brazilian Studies Programme Latin American Centre St Antony's College.
- Meyer, David S., and Sidney G Tarrow. 1998. "A Movement Society: Contentious Politics for a New Century." In *The Social Movement Society: Contentious Politics for a New Century*, Eds. David S, Meyer and Sidney G. Tarrow, 1–28. Lahnham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Michels, Robert. 1962. *Political Parties: A Sociological Study of the Oligarchical Tendencies of Modern Democracy*. London: The Free Press [1911].
- Ministerio de la Presidencia, and Ministerio de Comunicación. 2011. *Primer Encuentro Plurinacional Para Profundizar El Cambio*. La Paz, Bolivia.
- Molina, Fernando. 2010. "El MAS En El Centro de La Política Boliviana." In *Mutaciones En El Campo Político Boliviano*, 241–302. La Paz, Bolivia: UNDP.
- Montgomery, John D. 1972. "Allocation of Authority in Land Reform Programs: A Comparative Study of Administrative Processes and Outputs." *Administrative Science Quarterly* 17 (1): 62. doi:10.2307/2392094.
- Mudge, Stephanie L, and Anthony S. Chen. 2014. "Political Parties and the Sociological Imagination: Past, Present, and Future Directions." *Annual Review of Sociology* 40 ((July 2014)): 305–30.
- Müller-Rommel, Ferdinand. 1989. *New Politics in Western Europe: The Rise and Success of Green Parties and Alternative Lists*. Boulder: Westview.
- Müller-Rommel, Ferdinand, and Thomas Poguntke. 2002. *Green Parties in National Governments*. London ;Portland, OR: F. Cass.
- Murillo, María Victoria. 2001. *Labor Unions, Partisan Coalitions and Market Reforms in Latin America*. Cambridge, UK; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

- Murillo, María Victoria, Virginia Oliveros, and Milan Vaishnav. 2010. "Electoral Revolution or Democratic Alternation?" *Latin American Research Review* 45 (3): 87–114.
- Navia, Patricio. 2008. "Political Recruitment and Candidate Selection in Chile, 1990 to 2006." In *Pathways to Power: Political Recruitment and Candidate Selection in Latin America*, ed. Peter M. Siavelis and Scott Morgenstern, 92–118. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press.
- Nogueira-Budny, Daniel. 2013. "From Marxist-Leninism to Market-Liberalism? The Varied Adaptation of Latin America's Leftist Parties." Ph.D Dissertation, The University of Texas at Austin.
- Novaes, Carlos Alberto Marques. 1993. "PT: Dilemas Da Burocratização." *Novos Estudos Cebrap* 35: 217–37.
- Nylen, William. 2003. *Participatory Democracy versus Elitist Democracy : Lessons from Brazil*. 1st ed. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- O'Donnell, Guillermo. 1999. *Counterpoints : Selected Essays on Authoritarianism and Democratization*. Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press.
- . 1994. "Delegative Democracy." *Journal of Democracy* 5 (1): 55–69.
- Ondetti, Gabriel A. 2008. *Land, Protest, and Politics: The Landless Movement and the Struggle for Agrarian Reform in Brazil*. Penn State Press.
- Onis, Ziya. 1991. "The Logic of the Developmental State." *Comparative Politics* 24 (1): 109–26.
- Ostrogorski, Moisei. 1964. *Democracy and the Organization of Political Parties, Volume 1: England*. Garden City, NY: Anchor Books [1902].
- Oxhorn, Philip. 1995. *Organizing Civil Society: The Popular Sectors and the Struggle for Democracy in Chile*. Penn State Press.
- . 1998. "The Social Foundations of Latin America's Recurrent Populism: Problems of Popular Sector Class Formation and Collective Action." *Journal of Historical Sociology* 11 (2): 212–46. doi:10.1111/1467-6443.00061.
- Panbianco, Angelo. 1988. *Political Parties: Organization and Power*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Partido dos Trabalhadores. 1980. *Estatuto, Aprovado Na Reunião Nacional de Fundação Do PT, Maio/junho de 1980*.
- . 2001. *Estatuto*.

- Pateman, Carole. 1970. *Participation and Democratic Theory*. Cambridge University Press.
- Pearce, Adrian, ed. 2011. *Evo Morales and the Movimiento Al Socialismo in Bolivia: The First Term in Context, 2005-2009*. London: Institute for the Study of the Americas.
- Piven, Frances Fox, and Richard A Cloward. 1979. *Poor People's Movements : Why They Succeed, How They Fail*. New York: Vintage books.
- Pogrebinschi, Thamy. 2012. "Participation as Representation: Democratic Policy-making in Brazil." In *New Institutions for Participatory Democracy in Latin America: Voice and Consequence*, ed. Maxwell A. Cameron, Eric Hershberg, and Kenneth E. Sharpe, 53–74. New York: Palgrave.
- Postero, Nancy Grey. 2007. *Now We Are Citizens: Indigenous Politics in Postmulticultural Bolivia*. Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press.
- . 2010. "Morales's MAS Government." *Latin American Perspectives* 37 (3) (172): 18–34.
- Power, Timothy J. 2010. "Optimism, Pessimism, and Coalitional Presidentialism: Debating the Institutional Design of Brazilian Democracy." *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 29 (1): 18–33. doi:10.1111/j.1470-9856.2009.00304.x.
- Pribble, Jennifer. 2008. "Protecting the Poor: Welfare Politics in Latin America's Free Market Era." Ph.D Dissertation, Department of Political Science, Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.
- . 2013. *Welfare and Party Politics in Latin America*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Przeworski, Adam, and John D. Sprague. 1986. *Paper Stones: A History of Electoral Socialism*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Queirolo, Rosario. *The Success of the Left in Latin America: Untainted Parties, Market Reforms, and Voting Behavior*. 1st Edition edition. Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2013.
- Revilla Herrero, Carlos J. 2006. "Visibilidad Y Obrismo: En La Estrategia de La Imagen Del Movimiento Plan Progreso En La Ciudad de El Alto." *Programa de Desarrollo Del Poder Local de UNITAS En DNI – El Alto*, 1–25.
- Reygadas, Luis, and Fernando Filgueira. 2010. "Inequality and the Incorporation Crisis: The Left's Social Policy Toolkit." In *Latin America's Left Turns: Politics, Policies, and Trajectories of Change*, Eds. Maxwell A. Cameron and Eric Hershberg, 171–92. Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

- Ribeiro, Pedro. 2008. "Dos Sindicatos Ao Governo: A Organização Nacional Do PT de 1980." Ph.D Dissertation, Sao Carlos: Universidade Federal de Sao Carlos.
- . 2014. "An Amphibian Party? Organisational Change and Adaptation in the Brazilian Workers' Party, 1980–2012." *Journal of Latin American Studies* 46 (1): 87–119.
- Roberts, Kenneth M. 1998. *Deepening Democracy? The Modern Left and Social Movements in Chile and Peru*. Stanford University Press.
- . 2007a. "Latin America's Populist Revival." *SAIS Review* 27 (1): 3–15.
- . 2007b. "Repoliticizing Latin America: The Revival of Populist and Leftist Alternatives." *Woodrow Wilson Center for Scholars*, 1–11.
- . 2008. "The Mobilization of Opposition to Economic Liberalization." *Annual Review of Political Science* 11 (1): 327–49. doi:10.1146/annurev.polisci.11.053006.183457.
- Robertson, David. 1976. *Theory of Party Competition*. London ; New York: John Wiley & Sons Ltd.
- Robertson, Graeme B. 2010. *The Politics of Protest in Hybrid Regimes: Managing Dissent in Post-Communist Russia*. 1st ed. Cambridge University Press.
- Rojas Ortuste, Gonzalo. 2000. "La Elección de Alcaldes En Los Municipios Del País En 1999-2000: Persistencia de La Coalición Nacional." *Opiniones Y Análisis* 49: 83–113.
- Roma, Celso. 2005. "Atores, Preferência E Instituição Na Câmara Dos Deputados." Ph.D Dissertation, Sao Paulo: Universidade de Sao Paulo (USP), Department of Political Science.
- Romero, Carlos, Carlos Bohrt Irahola, and Raúl Peñaranda. 2009. *Del Conflicto Al Diálogo: Memorias Del Acuerdo Constitucional*. La Paz, Bolivia: FES-ILDIS y fBDM.
- Rossi, Federico M. 2015. "The Second Wave of Incorporation in Latin America: A Conceptualization of the Quest for Inclusion Applied to Argentina." *Latin American Politics and Society* 57 (1): 1–28. doi:10.1111/j.1548-2456.2015.00256.x.
- Roy, Sara. 2013. *Hamas and Civil Society in Gaza: Engaging the Islamist Social Sector*. With a New afterword by the author edition. Princeton University Press.
- Rueschemeyer, Dietrich, Evelyne Huber, and John D. Stephens. 1992. *Capitalist Development and Democracy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

- Samuels, David. 2004. "From Socialism to Social Democracy Party Organization and the Transformation of the Workers' Party in Brazil." *Comparative Political Studies* 37 (9): 999–1024. doi:10.1177/0010414004268856.
- . 2008. "Brazilian Democracy under Lula and the PT." In *Constructing Democratic Governance in Latin America*, 3rd. edition. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Samuels, David J. 1999. "Incentives to Cultivate a Party Vote in Candidate-Centric Electoral Systems Evidence from Brazil." *Comparative Political Studies* 32 (4): 487–518. doi:10.1177/0010414099032004004.
- Sanchez-Sibony, Omar. 2013. "Democratic Breakdowns via a Thousand Blows in Latin America." *LASA Forum* 44 (4): 7–9.
- Sandbrook, Richard, Marc Edelman, Patrick Heller, and Judith Teichman. 2007. *Social Democracy in the Global Periphery: Origins, Challenges, Prospects*. Cambridge, UK ;New York: Cambridge University Press,.
- Santos, Boaventura. 2005. *Democratizing Democracy : Beyond the Liberal Democratic Canon*. London ;New York: Verso.
- Schattschneider, E. E. (Elmer Eric). 1942. *Party Government*. New York: Farrar and Rinehart.
- Schiwy, Freya. 2008. *Todos Somos Presidentes/We Are All Presidents: Bolivia and the Question of the State*.
- Schwartz, Mildred A. 2006. *Party Movements in the United States And Canada: Strategies of Persistence*. Rowman & Littlefield.
- Siavelis, Peter M., and Scott Morgenstern. 2008b. "Candidate Recruitment and Selection in Latin America: A Framework for Analysis." *Latin American Politics and Society* 50 (4): 27–58. doi:10.1111/j.1548-2456.2008.00029.x.
- Siavelis, Peter, and Scott Morgenstern, eds. 2008a. *Pathways to Power: Political Recruitment and Candidate Selection in Latin America*. Penn State Press.
- Silva, Eduardo. 2009. *Challenging Neoliberalism in Latin America*. Cambridge ;New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Sivak, Martin. 2010. *Evo Morales: The Extraordinary Rise of the First Indigenous President of Bolivia*. 1st Ed. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Smith, Martin. 1993. *Pressure, Power and Policy : State Autonomy and Policy Networks in Britain and the United States*. England: Harvester Wheatsheaf.

- Smith, William C., Juan Pablo Luna, M. Victoria Murillo, Andrew Schrank, Evelyne Huber, John D. Stephens, Fernando Limongi, et al. 2014. "Special Section: Political Economy and the Future of Latin American Politics." *Latin American Politics and Society* 56 (1): 1–33. doi:10.1111/j.1548-2456.2014.00219.x.
- Smulovitz, Catalina, and Enrique Peruzzotti. 2000. "Societal Accountability in Latin America." *Journal of Democracy* 11 (4): 147.
- Snyder, Richard. 2001. "Scaling Down: The Subnational Comparative Method." *Studies in Comparative International Development* 36 (1): 93–110. doi:10.1007/BF02687586.
- Soule, Sarah A. 2012. "Bringing Organizational Studies Back in to Social Movement Scholarship." In *The Future of Social Movement Research*, ed. Jacqueliën van Stekelenburg, Conny Roggeband and Bert Klandermans, 107–23. Minneapolis, MI: University of Minnesota Press.
- Stavrakakis, Yannis. 2015. "Populism in Power: Syriza's Challenge to Europe." *Juncture* 21 (4): 273–80. doi:10.1111/j.2050-5876.2015.00817.x.
- Stefanoni, Pablo. 2003a. "MAS-IPSP: La Emergencia Del Nacionalismo Plebeyo." *Observatorio Social de América Latina* 4 (12): 57–68.
- . 2003b. "MAS-IPSP: La Emergencia Del Nacionalismo Plebeyo." *Observatorio Social de América Latina* 4 (12): 57–68.
- Stefanoni, Pablo, and Hervé Do Alto. 2006. *Evo Morales. De La Coca Al Palacio: Una Oportunidad Para La Izquierda Indígena*. La Paz, Bolivia: Malatesta.
- Stephens, John D. 1979. *The Transition from Capitalism to Socialism*. London: Macmillan.
- Stoyan, Alissandra. 2014. "Constituent Assemblies, Presidential Majorities, and Democracy in Latin America." Ph.D Dissertation, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Department of Political Science: Department of Political Science.
- Subercaseaux, Elizabeth, and Malu Sierra. 2007. *Evo Morales: Primer Indígena Que Gobierna En América Del Sur*. Santiago de Chile, Chile: LOM Ediciones.
- Tapia, Luis. 2011. *El Estado de Derecho Como Tiranía*. La Paz, Bolivia: CIDES/UMSA.
- Tavits, Margit. 2013. *Post-Communist Democracies and Party Organization*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Tockman, Jason. 2014. "Instituting Power : Power Relations, Institutional Hybridity, and Indigenous Self-Governance in Bolivia." <http://circle.ubc.ca/handle/2429/50912>.



- Tockman, Jason, and John Cameron. 2014. "Indigenous Autonomy and the Contradictions of Plurinationalism in Bolivia." *Latin American Politics and Society* 56 (3): 46–69. doi:10.1111/j.1548-2456.2014.00239.x.
- Tsebelis, George. 2002. *Veto Players : How Political Institutions Work*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- UMSS. 2004. *Atlas Del Trópico de Cochabamba*. Cochabamba: Universidad Mayor de San Simón.
- UNIR. 2012. *Perfiles de La Conflictividad Social En Bolivia (2009-2011)*. La Paz, Bolivia: Fundación UNIR.
- Van Biezen, Ingrid, Peter Mair, and Thomas Poguntke. 2012. "Going, Going, . . . Gone? The Decline of Party Membership in Contemporary Europe." *European Journal of Political Research* 51 (1): 24–56. doi:10.1111/j.1475-6765.2011.01995.x.
- Van Cott, Donna Lee. 2003. "Institutional Change and Ethnic Parties in South America." *Latin American Politics and Society* 45 (2): 1–39. doi:10.2307/3176978.
- . 2005. *From Movements to Parties in Latin America: The Evolution of Ethnic Politics*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.
- . 2008. *Radical Democracy in the Andes*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Van Dyck, Brandon. 2013. "The Paradox of Adversity: New Left Party Survival and Collapse in Latin America." Ph.D Dissertation, Harvard University.
- . 2014. "Why Party Organization Still Matters: The Workers' Party in Northeastern Brazil." *Latin American Politics and Society* 56 (2): 1–26. doi:10.1111/j.1548-2456.2014.00229.x.
- Van Dyke, Nella, and Holly J. McCammon. 2010. *Strategic Alliances : Coalition Building and Social Movements*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Vergara, Alberto. 2011. "United by Discord, Divided by Consensus: National and Sub-National Articulation in Bolivia and Peru, 2000–2010." *Journal of Politics in Latin America* 3 (3): 65–93.
- Wampler, Brian. 2007. *Participatory Budgeting in Brazil : Contestation, Cooperation, and Accountability*. University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press. <http://search.lib.unc.edu?R=UNCb5325549>; Table of contents only (<http://www.loc.gov/catdir/toc/ecip0715/2007014504.html>).
- Webber, Jeffery R. 2010. "Carlos Mesa, Evo Morales, and a Divided Bolivia." *Latin American Perspectives* 37 (3) (172): 51–70.

- . 2011. *From Rebellion to Reform in Bolivia: Class Struggle, Indigenous Liberation, and the Politics of Evo Morales*. Haymarket Books.
- Weber, Max. 1946. "Politics as a Vocation." In *Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, ed. Hans H. Gerth and Charles Wright Mills, 77–128. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- . 1968. *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*. New York, NY: Bedminster Press.
- Weyland, Kurt. 2009. "The Rise of Latin America's Two Lefts: Insights from Rentier State Theory." *Comparative Politics* 41 (2): 145–64.  
doi:10.5129/001041509X12911362971918.
- . 2013. "The Threat from the Populist Left." *Journal of Democracy* 24 (3): 18–32.  
doi:10.1353/jod.2013.0045.
- Weyland, Kurt G., Raúl L. Madrid, and Wendy Hunter. 2010. *Leftist Governments in Latin America: Successes and Shortcomings*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Wickham, Carrie Rosefsky. 2004. "The Path to Moderation: Strategy and Learning in the Formation of Egypt's Wasat Party." *Comparative Politics* 36 (2): 205–28.
- Wolff, Jonas. 2013. "Towards Post-Liberal Democracy in Latin America? A Conceptual Framework Applied to Bolivia." *Journal of Latin American Studies* 45 (01): 31–59.  
doi:10.1017/S0022216X12000843.
- Wuhs, Steven. 2008. *Savage Democracy : Institutional Change and Party Development in Mexico*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press.
- Yaffé, Jaime. 2005. *Al centro y adentro: la renovación de la izquierda y el triunfo del Frente Amplio en Uruguay*. Montevideo: Linardi y Risso.
- Yashar, Deborah J. 2005. *Contesting Citizenship in Latin America : The Rise of Indigenous Movements and the Postliberal Challenge*. Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Zegada, María, Claudia Arce, Gabriela Canedo, and Alber Quispe Escobar. 2011. *La Democracia Desde Los Márgenes : Transformaciones En El Campo Político Boliviano*. La Paz, Bolivia: Muela del Diablo.
- Zegada, Maria Teresa, and Jorge Komadina. 2014. *El Espejo de La Sociedad: Poder Y Representación En Bolivia*. La Paz, Bolivia: CERES/Plural.
- Zegada, Maria Teresa, Yuri F. Torrez, and Gloria Camara. 2008. *Movimientos Sociales En Tiempos de Poder: Articulaciones Y Campos de Conflicto En El Gobierno Del MAS (2006-2007)*. La Paz, Bolivia: Centro Cuarto Intermedio; Plural Editores.

Zuazo, Moira. 2008. *¿Cómo Nació El MAS? La Ruralización de La Política En Bolivia: Entrevistas a 85 Parlamentarios Del Partido*. La Paz, Bolivia: Fundacion Ebert.

———. 2010. “¿Los Movimientos Sociales En El Poder? El Gobierno Del MAS En Bolivia.” *Nueva Sociedad* 227 (may-june): 120–35.