Introduction

Political parties have undergone deep changes in recent years. As mass party membership has arguably become a relic of the past for many of them (Levitsky and Cameron 2003; Mainwaring and Zoco 2007; Van Biezen, Mair, and Poguntke 2012), political parties founded as ad hoc electoral vehicles to sustain the support of a single charismatic leader have become increasingly common phenomena in "young" and "old" democracies alike – prominent examples include the Movimiento Quinta República (MVR) under Hugo Chávez and Alianza País under Rafael Correa (Ellner 2013), as well as the Italian Forza Italia and the Popolo Della Libertá under Silvio Berlusconi (McDonnell 2013), among others. In these parties, the locus of organizational power is squarely at the top. By contrast, other newer parties, such as the Green left-libertarian or the anti-austerity "movement parties" in Western Europe, reject personalism in the interest of boosting internal participation and resisting oligarchic tendencies and top-down control.[1] However, success in achieving and maintaining internal grass-roots participation and bottom-up influence, particularly after assuming national power, has generally proven to be elusive for political parties (Jachnow 2013).

This book develops a thick "anatomy" of the Bolivian MAS (Movimiento al Socialismo, or Movement Toward Socialism) – an example of a party formed by social movements organized around the political inclusion of the poor and underrepresented, and one that 20 years after its genesis, and more than a decade in power, still deviates from the conventional wisdom on parties. I argue that the MAS has found ways to at least partially counteract trends toward

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[1] 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) and Müller-Rommel and Poguntke (2002). Della Porta et al. (2017) studies anti-austerity movement parties in Europe.

top-down control, a widely held expectation in the literature, due in large part to elements traceable to the party's social movement origins and to the ongoing strength of autonomous civil society mobilization. To test the generalizability of my arguments, I then compare the MAS with two additional parties that share common origins in social movements but vary in terms of the extent to which their structures disperse political power and allow bottom-up participation in decision-making. A central goal of this book, then, is to explain *why* some movement-based parties develop more top-down structures designed to enhance the power and autonomy of the party leadership while others remain more open to bottom-up participation and responsive to the interests, demands, and preferences of their social bases. Through an in-depth examination of the origins, organization, and internal politics of three parties formed by and with strong ties to grass-roots social movements in Latin America, this book develops an original theoretical framework for explaining variation in their internal power distributions, organizational models, and leadership patterns.

New parties have been especially important in Latin America (Levitsky et al. 2016). 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, and Hunter 2010; Levitsky and Roberts 2011).[2] Some of those parties began life as social movements. Usually described loosely as "movement-based" parties (Van Cott 2005: 39; Hochstetler 2013: 242), they draw organizational strength from connections to grass-roots social movements. Key examples include the Brazilian PT (Workers' Party), the Uruguayan FA (Broad Front), the Colombian 19th 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 core case studied in this book: the Bolivian MAS.

Movement-based parties are not just a Latin American phenomenon; they have also emerged in Africa (LeBas 2011), the Middle East (Roy 2013), Western Europe (Mair 2013; della Porta et al. 2017), Eastern Europe (Glenn 2003), and North America (Schwartz 2006). Despite their importance and rise in popularity (de Leon 2013: 5, 158–9), we know little about how these parties work internally. Research has tended to overwhelmingly focus on the origins of movement-based parties and their rise to prominence (e.g., Kitschelt 1989a; Keck 1992; Bartolini and Mair 1995; Bruhn 1997; Goldstone 2003; Chandra 2004; Van Cott 2005; Madrid 2012), meaning that the internal politics of these

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[2] Left parties are parties committed to the values of equality and solidarity (Huber and Stephens 2012: 28). Strategically, they seek to use state power to "protect individuals from market failures, reduce socio-economic inequality, and strengthen underprivileged sectors" (Levitsky and Roberts 2011: 5).

parties remain both underexamined and undertheorized. The work by della Porta et al. (2017) is a partial exception.

In Latin America, the rise in popularity and ascension of movement-based parties to national-level power generated some optimism about the prospects for building internally democratic organizations that encourage grass-roots social movements to participate both widely and substantively in making collective decisions (Van Cott 2008; Handlin and Collier 2011; Goldfrank 2011a; Madrid 2012; De la Torre 2013). Extending direct grass-roots participation, which has been associated with the post-Cold War notion of "deepening" democracy, is a historic goal of the political left in Latin America (Roberts 1998: 3; Goldfrank 2011b). 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 power and political authority, but more fundamental questions still remain unanswered: How do these parties work internally? How democratic are they in their organization and internal operations? What are their relationships to grass-roots allies in civil society? And what causes these parties to exhibit such a wide variation in the manner in which they concentrate and disperse political power in their internal organization? To put it simply: why do some succumb to the trend toward top-down control, as the conventional wisdom would expect it, while others resist that trend more strongly?

These questions have a long lineage in political and sociological thought. They had great relevance to Moisei Ostrogorski'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 his seminal book, *Political Parties* (Michels, 1962 [1911]). The short version of Michels's "iron law" of oligarchy is arguably one of the most generalizable and prominent statements in political science.[3] Now over a hundred years old, Michels's argument on the organizational development of parties predicts the inevitable rise of top-down, elite-dominated hierarchical structures that concentrate power and de-emphasize bottom-up participation. Michels's oligarchy theory is of special interest here because influential analyses of party organization either explicitly

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[3] 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 grass-roots, 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).

confront or arrive at this same conclusion.[4] Framed as an authoritative, "fundamental sociological law of political parties," it denies the very possibility of democratic modes of governance within parties regardless of party type or differences in their founding organizational characteristics. The assumption is that, even if parties have different genetic endowments (Panebianco 1988), they will all end up the same – particularly as they contest elections, institutionalize their structures, and access high electoral office.[5]

Michels's work has deeply shaped scholarly thinking about political parties. And indeed, there is a clear teleological expectation in the scholarly literature of comparative political parties that *even* where parties begin as social movements (or as distinctively bottom-up organizations), they all evolve until they are dominated by a specialized, professionalized caste of political elites who are highly detached from and unaccountable to their social bases. In response to electoral imperatives and other pressures discussed in Chapter 1, the movement transforms into a political machine or, even worse, a closed and powerful political cartel with distinct interests from the movements (Katz and Mair 1995). Under conditions of cartelization, there is a widening gap between party leaders and social bases, and the latter wield little power in internal party affairs.

This book challenges this highly influential body of literature by showing that such a teleological course of organizational development is *not* inevitable or preordained. I argue that Bolivia's MAS, a party formed directly by social movements, has found ways to at least partially counteract Michelsian oligarchic trends. This outcome is largely attributable to the party's social movement genesis and the strength and ongoing capacity of autonomous social mobilization by its social base. I demonstrate that, against theoretical expectations, the party's grass-roots social base wields significant influence over the selection of candidates for elective office and in the policy-making sphere. Although oligarchic temptations are readily present by the party's top leadership, historical causes traceable to the party's early development as well as constant causes linked to its power base provide countervailing, "bottom-up" correctives to hierarchy and concentrated authority.

Although the question of *who* wields power in political parties and the related idea of internal party democracy are the subject of an age-old debate, they recently regained attention in comparative party analyses (Hazan and Rahat 2010; Cross and Katz 2013; Cross and Pilet 2013; de Leon 2013; Mudge and Chen 2014), partly in response to the widespread crisis of representation and the decline of mass party membership. Thus, the broader theoretical question that I address in this book – the conditions and mechanisms under

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

which political parties can counteract a seemingly inevitable course of oligarchic organizational development – is both a classic question of political sociology and a pressing issue of practical relevance in contemporary societies.

WHY THIS BOOK

Parties are crucial, if not indispensable, for democratic politics.[6] They do much more than make democracy "workable" for voters and politicians.[7] Parties are key for political interest aggregation and for the translation of programs into policies. Their organizational properties, moreover, have implications not only for the dynamics of interparty competition (Panebianco 1988; Kitschelt 2000; Roberts 2015a), but also for shaping normatively important public policy outcomes. For example, the politics of redistribution can be better understood by looking at the organizational attributes of parties – and, specifically, their balance of power among internal stakeholders – since more power-dispersing parties generally push social policy in a bolder, more redistributive, and universalistic direction.[8] Thus, there is a potentially high payoff for research on the sources of variation in the internal distribution of power within and between parties.[9] This could then be linked to rich and nuanced explanations of macro-level processes, such as social policy reform.

The question of whether, to what extent, and how parties can defy the tendencies toward top-down control and remain open to societal input is not just an academic exercise; it has important practical and political consequences at both the party and the regime levels. As multiple studies have made abundantly clear, when democratic participation within governing parties is deficient, those parties can more easily become vehicles for the unrestrained will of political elites and even dominant single leaders. In such contexts, the voices of regular citizens or even of the party's own social bases may not be heard, thereby hindering the average citizen's participation in political life while enhancing the discretion of the party leadership – a condition conducive to personalistic politics. At the party level, using Hirschman's (1970) terminology, where groups and individuals that constitute a party's social base have limited opportunities to exert "voice" in party decisions, it is generally much harder to establish and maintain high levels of organizational "loyalty," partisan engagement, and mobilization capacity (Anria and Cyr 2017; Pérez, Piñeiro, and Rosenblatt 2018; Rosenblatt 2018). At the broader regime level, where instances

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[6] As Schattschneider (1942: 1) writes, "modern democracy is *unthinkable* save in terms of political parties" (emphasis added).

[7] "Democracy," writes Aldrich (1995: 3), "is *unworkable* save in terms of parties" (emphasis added).

[8] For excellent analyses pointing in this direction, see Huber and Stephens (2012), Pribble (2013), Schipani (2016), and Garay (2017).

[9] See Mudge and Chen's (2014: 320) call for research on this question.

for bottom-up input are significantly reduced while in power, "bait-and-switch" policy-making becomes more likely (Roberts 2015a). This, in turn, can affect negatively the consistency of the party "brand" and impact the stability of the overall party system (Lupu 2016).

When governing parties are more open to bottom-up input, by contrast, there are greater opportunities to establish checks on the decisions of their leaders and constrain their strategic behavior and hierarchical control. In such contexts, it is less likely that the party will become a vehicle to advance the goals of a personalistic leader – even if oligarchic temptations are readily available. The presence of channels to exert "voice" provides incentives for the social bases to shape important decisions, as these bases become de facto veto actors within the organization. Developing greater opportunities for bottom-up input, moreover, makes it comparatively easier for these parties to maintain strong grass-roots linkages as well as to breed organizational loyalty, partisan engagement, and mobilization capacity (Rosenblatt 2018). At the broader regime level, when a governing party establishes and upholds well-developed opportunities for bottom-up grass-roots participation, instances of bait-and-switch policy-making are less likely – a condition conducive to policy stability. This, in turn, makes the consistency of the party brand more likely to stick and the party system more stable (Lupu 2016).

In addition, when governing parties (especially those formed by popular organizations pushing for inclusion) are more open, they may generate opportunities and incentives for the political empowerment of traditionally marginalized groups by boosting their input in the political power game.[10] Seen from this angle, arguments about internal power dispersion can be seen as arguments about "democratizing" or "deepening" democracy.[11] My goal here, then, is neither to refute Michels's "iron law" of oligarchy nor to prove that it does not apply everywhere. Rather, the goal is to use original, systematic evidence to explain the conditions, mechanisms, and processes under which broader and substantive bottom-up participation can be promoted and sustained within contemporary governing parties that have social movements, peasant associations, labor unions, and other popular organizations as their

[10] 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.

[11] 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 (see also Huber, Rueschemeyer, and Stephens 1997). In this view, democracy is not just about its formal institutions, but it also has to do with increased empowerment of its citizens, especially subordinate groups in society.

core social base.[12] The scholarly literature gives scant theoretical guidance to assist with the empirical exploration of this puzzle.

Beyond its substantive and practical relevance, this book helps address significant gaps in the scholarly literature of comparative politics. Understanding the organization and internal operations of movement-based parties adds to one of the most strikingly underdeveloped and fragmented bodies of literature in comparative politics: the debate about what happens inside the "black box" of parties and party decision-making (Levitsky 2001). As scholars have noted, political parties "are not what they once were" in older and younger democracies alike (Schmitter 2001, cited in Roberts 2015a: 37). Yet, although parties remain weakly organized in much of the developing world (Cyr 2012), the era of party-building is far from over (Tavits 2013; Van Dyck 2014), and movement-based parties seem to be well-equipped to build strong and durable organizations (Levitsky et al. 2016: 21). In Latin America, a region notorious for its populist tradition and personalistic politics (Weyland 2001; De la Torre and Arnson 2013; Roberts 2017), vibrant social movements have spawned electorally successful parties that even gained national-level power. This is by itself a remarkable development. Even more remarkable, some of these parties have become better than others at generating spaces for bottom-up influence and counteracting the trends toward top-down control associated with party bureaucratization and concentrated executive authority – a pattern that is promising because it can contribute to breaking with the historic mold of party organizations subordinated to the political authority and interests of dominant leaders. And yet the literature has few insights to help explain this variation.

This book provides a timely addition to the study of the internal politics of movement-based parties, and in so doing it tries to build bridges across the scholarly literatures on political parties and social movements. The book not only shows how movements can form parties, as they sometimes do, but also how they shape and constrain internal party organizational and leadership patterns. Indeed, as discussed in the pages that follow, movement attributes become a critical source of variation in parties' internal power distributions and organizational models, both within and across cases.

MOVEMENTS, PARTIES, AND MOVEMENT-BASED PARTIES

The scholarly works of literature on social movements and political parties have often traveled parallel roads with little conversation between them (della Porta et al. 2017: 3). However, scholars have recently been paying more attention to the multiple overlaps between parties and movements linked to

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[12] My approach is thus akin to the one followed by Lipset, Coleman, and Trow (1977 [1956]: 13) in their seminal study of the conditions affecting *union* democracy, whose goal was to explain the mechanisms that might enable or hinder the maintenance of democracy in organizations.

them (Goldstone 2003; Heaney and Rojas 2015; Tarrow 2015). Social move-
ments, usually defined as networks of groups that seek to change some aspect of
the social and political structure through extra-institutional means (Tilly 1978),
influence the internal politics of parties in various ways; they often infiltrate
parties, introduce new issues on their programs, provide mobilizational power,
and help parties expand their bases of support by establishing linkages with
voters, among other things (Bartolini and Mair 1995; Thachil 2014; Brooke
2017). In extreme cases, as McAdam and Tarrow (2010: 533) note, "move-
ments turn into political parties themselves." In this book, I call these
movement-based parties. They are one of "the main political consequences of
movements at the structural level" (Amenta et al. 2010: 289).

Movement-based parties share two key defining attributes. First, they are
parties directly formed by social movement activists and leaders. This means
they have a different logic of party formation than what the dominant,
Downsian models of party formation stipulate (Downs 1957). In those highly
influential models, parties are seen as the creation of strategic legislators; they
are depicted simply as electoral vehicles for political elites and as structures
largely detached from their social bases (Aldrich 1995: 29–50). By contrast,
movement-based parties are the direct creation of militant movement activists
and grass-roots leaders forged in the heat of social mobilization, who decide to
enter into the electoral arena and compete for office while sustaining collective
action in the streets; they are generally formed as opposition parties or as
regime challengers, and they follow a distinctively "bottom-up" logic of party
genesis. In short, if in Aldrich's (1995) dominant model the logic of party
formation consists of rootless political entrepreneurs in search of social bases,
movement-based parties stand out because they follow the reverse logic. They
begin life as movements (Tarrow 2015: 95).

Second, movement-based parties are parties with a core constituency of grass-
roots social movements.[13] This definition parallels Levitsky's (2003: 4) definition
of labor-based parties, with grass-roots social movements rather than organized
labor as the sponsoring organizations and core constituency. In my conceptual-
ization, movement-based parties are also different from Kitschelt's (2006) ana-
lytical 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 vari-
ous movements and other popular organizations and, as such, they are better
prepared to incorporate a broader set of issues, actors, and demands. My
conceptualization is also different from della Porta et al.'s (2017: 4, 7) definition

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[13] The term "core constituency" comes from Gibson (1992, 1996). It refers to specific sectors that
provide financial resources, policy-making support, and guidance to a political party. In the case
of movement-based parties, movements also provide mobilizational power. In the remainder of
this book, I shall use the terms "social movements," "grass-roots movements," and "popular
organizations" interchangeably.

of "movement parties," which stresses the strength of the organizational linkages between parties and movements. In that definition, movement parties are those that have particularly strong organizational and external links with social movements. My definition of movement-based parties also considers those connections but emphasizes that these parties are the creation of social movements. They are, in short, founded *directly* by movements.

In contemporary Latin America, examples of these parties include, but are not limited to, the Bolivian MAS, the Brazilian Workers' Party (PT), the Ecuadorian Pachakutik Plurinational Unity Movement – New Country (Pachakutik), the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN), the Uruguayan Broad Front (FA), and the Venezuelan Radical Cause (LCR). Outside Latin America, additional examples of movement-based parties include, but are not limited to, the African National Congress (ANC) in South Africa, the Congress Socialist Party (CSP) in the Indian state of Kerala, and even the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, as well as "historic" cases such as Solidarity in Poland and even the Republican Party in the United States, which emerged from the abolitionist movement in the context of the American Civil War (McAdam and Tarrow 2010: 533).[14] Table I.1 has additional examples and details about their sponsoring movements and core constituency.

Clearly, many of these parties have lost their bottom-up characteristics and become hierarchical party organizations. What I am going to explain in this book is why some of them have been able to preserve a vibrant and participatory internal life.

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, such as street protests and mass demonstrations, and they also compete for office in the electoral arena.[15] As della Porta et al. (2017: 7) note, "to different degrees, they have overlapping membership." And, in fact, 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 and programmatic orientation, they almost always share a rejection of top-down hierarchical control by an autonomous and all-too powerful party leadership, as well as an explicit commitment to maximizing opportunities for democratic participation at the grass-roots level (Carty 2013).

Movement-based parties are often seen as "transitional phenomena" (Kitschelt 2006: 288; della Porta et al. 2017: 24), 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

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[14] 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).

[15] De Leon (2013: 158) calls them "omnibus" parties, acknowledging that it is "difficult to discern where the party begins and where it ends."

TABLE 1.1 *Examples of movement-based parties.*

Party	Country	Sponsoring organizations and core constituency	Sources
Movement Toward Socialism (MAS)*	Bolivia	Coca growers; peasant movements	Van Cott (2005); Madrid (2012)
Workers' Party (PT)*	Brazil	Labor unions; ecclesiastical communities	Meneguello (1989); Keck (1992)
Broad Front (FA)*	Uruguay	Labor unions; student movement	Luna (2007); Lanzaro (2011)
Pachakutik Plurinational Unity Movement	Ecuador	Indigenous movement	Van Cott (2005); Yashar (2005)
Farabundo Martí Natl. Liberation Front (FMLN)*	El Salvador	Guerrilla groups; labor unions	McClintock (1998)
African National Congress (ANC)*	South Africa	Anti-apartheid movement; labor movement	Marais (2011)
Muslim Brotherhood	Egypt	Pan-Islamic, religious movement	Wickham (2015)
Solidarity	Poland	Labor unions	Garton Ash (2002)
Congress Socialist Party (CSP)	India (Kerala)	Anti-colonial, anti-caste movements	Desai (2003)
British Labor Party[a]	Great Britain	Labor unions	Bartolini (2000)
Christian Democratic Party[b]	Germany	Catholic lay organizations; confessional organizations	Kalyvas (1996)
Green Party[c]	Germany	Environmental movement	Kitschelt (1989a)

Notes: The list is not exhaustive. Asterisks indicate movement-based parties that won national-level elections, and not as a member of a coalition. The list also excludes cases such as Podemos in Spain, Syriza (Coalition of the Radical Left) in Greece, and M5S in Italy. These have a core constituency of and strong connections with anti-austerity protest movements in each country (della Porta et al. 2017: 24–55), but they are not *sponsored* directly by movements.

[a] Labor unions, in alliance with other civic associations, also sponsored social democratic or labor parties in many other countries, including Belgium, Sweden, and Australia, among others (see Bartolini 2000: 246).

[b] Religious communities and associations also formed confessional political parties in countries like Belgium, the Netherlands, and Austria, among others (see Kalyvas 1996).

[c] Environmental movements, in alliance with other social movements, also spawned Green parties in several other Western European countries, including Belgium, Finland, France, and Italy.