

THESIS

INSTITUTIONALIZING ETHNIC DEMANDS: FRAMING PROCESSES,
RESOURCE MOBILIZATION, AND INDICATORS OF PARTY FORMATION IN
COLOMBIAN ETHNIC MOVEMENTS

Submitted by

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ABSTRACT

INSTITUTIONALIZING ETHNIC DEMANDS: FRAMING PROCESSES, RESOURCE MOBILIZATION, AND INDICATORS OF PARTY FORMATION IN COLOMBIAN ETHNIC MOVEMENTS

This thesis examines framing and mobilization processes in Colombian ethnic social movements. I employ systematic process analysis to analyze the question of why indigenous social movement organizations have created viable ethnic party vehicles in electoral politics while black social movement organizations have failed in this endeavor. I find that fragmented framing in the black movement led to disunity and inhibited mobilization processes culminating in the inability to mobilize a loyal electorate. This fragmentation was observed less in the indigenous case, resulting in a more unified movement with broader appeal to the indigenous electorate.

My research makes key contribution to the Latin American social movement literature by performing an analysis that compares the respective ethnic social movements in the region while also addressing ethnic party formation. Much of the extant literature highlights one of these groups while paying only cursory attention to the other. The systemic process analysis performed here seeks to help fill this gap in the literature.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	ii
ADMINISTRATIVE AND ETHNIC MAPS	1
INTRODUCTION	4
RESEARCH DESIGN & FRAMEWORK	7
RACE AND ETHNICITY IN LATIN AMERICA AND COLOMBIA.....	25
BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE CASE.....	29
OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS: INSTITUTIONAL APERTURES	43
ANALYSIS	49
CONCLUSIONS	60
WORKS CITED	67

Administrative and Ethnic Maps

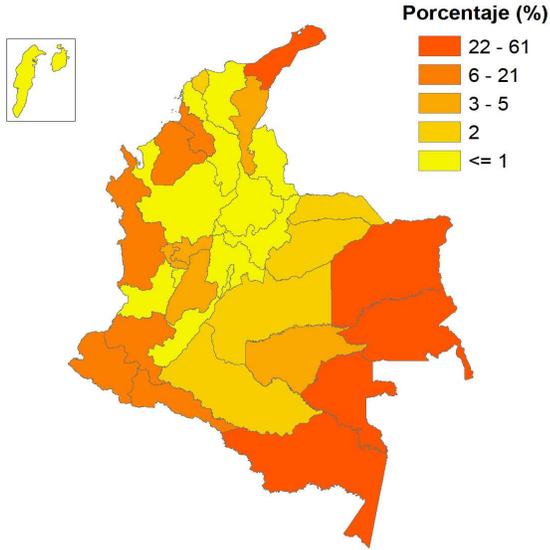


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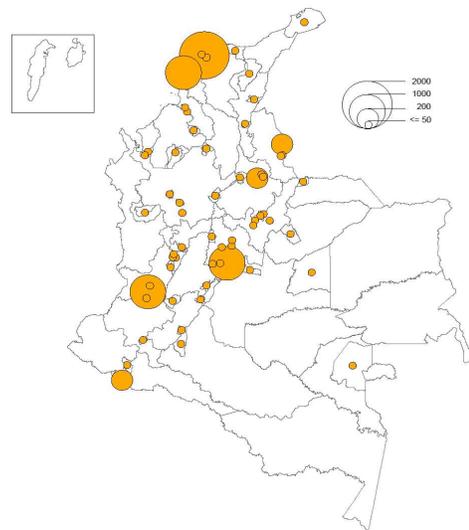


POBLACIÓN INDÍGENA, ROM Y AFROCOLOMBIANA

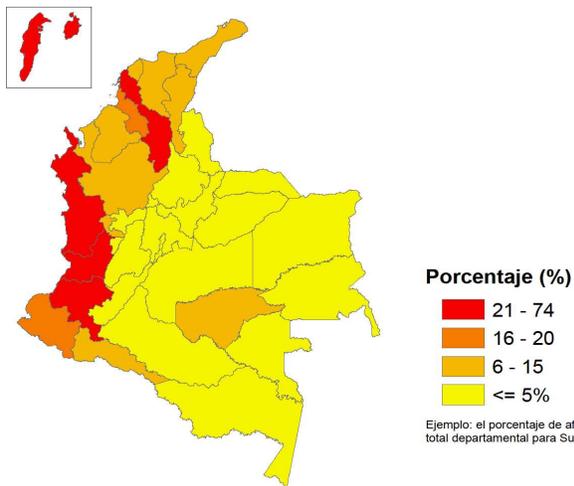
PARTICIPACIÓN DE INDÍGENAS, RESPECTO A LA POBLACIÓN TOTAL DEPARTAMENTAL



POBLACIÓN ROM, A NIVEL MUNICIPAL



PARTICIPACIÓN DE AFROCOLOMBIANOS, RESPECTO A LA POBLACIÓN TOTAL DEPARTAMENTAL



Ejemplo: el porcentaje de afrocolombianos respecto a la población total departamental para Sucre, se encuentra entre el 16 y el 20%

Fuente: Censo General 2005, Marco Geoestatístico Nacional, 2004
Especializado en: Dirección de Geoesadística
Fecha: Octubre de 2006

Source: Departamento Administrativo Nacional de Estadística (DANE)

Introduction

In 1985, Donald Horowitz wrote that “Nowhere is the reciprocal relation between party and society more evident than in ethnic politics” (Horowitz 1985: 291). More importantly, he would add that ethnic cleavages often produced ethnic parties that served to play a great role in political organization. But speaking against Horowitz’s assessment was the state of Latin American ethnic politics at the time, an area in which few examples of ethnic party formation existed despite the notable ethnic diversity of the region. It is this type of observation that led Pradeep Chhibber to note that ethnic party emergence is not only a function of the existence of ethnic cleavages but also of the politicization of that cleavage (1999). Ergo, a multi-ethnic society was a necessary but not sufficient condition for ethnic party emergence.

In the years surrounding Horowitz’s statement, Latin America had experienced a surge in ethnic mobilization and a revival of calls for indigenous rights, a process that would continue for the decades to follow. This rise in multicultural politics has been attributed to a variety of phenomenon in the region. Justifications ranging from broad constitutional reforms to neoliberal economic policies are suggested to have politicized ethnicity for multitudinous purposes, including cultural preservation, resource control, communal rights to land, and territorial autonomy. At the same time, and particularly in the 1990s, many Latin American party systems were undergoing periods of severe stress and decomposition (Van Cott, 2005). This created a political climate ripe with opportunities for ethnic mobilization, as social movement leaders and followers had new reasons to organize and fresh demands to make to the state. Moreover, the combination of party system stress and institutional reforms also placed those movements in position

to transform political mobilization into the creation of electoral vehicles. Indeed, it has been noted elsewhere that ethnic party formation has taken place and that success stories can be found across Latin America (Van Cott, 2005; Rice, 2011).

Across Latin America two main ethnic minority groups have used new political opportunities to politicize ethnic identity; indigenous groups and Afro-Latin populations. Juliet Hooker (2005) cites a report from the Inter-American Development Bank that suggests both groups suffer from racial discrimination and “social exclusion,” the latter explained as the inability of a social group to participate socially, politically, culturally, and economically in society. It is this fact that led Nelson do Valle Silva to comment that there were costs associated with not being white or mestizo, prices that were paid by both indigenous and black citizens (do Valle Silva, 2000). Thus, both groups continue to seek amelioration of their respective standing in society, and areas for improvement are plentiful.¹

Interestingly, while wonderful studies of black collective claims have been done (Asher, 2009; Ng’weno, 2007) much of the focus on the progress of social movements and party formation in Latin America has been focused on indigenous populations. It is once again Hooker who rightfully notes that “The work of scholars of indigenous mobilization in Latin America, while extremely useful for understanding the adoption of multicultural citizenship reforms..., is less helpful in explaining black exclusion” (2005: 289). This statement is incisive as it gets at an unfortunate gap in the study of ethnic politics in Latin America. This gap is evident when we consider that there exists a less developed understanding of the effects of institutional and economic reform on black

¹ Hooker (2005) notes that blacks and indigenous people suffered disproportionately from poverty, unsatisfied basic necessities, illiteracy, and a lack of health services.

social movements in comparison with indigenous movements, particularly in terms of the conditions that facilitate (or hinder) party consolidation out of those movements.

Moreover, multicultural politics in the country is often viewed as indigenous politics, with the struggles of black Latin Americans frequently being overlooked or taking a back seat. And second, it remains unclear how movements for black rights have deteriorated, advanced, or expanded into lasting political fixtures. Thus, a key set of processes remains understudied. This state of the study presents us with a call for more in-depth, comparative study between these social movements that can help give us a broader, more complete understanding of ethnic politics in the region.

In Colombia, both of these ethnic groups are present and have made collective claims to government. Some authors have astutely noted that indigenous claims to land rights, semi-autonomy, and representation in Colombia have been more successful than similar claims made by black communities (Arocha, 1994, 1998; Hooker, 2005). Others have lamented the electoral failures and stagnation that can be observed in the Colombian black movement (Agudelo, 1999, 2002). And one study went so far as to compare the impact of constitutional reform on black and indigenous rights, inclusion, and democratization processes (Van Cott, 2000). But studies of this type, while valuable, leave the field wanting. What remains undone is an in-depth comparison that seeks to explain how the black and indigenous movements have diverged from each other to the point that one exhibits broader mobilization, greater acquisition of collective rights, and higher levels of institutionalization. In this paper, I propose to assist in closing this gap by conducting an detailed, systematic comparison of ethnic party formation out of ethnic social movements in Colombia. I should make clear that my goals do not include a

comprehensive analysis of struggles for ethnic collective rights in the country. Instead, I seek to identify what processes and conditions within Colombian ethnic movements were productive or inhibitive of ethnic party formation across the two movements. Such a study has much to offer the sub-field and should be a welcome addition to other analyses of ethnic politics in Latin America.

Research Design & Framework

It has been noted elsewhere that most socio-economic indicators show Afro-Colombians faring equally as poorly as indigenous people across the region (Hooker, 2005). And as previously mentioned, scholars have noted that indigenous claims to land rights, semi-autonomy, and representation have been more successful than black claims (Arocha, 1994, 1998; Hooker, 2005), while others have analyzed the failure of black leaders to perform at the ballot box and present followers with a consistently viable option in elections (Agudelo, 1999, 2002). Meanwhile, indigenous actors in the country have experienced far greater degrees of success in all of these aspects, despite comprising a smaller segment of the Colombian population (Van Cott, 2005). An observation that drives this analysis is the fact that Colombia's constitutional reform movement opened up the political system to various sectors of Colombian society that had theretofore not received equal representation as traditional political powers. Thus, both groups were faced with a political opportunity in the broad state reform, an opportunity that opened the door for both groups to act in order to achieve unprecedented rights and representation. It is for this reason that I assume a common *political opportunity structure* within the country for ethnic movements. Skeptical readers might suggest that

a review of the entire landscape of opportunity would certainly reveal a mixed bag of political openings for each group, and thus that a common opportunity structure is a misinterpretation of reality. This suggestion is not without merit. Knowledgeable observers would attest to the fact that indigenous groups were better situated at the time of reform to influence this process. This critique notwithstanding, it is my assertion that a relatively open forum such as the National Constituent Assembly (Asamblea Nacional Constituyente; ANC) provided generally congruent opportunities to the two groups presented here. Both indigenous and black social movement organizations were able to bring their demands and desires to the table, and the outcomes of this dialogue was affected more by the actions and strategies of each movement rather than an imbalance in opportunities. In other words, I think a better explanation can be derived if we focus on movement dynamics rather than incongruities in institutional openings. Moreover, most cross-country studies assess party formation in terms of comparatively permissive (or restrictive) institutional environments. The single-nation study presented here seeks to step away from this type of explanation in favor of one that allows for a deeper delving into the movements themselves. Ergo, if disparate collective and electoral gains can be observed, then we should analyze ethnic *framing* and *mobilization* processes to explain diverging outcomes. This understanding influences my research question, which is formulated as follows:

RQ: How have framing processes and mobilization structures in Colombian ethnic movements led to a comparatively greater level of institutionalization in the indigenous case versus the case of black Colombians?

Taking this question under consideration, my goal here is to come to some approximation as to how the framing and mobilization capacities exhibited by indigenous Colombians allowed for the creation of electorally viable parties while the Afro-Colombian movement has not yet achieved this.² What differences between the two might explain these outcomes? Is this a question of black ethnicity not lending itself to politicization as well as indigenous identity? I hope to address all of these questions in the sections that follow.

My research design is a structured, focused comparison of two ethnic movements in one nation (Colombia) considered broadly as the indigenous and black movements. Thus, there are two cases under study within a single South American country. By ‘considered broadly’, I mean to say that the primary unit of analysis is the ethnic group rather than the social movement organization or party. Naturally, in order to describe the ways in which specific movement organizations attempted to develop into electoral vehicles, there will also be data gathered that pertains to sub-cases within the unit of observation.³ Similar data for each case was collected in order to identify variables and test hypotheses, both developed from the extant literature on indigenous and Afro-Colombian mobilization in Colombia as well as the social movement and political party literatures (King, Keohane, and Verba, 1994: 45). Therefore, the mode of explanation employed here is *theory-oriented*⁴ and employs the method of systematic process analysis

² Following Van Cott (2005) I define a viable ethnic party as one whose electoral platform includes among its central demands programs of an ethnic or cultural nature *and* that exhibits consolidation and voter support to continue as a competitor in elections.

³The justification for a broader unit of analysis is simply that the question at hand requires considering black organization at large for comparison with the same for indigenous actors. That is to say, the taking-off point of the study is prior to the formation of many of the organizations and parties mentioned here, making it difficult to analyze these smaller units over the entire time period.

⁴ Hall refers to theory-oriented explanations as ones that construe “the task of explanation as one of elucidating and testing a theory that identifies the main determinants of a broad class of outcomes and

as laid out by a (2006). In this method, the investigator begins by articulating the theory or sets of theories that identify the main causal variables that produce the specific outcomes to be explained while also detailing how the variables interact in the causal chain. Next, the investigator delivers predictions about the patterns that will appear in observations before finally drawing observations from the cases under study that are relevant to the aforementioned predictions. Multivariate statistical analysis was ruled out due to the small number of cases under study. Nonetheless, the detailed case studies, combined with the systematic comparison of cases that exhibited different outcomes on the dependent variables, should deliver scientifically rigorous inferences about causal processes.

Social Movement Framework

In his seminal text *Power in Movement*, Sidney Tarrow creates a solid framework through which we can understand collective action. Specifically, he notes that collective action takes many forms, the most common being activity that takes place within institutions and seeks common goals that society does not think twice about. However, there is also contentious collective action, which “lies at the base of all social movements, protests, and revolutions” (Tarrow, 1998: 3). Equally important, he notes that “collective action becomes contentious when it is used by people who lack regular access to institutions, who act in the name of new or unaccepted claims, and who behave in ways that fundamentally challenge others or authorities” (Ibid: 3). It is apparent that the ethnic movements that have taken place across Latin America are examples of contentious

attaches special importance to specifying the mechanisms whereby those determinants bear on the outcome” (2006: 25).

collective action, seeking to capitalize on broad constitutional reforms to gain access to institutions and make new, previously unfeasible claims.

The social movement literature also expresses the importance of the framing processes, opportunity structures, and mobilizing structures. McAdam, McCarthy and Zald (1996) identify three sets of factors key to analyzing movements:

- 1) Political opportunity structures: the changes in the institutional structure or informal power relations of a given system.
- 2) Mobilizing structures: the collective vehicles, informal as well as formal, through which people mobilize and engage in collective action.
- 3) Framing Processes: the conscious strategic efforts by groups of people to fashion shared understandings of the world that legitimate and motivate collective action.

This paper sees the interaction of this triumvirate of factors as crucial to making sense of movement dynamics. As stated above, I seek to focus my analysis on two cases within the Colombian nation-state. By focusing on a single nation, we gain a great deal of clarity via the long-appreciated tenet of parsimony. That is to say, a single-state context allows for a comfortable assumption of constancy in political opportunity structures, particularly those created during periods of broad reform and institutional apertures. Across the Colombian system we can observe similar processes of administrative decentralization, institutional realignment, and electoral engineering. Such an approach is conducive to a more reliable assessment of the interplay of the framing and mobilization variables, allowing inferences with greater causal reliability. Essentially, by taking political opportunity variables out of consideration, we succeed in removing the “why” side of collective action (opportunities) while paying greater attention to the “how” (framing and mobilization). That is not to suggest that the interaction of structure and agency is by any means unimportant. Any paper that seeks to

begin explaining ethnic party formation is required to give some credence to the importance of a debilitated party system, for example. However, it is my contention that constitutional reform opened institutional doors to both indigenous and black actors relatively equally. For this reason, the onus of explanation in this case falls upon the shoulders of the other two pillars of this theoretical framework while holding opportunity dynamics still. This also allows for the movements to be judged on their own internal merits which should generate a more fruitful direct comparison, particularly in terms of attaching outcomes to movement specifics. It must be noted, however, that while the two movements experienced a common opportunity in terms of institutional reform they also experienced contrasting institutional opportunities in the post-reform period. This occurred in the face of different forms of reserved representation for the two groups, with the indigenous movement receiving representation in both legislative bodies (senate and chamber) while the black movement received seats in only the chamber of representatives. This resulted in disparate opportunities for party consolidation, as will be seen later.

Parties & Party Systems

In assessing the success of ethnic movements in terms of party formation, it aids us to establish what function the parties in question would putatively serve should they form. One of the better formulations that describes the basic purpose of parties was delivered by Lipset and Rokkan back in the 1960s. In the introduction to their edited edition, the authors suggest that parties

help to crystallize and make explicit the conflicting interests, the latent strains and contrasts in the existing social structure, and they force subjects and citizens to ally themselves across structural cleavage lines...Parties have an expressive function; they

develop a rhetoric for the translation of contrasts in the social and cultural structure into demands and pressures for action or inaction...Small parties may content themselves with expressive functions, but no party can hope to gain decisive influence on the affairs of a community without some willingness to cut across existing cleavages to establish common fronts with potential enemies and opponents (Lipset and Rokkan, 1967).

If we follow Lipset and Rokkan's limning of party functions, it stands to reason that a key determinant of ethnic party formation and success lies in the ability to "crystallize" ethnic interests and demands while also giving expression to a coherent ethnic party platform. In essence, they should determine common ethnic demands, articulate them to the ethnic group, and pressure government to act accordingly. The presence of these processes serves to provide an indication of the broader movement's capacity to have a lasting effect on governmental institutions and, as a consequence, its ability to consistently mobilize a loyal electorate.

While the aforementioned party functions are a key base for assessing formation and performance, we must also remain cognizant of the context within which ethnic movements seek to develop into electoral vehicles. It has been noted elsewhere that parties in the region are crucial to the quality of democracy, producing stability and enhancing representation (Levitsky and Cameron, 2001). Moreover, the various institutional reforms that have been undertaken across Latin America in the last two decades all shared two common goals; deepening democracy and economic expansion. For party systems, this meant strengthening the link between parties and voters which had eroded over time (Ibid). Van Cott (2005) noted that Latinobarometer respondents

reported a decline of confidence in parties from the 1998 survey to the 2003 survey.⁵ This decline was connected with a tendency toward personalist politics that focused on single candidates and replaced more “organic” links between voters and parties (Ibid). This erosion of linkages was one of the key goals of broad institutional reform and the necessity to address these ills was met in many cases by an opening of party systems and, to a certain extent, the dealignment of traditional parties.⁶ It has also been noted elsewhere that such a circumstance provides an opening for ethnic movements to politicize cleavages and enter the realm of competitive politics (Maiz, 2003). This may even be the case in institutionalized systems which historically exhibit fixed, stable party systems that become more fluid and inchoate due to institutional realignment (Mainwaring and Scully, 1995).

Per Samuel Huntington, “Institutionalization is the process by which organizations and procedures acquire value and stability” (Huntington, 1968). If we extend Huntington’s assessment a bit further, it becomes clear that a party “can be considered consolidated if it has an identifiable voting base (party roots); becomes well known, if not universally accepted (legitimacy); and develops into an independent structure as opposed to a personalist vehicle (organizational structure)” (Rice, 2011). These criteria will be important when considering party consolidation and institutionalization in the cases considered here. I should also make it clear that I do hold a clear distinction between party formation and the growth of a movement. When I consider movement dynamics throughout this paper, I am referring to the framing

⁵ Van Cott (2005) noted that only 10-15 percent of respondents responded that they had “some” or “a lot” of confidence in political parties, down from 21 percent reporting “much” or “some” confidence in 1998. Colombia was among the countries with the highest “no confidence” responses.

⁶ Dalton, Flanagan, and Beck (1984) suggested that dealignment indicates a brief period of time in which the number of votes cast for dominant parties sees a considerable decline.

processes and mobilization capacities of each movement. Party formation, on the other hand, refers specifically to the creation of electoral vehicles that seek to elect officials to public office. In some cases, this means that the very organizations whose dynamics have been taken under consideration are backing certain individuals for elected office.

The Colombian State as a Focal Point

It should be noted that this analysis seeks to utilize the state as a focal point for two logical reasons. First, I follow Yashar in her assessment of the state as a point of departure in ethnic relations. Yashar notes that Latin American states “define *who* has political membership, *which* rights they possess, and *how* interest intermediation with the state is structured” (Yashar, 2005: 6, emphasis in original). It follows that the state is paramount in the creation and management of identities within society. Second, and following from Yashar’s last point on interest intermediation, the state is understood here to be the interpreter and receiver of political and social demands. Thus, when ethnic movements make collective rights claims they are demanding them from the state. It is for this reason that the current study considers movement success and continuation in terms of interactions with the state. These interactions include making demands of the state (as well as state responsiveness to demands), organizational capacity in state sponsored elections, and the actions of movement actors within state institutions.

The assumed role of the state as the recipient of demands also means that it has a hand in determining movement outcomes. Thus, and as is mentioned in even greater detail below, an ideal way of interpreting the contrasting gains made by movements is to analyze the dynamics within a single case. In other words, I plan to compare the successes and shortcomings of the two movements within the context of a single nation in

order to keep the political opportunity variable constant for the early stages of mobilization. This will allow for a greater understanding of how social movement organizations (SMOs) are framing and mobilizing contention in the face of a common state apparatus.

Variables and Concepts

Building upon the social movement and party literatures, I have identified a set of variables that are important for examining the present question. The independent variables are composed of structural and process-oriented variables identified within both literatures, as described above. Based on this framework, the independent variables are as follows:

- IV1: Demographics and concentration of ethnic populations (mobilization structures)
- IV2: Shared understanding of ethnicity (indigeneity/blackness) (framing processes)
- IV3: Unity and coherence of ethnic demands (framing processes)
- IV4: Density of organizational networks (mobilization structures)

For the purposes here, a “shared understanding of ethnicity” is understood as the ability of movement leaders to fashion a unified ethnic message to followers of what blackness or indigeneity consists of. Connected with this is the second IV, which refers to a clear set of agreed upon demands which motivate collective action. The next two variables are linked to the mobilization structures variable set. According to Foweraker (1995) dense organizational networks are likely to promote mobilization and enhance the success of those mobilizations. This may be the case even when financial resources are limited, as is often the case in Latin American ethnic movements. For this reason, the “density of organizational networks” variable has been added and is understood as the exhibition of

an extensive, hierarchical network of social movement organizations (Van Cott, 2005: 43). Thus, the presence of thin networks that are composed of a small (possibly single member) elite designates a lack of density in organizational structure. The “demographics and concentration” variable is measured as the rural/urban composition of the ethnic group as well as how concentrated they are throughout the nation.

Extending from the party literature are the two main dependent variables that are under consideration. First, I should restate that the understanding of basic party functions comes from Lipset and Rokkan’s (1967) formulation. Thus, any ethnic party that achieves lasting success will have “crystallized” ethnic demands and given expression to those demands en route to building a loyal voting base. In order to assess success in achieving this function, the dependent variables are described as follows:

- DV1: Ethnic party consolidation
- DV2: Electoral viability of ethnic parties

A party can be considered consolidated so long as it develops an independent structure, gains legitimacy among other actors, and has solid party roots (Rice, 2011: 176-77). The foremost measure of party consolidation is the existence of a reliable voting base in the form of stable electoral data (Ibid). In other words, a decrease in party votes will be considered to be a decrease in party consolidation and the deterioration of party roots. I should also note that I follow both Mainwaring and Scully (1995) and Rice (2011) in their conception of party consolidation as a continuum (more versus less consolidated) than a dichotomy (consolidated versus not consolidated). It is my proposition that parties that exhibit an increased vote share in elections and greater organizational density are more consolidated than the parties that fail to do so.

According to Van Cott (2005: 18), electoral viability is the achievement of a sufficient level of voter support to continue as a competitor in multiple election cycles.⁷ Thus, an electorally viable party will present candidates for election in multiple elections while not necessarily gaining seats in each of those elections. I depart somewhat from this formulation as I consider electoral viability to denote a party that not only presents candidates for elections but also regularly elects candidates to national offices.⁸ The justification here is that electorally viable parties should not only present candidates for election in each cycle, but also be a potentially viable source of representation for voters. That is to say, they should present an option that presents electoral possibilities that are buttressed by a show of success in past elections. I should briefly note that there was an initial intention to include a DV that would denote party formation. However, upon closer review of electoral data it became clear that permissive rules allowed for a great number of parties to “form” in the sense of official recognition. This was the case for both ethnic groups. Thus, I decided to leave this variable out as there was not enough variation in outcomes to give any explanatory power to the IV’s.

Hypotheses & Central Claims

It is my expectation that certain patterns will be observed that illustrate the flow of causality within the collection of variables outlined above. The hypotheses and claims presented here correspond to the causal maps presented in figure 1 (indigenous movement) and Figure 2 (Afro-Colombian movement). Both causal maps begin with the common opportunity structure of constitutional reform and move on to identify the

⁷ I depart from Van Cott’s definition as she limits her understanding of electoral viability to local and regional elections and denotes parties with national level electoral success differently. Nonetheless, the main idea behind electoral viability is used here.

⁸ Van Cott denotes this as a “successful” party.

placement of the independent variables in the causal scheme before concluding with the dependent variables of electoral viability and party consolidation. To repeat, it is my goal here to present a possible causal pattern that explains the divergent outcomes in the dependent variables while bringing forth the importance of all variables in conjunction with each other rather than the effect of each variable individually. In other words, rather than discussing the effects of framing processes on producing electorally viable parties, I seek to follow a sequential causal pattern that builds upon the effects of each variable, advancing chronologically. This being the case, and following Hall's prescription, my first task is to present a justification as to why the variables play out in this fashion and what observations we should expect to make if this is indeed the case (Hall, 2006).⁹ These hypotheses will then culminate with three central claims that are to be revisited throughout this analysis.

Each causal map begins with the common opportunity structure of constitutional reform. This point of departure corresponds to my main assumption that constitutional reform opened political opportunities for both indigenous and black leaders to politicize ethnicity. This is understood to be the case because the new social contract took up the task of altering the racial ideology of the nation from that of *mestizaje* to one that was multicultural and pluri-ethnic. Thus, both movements were presented with a new opportunity to make legitimate and substantial claims to government that were rooted in ethnicity. Therein lays the commonality of opportunity structures in the nascent stages of institutional reconfiguration. But it is also at that stage (institutional aperture) that the movements begin to exhibit diverging paths. I expect that observations of the two cases

⁹ Hall refers to the expectations primarily as predictions, however here I keep with the normal scientific language by referring to them here as hypotheses.

will demonstrate the effects of heterogeneous versus homogenous framing capacities and how this fragmentation limits the ability of elites to mobilize broad support and build dense organizational networks.¹⁰ Continuing from there, I expect to uncover information that illustrates how the two movements were able to capitalize on contrasting institutional opportunities which took the form of disparate forms of reserved representation. I expect to show how all of this culminates with the contrasting outcomes of the movements in the dependent variables, not simply because we see these disparate outcomes, but because of the nature of the disparity and how it is manifested in data drawn.

If framing issues are indeed the initial variable of importance, we should observe in the two cases a key dissimilarity: the ability versus the inability to mold a common sense of ethnicity and a commonly accepted set of ethnic demands. Thus, we should observe a successful linking of cultural traits, ethnic characteristics, and even territories that are widely considered indigenous to indigenusness. Stated simply, these items should be viewed *as* indigenous *by* indigenous people. As the counter-example, we should expect to see black movement leaders largely fail to succeed in communicating a coherent sense of black culture and black identity, or at least one that frames a legitimate image of blackness that most Afro-Colombians can identify with. Moreover, these contrasts should also be manifested as uneven capacities to articulate a set of demands representative of the issues that pertain to the majority of the ethnic community. Ergo, we should see one movement with a more varied and incoherent set of issues while the other will have a narrower, cogent, and palatable ethnic agenda.

¹⁰ By homogenous versus heterogeneous framing, I mean that the overall movement exhibited a greater or lesser degree of unity in the framing of ethnicity, issues, and demands. This should not be understood to imply that either movement was entirely unified or fragmented at any point in time. Homogenous implies a greater degree of unity while heterogeneous implies a greater degree of fragmentation.

I hold that the framing issues discussed above have a direct causal impact on the ability of the respective movements to mobilize a loyal and passionate following. More specifically, the inability to successfully frame a unified notion of ethnicity should be observed in the black movement in the form of continued support for traditional parties, a condition that reflects the inability of black organizations and leaders to broadly connect black Colombians with putatively black issues. Alternately, indigenous leaders should demonstrate the ability to wrest votes from traditional parties as they present an option that speaks to broad swaths of Indian voters. Additionally, the fragmentation that comes out of poor framing will be observed in the form of individually driven political movements with thin organizational networks. The opposite should be observed in indigenous organizations whose unified framing provides a strong support base that motivates aspiring leaders to remain loyal to the larger movement as it offers them opportunities for political advancement into the future. This factor results in the creation of hierarchies and denser organizations.

Taking these hypotheses and observations into consideration, an analysis of the indigenous and black movements in the Colombian case leads me to make two key claims:

- 1) The black movement in Colombia has been less successful in building viable ethnic parties due to internal fragmentation and the lack of a unified voting base.
- 2) This lack of unity is caused by the inability to frame the movement around a commonly accepted perception of blackness and black demands than the one adopted by indigenous social movement organizations.

In accordance with these assertions, I hold that framing processes directly impact mobilization processes which in turn have a direct impact upon electoral outcomes for

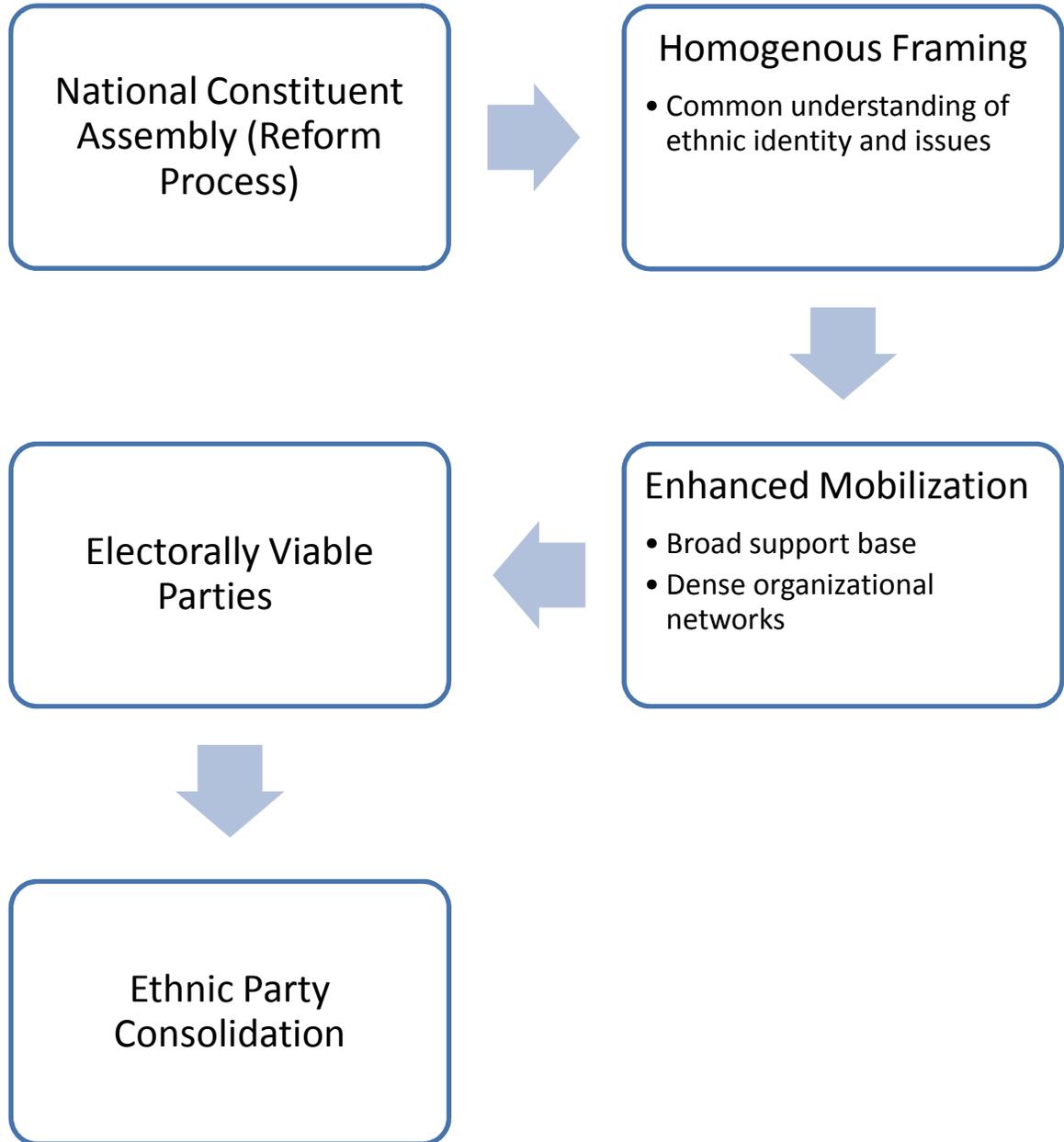


Figure 1.1: Flow of Causality for Indigenous Movement

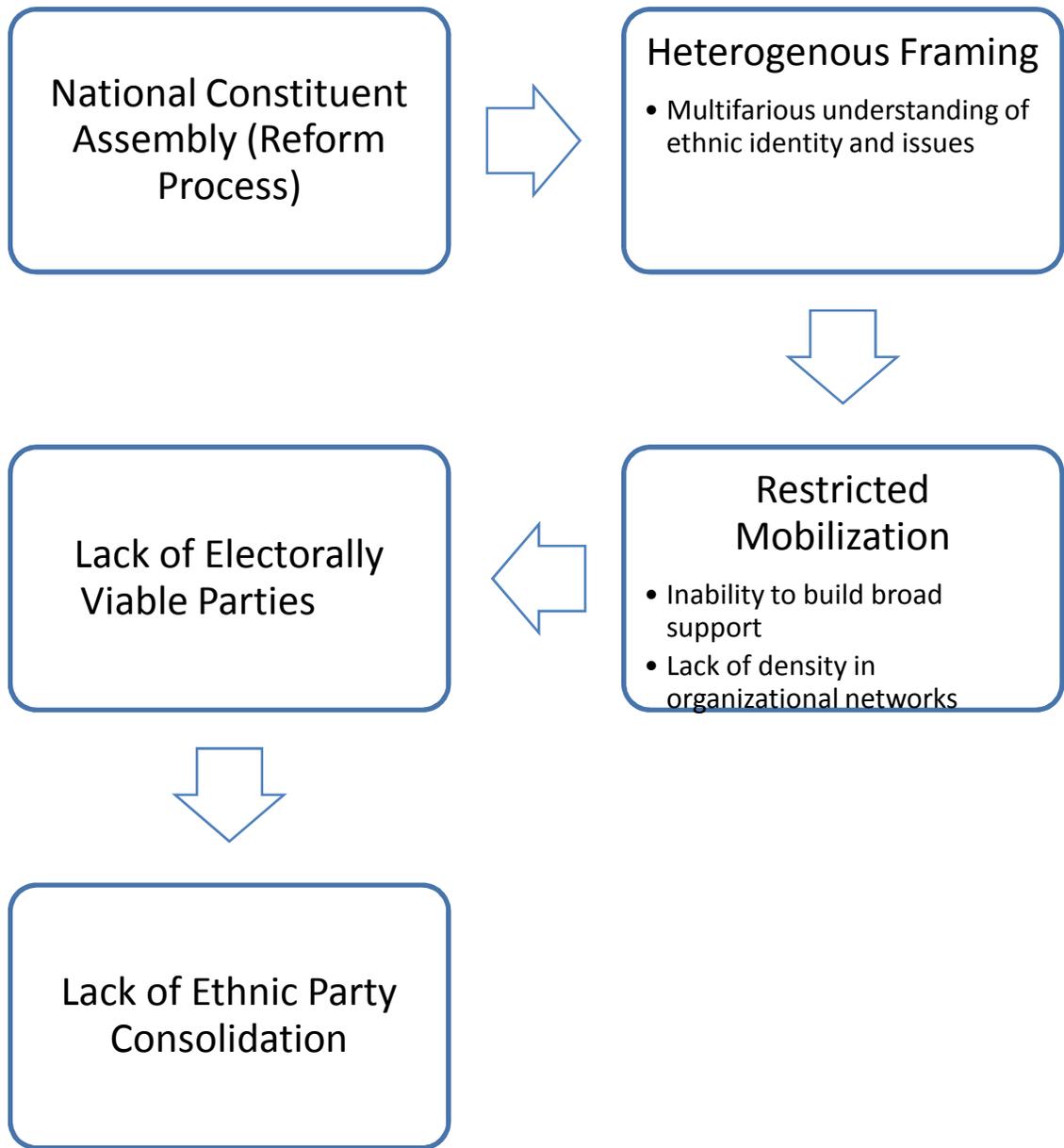


Figure 1.2: Flow of Causality for Afrocolombian Movement

ethnic actors. It is for this reason that I have given a chronological order to the causal flow, as I perceive framing processes in this case to occur *a priori* to mobilization. I should note that my intent is not to make a broad argument that mobilization is always a function of framing. Indeed, such an order can easily behave inversely. However, in the case presented here the opportunity structure demanded that groups first frame ethnic identity for the purpose of establishing a set of ethnic demands. This then affected (and continues to affect) the behavior of mobilizing structures and their ability to form electoral vehicles.

The remainder of this paper will focus on substantiating these claims and providing explanations of the variation in the dependent variables. I expect such a detailed account to provide a rich understanding of movement dynamics, sources of strengths and weaknesses, and provide direction toward generating causal explanations of diverging outcomes. This analysis will be comprised of four main sections. First, I establish the background of the study which includes a review of race and ethnicity in Latin American and Colombia as well as the causes of the surge in ethnic mobilization across the region. Next, I discuss constitutional reform as a political opportunity structure that is common to both groups and which provided political space for both sets of actors to gain access to government. The third section engages with the explanatory variables which are argued to produce the variation in the dependent variables, framing processes and resource mobilization processes. In this section observations are made that seek to establish the causal flow laid out in figures 1 and 2. Also included in this section is a discussion of outcomes which seeks to link the independent variables to the dependent variables by demonstrating electoral outcomes and analyzing the hypotheses

presented. In other words, I make an attempt at explaining outcomes by connecting the dynamics of framing and mobilization to the electoral outcomes observed. Finally, I close with a comprehensive conclusion that recaps the study, identifies overlooked aspects, and prescribes direction for future study.

Race and Ethnicity in Latin America and Colombia

Conceptions of race during the colonial period in Latin America were largely rooted in European racial ideologies that identified certain races with a natural inferiority (Graham, 1990). Equally important in this perception was an aversion to race mixture, as it was thought to have deleterious effects on whiteness (Wade, 1993). It was these scientifically backed formulations of race that justified the continuation of black slavery and established a racial order that placed white Europeans at the apex of a top-down hierarchy. Thus, during the colonial period the ethnic condition of the individual determined his legal status and social position (Morner, 1965).

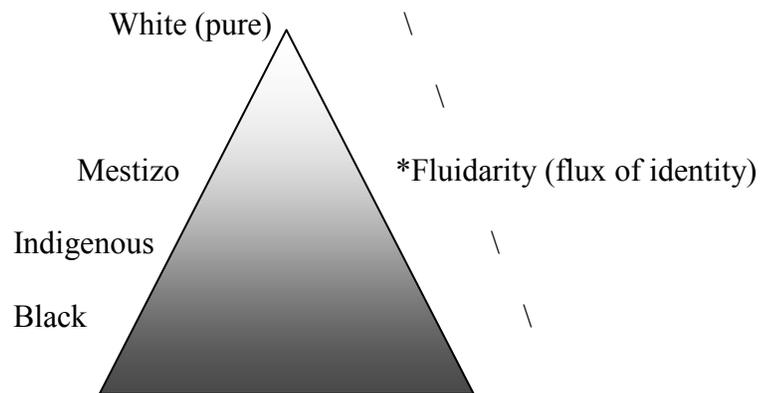
Independence from the European mother countries came with an intellectual dilemma in the Americas. On one hand, most Latin American societies were typified by racial heterogeneity while, on the other, they sought a continued integration with Europe (Graham, 1990). This set of circumstances left Latin American elites in a difficult position, seeking to both maintain their European qualities while managing their own nation-building exercises in societies that were defined by race mixture and racial plurality (Ibid). The resulting ideology would require a sense of dynamism that could express the continued, scientifically based superiority of whiteness over non-whiteness

while also making itself amenable to a sense of national identity and unity in their nascent nations.

The post-colonial situation was complex, exhibiting signs of both continuity and change. European models of modernity and progress were not completely abandoned. Peter Wade remarks that in the Colombian context, racial mixture and black and Indian populations were harnessed to these models of modernization through the ideologies of *mestizaje* (race mixture) and *blanqueamiento* (whitening), providing a distinctly Latin American response to the dilemma (Wade, 1993). “Blacks and especially Indians were romanticized as part of a more or less glorious past, but the future held for them paternalistic guidance towards integration, which also ideally meant more race mixture and perhaps the eventual erasure of blackness and indigeneity from the nation” (Ibid: 11). In the desire for single race rhetoric, the *mestizo* was idealized. A desirable society was one in which Latin American populations achieved a whitening of their populations, and it is here that we see the ideology of *blanqueamiento* put to work in a nationalist context. It is also here that seemingly contradictory forces find a place to coexist; discrimination situates itself with *mestizaje*, racial exclusion with racial inclusion. It is this conjunction between *mestizaje* and *blanqueamiento* that have defined race and ethnic relations in Colombia.

A more complete understanding of racial subjectivity in Colombia can be acquired by conceptualizing it as a pyramidal hierarchy. The pyramidal race structure is an idea that Wade (1993) touches on, although he fails to do so at any significant length. Despite its cursory appearance in Wade’s work, I perceive this visualization to be

important to understanding the racial hierarchy. The ensuing analysis acts upon the following diagram:



The first aspect that should be noted is the apex of the pyramid. It is in this zenith that white purity resides (*sangre limpia*), having been situated there by the colonial and post-colonial racial discourse that champions it as the highest standing in the racial caste system. As we move down the hierarchy we begin to distance ourselves from white purity, first running into the mestizo who, again, is putatively the desired end point of our discourse of racial mixture (keeping in mind that it is the lighter side of the mestizo that is admired). Fixed directly below the mestizo is the indigenous subject and, finally, as we approach the base of the pyramid we find the situation of black Colombians. This is important for two main reasons. First, Wade's investigations establish that indigenusness was viewed as an ethnic category with a greater connection to mestizos and Europeans than Afro-Colombians. Also, the placement of Afro-Colombians affirms the desire of Colombian society to exclude them to an even greater extent. Thus, there are long-held perceptions across the country about the kinds of racial subjects and potential citizens that blacks and Indians, one being casted beneath the other.

In her assessment of “negritude” in Colombia, Nina de Friedemann (1984) is quick to ascribe a quality of “invisibility” to black populations in Colombia. She asserts that a lack of discoverability has historically typified the black experience in Colombia, not only because of exclusion from the white world but because of a racial monologue that largely ignored their existence. This articulation of blackness is not exclusive to Friedemann (Wade, 1993; Whitten, 1998). Jaime Arocha is particularly insightful here as well. When speaking of the universality of mestizaje’s racial ideology, he notes that

In 1890, Law 89 opened the possibility for one exception, that of the “savages,” who were allowed to retain their forms of land tenure and government while Catholic missionaries completed their task of integrating them into Christian Civilization. As time passed, Colombians perceived themselves in binary terms, as “us” and “others” (*indios*), while Afro-Colombians were left in a semantic limbo that approached invisibility (Arocha, 1998: 73).

Arocha goes on to note that while the indians (*indios*) were being “Christianized” they were allowed special reserves (*resguardos*) on which they could live and continue an indigenous cultural experience. These revelations are crucial to understanding race and ethnicity in Colombia; Indians were historically recognized as a distinct out-group in Colombian society, while black Colombians were entirely excluded from the national imagination, largely assumed to have been engulfed in the *mestizo* culture.

Wade is also informative on this topic. He explains that in Colombia, blacks were not thought of as a distinct group to the same extent as indians because acculturation allowed them to have adopted the mestizo culture that indians had not been able to adopt, due to their status as savages. Afro-Colombians “have been seen much more as second class citizens...and often assumed not to have a ‘black culture.’” (Wade, 1997: 21). In contrast, part of the identity of indians was to have distinct cultures and languages (Ibid).

In one sense, it is as if black Colombians benefited from more inclusion, as cultural assimilation would have us believe that they were being included in the national conversation. However, this misses the fact that they were seen as an acculturated group while being an excluded minority. It is largely for this reason that indigenous people were able to establish a sense of cultural difference that blacks would later have to struggle to achieve.

Background and Context of the Case

The Colombian example is both ideal and significant for various reasons. First, it has been noted that Colombian Indians were the first to form viable ethnic parties after the institutional reconfiguration that came out of the *Asamblea Nacional Constituyente* (ANC). These successes made them models for indigenous leaders in other nations, both in the organizational and inspirational sense (Van Cott, 2005). Second, Afro-Colombians also have a history of struggle, dating from the times of rebel slaves who formed *palenques*, or fortified slave communities (Wade, 1993). Moreover, the dynamics of race, including the history of *mestizaje*, have played out similarly in Colombia as they have in the rest of Latin America (Miller, 2004). These factors, along with the existence of vibrant ethnic movements that are representative of both indigenous and black populations, make the setting ripe for a substantial and instructive comparison.

The structural and institutional transformations (most notably neoliberal economic policies and constitutional reform) that have taken place in Colombia have taken place across Latin America. Therefore, the country is representative of region-wide transformations that serve to define the political process of Latin America. Specifically,

the case gives insight into the process of democratization throughout the region. Van Cott articulated it nicely, stating that Colombia represents “the transformation of an unconsolidated democratic regime into a distinctly different model of democracy via a radical constitutional reform guided by normative criteria” (Van Cott, 2000: 3).¹¹ What this means is that in order to further consolidate democracy in Colombia, constitution-makers saw the necessity to transform the state, particularly in terms of the organization of its territories and the functions of the legal system. More importantly, in the years following Colombia’s National Constituent Assembly, fellow Latin American systems have also adopted similar sets of reforms in order to deal with similar issues.¹² All share some key emphases, including recognizing ethnic diversity, strengthening the protection of rights and the rule of law, and opening spaces for popular participation (Van Cott, 2000). These facts strengthen Colombia’s status as a useful example from which we can gain insight into both Colombian ethnic politics and Latin American ethnic politics as a whole. Otherwise stated, upon analyzing movement dynamics and party formation in Colombia, we will be better equipped to assess the successes and failures of ethnic integration and participatory expansion in neighboring states.

Early Motivations: Causes of Ethnic Political Resurgence

A common regional theme in 1980s Latin America was the persistence of social crises that had vast impacts on the relations between civil society and the state. The efficacy of Latin American institutions was widely questioned while the legitimacy of state governments was under the same assault. In order to deal with these crises, the response

¹¹ Van Cott (2000) was actually referring to both Colombia and Bolivia as she used both cases in her book.

¹² Constitutional reforms and replacements were created in Paraguay (1992), Peru (1993), Argentina (1994), Bolivia (1994), Nicaragua (1987, 1995), Brazil (1988, 1994, 1997), Chile (1994, 1997), Costa Rica (1997), Uruguay (1997), and Ecuador (1998).

by many states in the region was to engage in restructuring processes that would affect institutions and citizens alike while redefining the politicization of daily life. The prevailing climate, dictated largely by past experiences with failed import-substitution models, led state technocrats to pursue neoliberal economic restructuring policies that would open borders to international markets and investment, reduce the size of the state apparatus, and focus on governmental efficiency.

While variation across Latin American cases can be observed, neoliberal restructuring projects had a distinct set of generalizable effects that altered the tune of political and social organization. Latin American governments had the desire to decrease the size and scope of government while decentralizing their political systems (Weyland, 2002; Falletti, 2006). They also wanted to expand democracy, ensure rights, and foster social cohesion among diverse populations (Jaies & Delich, 2009).

Concomitantly, and somewhat paradoxically, these downsized states also had to broaden their capacity in certain areas to ensure access to underdeveloped lands, territories, and regions in order to pursue development goals. As a result, neoliberal policies had great effects upon rural ethnic and racial minorities who often inhabited the rural, underdeveloped lands in question. This led to a host of social and political issues for many minority populations which included challenges to autonomy, livelihood, and resource control (Brysk & Wise, 1997). For this reason, it follows that neoliberal policies ended up having radical effects on what Sydney Tarrow would refer to as the “repertoires of contention” that ethnic social movement organizations would employ when framing movements and making demands to the state. Postero and Zamosc further detail the three main ways in which neoliberal reforms affected ethnic populations:

- 1) Political restructuring, which has changed relations between Indian groups and the state.
- 2) A new emphasis on resource extraction schemes, which has threatened indigenous lands.
- 3) Economic restructuring, which has caused drastic economic crises (Postero & Zamosc, 2004).

It was in response to these threats that ethnic movements generated a renewed fervor after decades of limited activity (Young, 1976).¹³ Moreover, this restructuring of the state was accompanied by a trend of broad constitutional reforms across Ibero-America. Thus, there are three combined pressures brought on by broad reforms that motivated a surge in ethnic politics throughout the region; structural conditions characterized by nascent threats to ways of life and culture, the reconfiguring of Latin American nations as multi-ethnic in nature, and broad institutional realignments. These political opportunities are largely responsible for ushering in an era of politicized ethnic identities.

The same tensions that grind throughout Latin America are equally present within Colombia. In the 1960s, *latinfundismo* in the country gave way to neoliberalism as the main ideological structure of society (Rathgeber, 2004). As the ANC was undergoing its process of reforming the Colombian state, neoliberal structures were being deepened throughout the country. More importantly, they certainly would not be left out of the reform conversation. Rather, the reformed constitution is highly reflective of neoliberal desires. Rodrigo Nunes aptly notes that “Pre-assembly discussions coincided with the approval of Gaviria’s economic reforms, which were elaborated by an economic team of mostly young economists with American degrees and few, if any, ties to political organizations” (Nunes, 2007: 13). A group of technocrats was therefore responsible for

¹³ Young’s 1976 review of ethnicity in Latin America revealed that indigenous populations were not forceful actors in Latin American politics, particularly at the national level.

the implementation of policies that supported the then “fashionable” recommendations of multilateral agencies such as the IMF and World Bank (Ibid: 13). Furthermore, the involvement of technocrats without official ties to parties should lead us to believe that these policies were enacted by a political minority, actions that run counter to the pluralist wording of certain sections of the constitution.

As a result of these circumstances, the 1991 Constitution is deeply imbued with unambiguous neo-liberal rhetoric which supports further opening of the Colombian economy to foreign markets and capital and the creation of an “efficient” state. The document established the creation of an independent central bank (Article 371), abandoned the state’s monopoly over public services (Article 336), enhanced the role of regional entities in the provision of public services (Article 356), and endowed the state with the responsibility of promoting the internationalization of economic relations (Article 226). It also contains clauses that advocate spending for the establishment of the *Estado Social* (Social State), however, “critics have pointed out that the constitution does not preclude the justification of neo-liberal policies based on constitutional precepts” (Nunes, 2007: 15).

Materially speaking, this economic *apertura* brought dramatic reductions in import tariffs, privatization of state-owned assets, the elimination of many protectionist measures, and the entering of economic trade unions to facilitate free trade (Aviles, 2001). In addition, neoliberalism is often seen to be an outcome of the politics of elite agro-industries in Colombia (Ibid). This being the case, these policies often sought to open new possibilities for agricultural and land-owning elites to extract Colombian resources, particularly those located in rural parts of Colombia, often on land worked and

inhabited by ethnic minorities (Ibid). Writing on this subject, Rathgeber rightfully notes that “The eagerness to commodify all aspects of life, and to exploit natural resources without bounds affects even the most remote communities” (Rathgeber, 2004: 107). These assaults proved to have great effects on ethnic communities and in very specific ways. The government of Cesar Gaviria (1990-1994) gave private companies the ability to extract raw materials on communal lands, despite legal restrictions that putatively protected against this (Ibid). In a move that would particularly affect the black communities, the following administration of Andres Pastrana (1998-2002) modified the mining law of the country, implementing a Mining Code that removed power from the established mechanisms of consultation and participation with the affected communities (Ibid). “Since 2000...all impact evaluation procedures have been reduced to a single environmental license, transforming what was once a coordinated and participatory process into a simplified pro-forma process. This threatens the provision of the national constitution and international agreements...which protect indigenous territorial autonomy” (Rathgeber, 2004: 107).

In essence, Colombian government found itself on a direct path for minimizing its interference into the economy, except to facilitate the movement of capital and foreign investment. At each turn, political and social reforms have been inextricably linked to neo-liberal policies, a pairing which symbolizes new processes in the nation-building exercise. Anthropologist Jason Antrosio keenly notes that the state has become an impartial “promoter and arbiter of the economic market” while it “similarly proclaims neutrality with respect to national identity” (Antrosio, 2005: 201). In Essence, it has altered its past social policies to facilitate the intermingling of social life and a desired

economic path based in tenets of modern, western development. That is not to suggest that neo-liberal reforms are value neutral or do not privilege certain sectors of society over others. It is obvious that the action of promoting an open market benefits the business class and business interests over the working class. Moreover, the reduction of the size of the state means a sacrifice in services for certain sectors, burdens that often fall heavily on the working class and peasantry. What I do mean to say is that, while egalitarianism has not been promised, it would appear that all sectors possess equal *possibilities* for the enjoyment of their rights, including ethnic minorities. How this appearance would translate into reality was far less clear.

These socio-economic phenomena are functions of a reformed system that seeks to establish and solidify the universal principles of the western tradition, principles that many ethnic actors saw as fundamentally opposed to their interests. One author noted that “indigenous cultures do not value the ethos of private accumulation or individual achievement that underpins capitalist society. The good of the community is almost universally considered more important than the good of the individual...” (Van Cott, 2000: 11). This accentuates an important fact; ethnic actors in Colombia, and Latin America more broadly, were struggling against not only the material impositions of neoliberalism, but also the western, individualistic, Liberal culture of neoliberal policies that were tied constitutional reform. This was the setting in which ethnic social movement organizations and their followers would be moved to action and generate momentum towards achieving unprecedented gains from government.

The History and Development of Black SMOs

Gaining a full understanding of the dynamics of the each movement requires delving into the histories of the respective social movement organizations. For Afro-Colombians, the most notable among these are the United Peasant Association of the Atrato River (Asociación Campesina Integral del Río Atrato; ACIA), the Process of Black Communities (Proceso de Comunidades Negras; PCN), the Organization of People's Neighborhoods and Black Communities of the Chocó (Organización de Barrios Populares y Comunidades Negres de Chocó; OBAPO) and Cimarrón. Of particular importance are the interactions between these organizations and the Colombian state, as well as the role that each sought to play in black "ethnicization" process during the reform period.

In the 1980s, residents of the predominantly black department of Chocó experienced heightened pressures on their resources when the department's political administration gave large concessions to private logging and mining companies (Asher, 2009). It was during this period that ACIA was born and emerged as a leading association of black Colombians in the area (Agudelo, 2001). After organizing an ultimately unsuccessful forum in the town of Buchadó, Chocó, the ACIA sought to broaden its reach across the region while refining its strategies. To achieve this, ACIA drew on the experience of OREWA (Organización Regional Emberá-Waunana del Chocó), the regional organization of the Emberá indians (Asher, 2009).¹⁴ This change in strategy altered ACIA's earlier land claims, which were more traditional peasant land

¹⁴ During interviews conducted in 1995, Asher was informed by ACIA leaders that they had also received advice from OREWA legal advisers and consultants.

claims (Agudelo, 2001), to claims that were couched in ethnic and environmental language (Asher, 2009).¹⁵

With its origins in the 1970s, the Movimiento Nacional Cimarrón (commonly known as Cimarrón) is among the oldest and best known black organizations in Colombia. The group was formally established in 1982 and during this decade selected Juan de Dios Mosquera as its leader (Wade, 1995). Cimarrón emerged from a radical leftist study group and established a hub in the town of Pereira along with centers in other urban locations across Colombia (Ibid).¹⁶ Asher (2009) explains that the organization's key objectives were to:

- 1) Draw attention to the discrimination and oppression of marginalized groups, especially blacks.
- 2) Struggle for equality and universal human rights of subordinated groups all over the world, including blacks, workers, and women.
- 3) Be in solidarity and form alliances with other black struggles, such as the antiapartheid movement in South Africa, civil rights efforts in North America, and négritude movements in the Caribbean and Francophone Africa.

It is important to understand that the word *cimarrón* in Spanish refers to a domesticated animal that has run wild and that the term was applied to runaway slaves who built fortified slave colonies referred to as *palenques* (Wade, 1995). Cimarrón (the organization) thus represents a history of *cimarronaje*, in which palenques are viewed as symbols of cultural resistance and a struggle for human rights. This ideology “invites people to connect certain aspects of their phenotype (their physical ‘blackness’) to a history of oppression that is initially national but also continental and even global” (Wade, 1995: 344).

¹⁵ For a more detailed account of this shift to ethnic and environmental claims see Asher 2009, pp. 38-39.

¹⁶ Wade (1995) listed Manizales, Quibdó, Cali, and Bogotá as urban centers with Cimarrón organizations.

Toward the end of the 1980s, black Colombians saw the emergence of two more key organizations in OBAPO and the PCN. OBAPO originally sought to mobilize Quibdó shanty town residents and several other coastal communities (Asher, 1999)¹⁷ and would play an important role in lobbying on behalf of Afro-Colombians during the development of Transitory Article 55 and Law 70 (Agudelo, 2001). In its early stages, the PCN was known as the Organización de Comunidades Negras (OCN). In somewhat of a contrast to OBAPO, the OCN was started in an urban setting but focused on mobilizing rural communities in the Pacific (Asher, 2009). During the mobilization process, OCN members began to developing a vision for a national black movement that they thought fit the contemporary economic and political changes that were occurring in the country. This vision was influenced by intellectual debates that discussed the role of culture in contesting state power and the accepted forms of development. The OCN's aim was to propose a model of development that was "ethno-culturally" appropriate for the Pacific region and that would emphasize the importance of everyday cultural practices of black communities (Asher, 2009). In 1993, during the third National Conference of Black Communities, the group changed its name to the Process of Black Communities (PCN) to emphasize the process of black struggles in Colombia, struggles that continued beyond the recognition of rights and into the phases of implementation (Ibid). It was at this point that they also outlined a fresh set of goals. According to Asher, these were:

- 1) To organize a broad, grassroots-based black social movement based on diverse Afro-Colombian identities and interests.

¹⁷ Agudelo (2001) notes that OBAPO would later seek to expand their reach into the rural countryside as well.

- 2) To envision a political strategy that would enable organized black communities to make autonomous decisions regarding their livelihoods.
- 3) To develop culturally-appropriate, ecologically-sustainable models of economic development.
- 4) To establish autonomous territorial control over the Pacific.

Even the casual observer can easily note the combination of a lack of specifics and ambitious scope. In the short term, broad goals provided some common ground upon which different organizations could meet. Extended connections would prove more tenuous, however, with various points of difference posing dilemmas for continued unity. First and foremost, and as will be highlighted in the ensuing analysis, there were chasms between groups in terms of the way that *negritude* (blackness) should be framed.

The Development of Indigenous SMOs

Colombia's contemporary indigenous organizations emerged from the peasant land movement of the 1960s and 1970s. These struggles often took the form of localized resistance and sought to recapture land from hacienda owners (Findji, 1992). An important historical antecedent is the *resguardo* system of indigenous landholdings. A *resguardo* is a communal landholding entity administered by annually-elected councils called *cabildos* (Dover and Rappaport, 1996). Various attempts to dismantle the *resguardo* system in the nineteenth century motivated protectionist movements to preserve it (Ibid).¹⁸ Much of this resistance was originally done behind peasant organizations such as the National Association of Peasant Producers (Asociacion Nacional de Usuarios Campesinos; ANUC) which were not necessarily indigenous organizations but whom often represented the land claims of indigenous persons (Bagley,

¹⁸ Attempts to preserve *resguardos* were solidified with the guarantees to communal land tenure included in the 1991 constitution. Until then, however, the *resguardo* was in continuous danger of disappearance due to the ongoing privatization of lands (Dover and Rappaport, 1996).

1989). The eventual expansion of such plights to a larger scale eventually brought about the birth of various indigenous organizations that served to concentrate and strengthen indigenous struggle. It was this type of expansion that gave birth to organizations such as the Indigenous Authorities of Colombia (Autoridades Indígenas de Colombia; AICO), the Regional Indigenous Council of Cauca (Consejo Regional Indígena del Cauca; CRIC), and the National Indigenous Organization of Colombia (Organización Nacional de Indígenas de Colombia; ONIC).

CRIC emerged out of the farmers' union experience in 1971. The organization was formed when indigenous actors realized the uselessness of the union during times of land confrontation (Findji, 1992). It was originally composed mostly of Nasa, Guambiano and Coconuco Indians from Cauca and professed two key purposes. First, the organization sought to further the struggle to regain traditional lands taken by haciendas. Second, it aimed to strengthen indigenous cultures (Van Cott, 2005). Interestingly, the CRIC is an initial example of ethnic mobilization during a period in which class was the primary organizing principle. In fact, it had no true "ethnic" vision at its inception. Rather, it was born out of terrajero struggles, a characteristic that was akin to class-based movements (Findji, 1992). But eventually, these struggles started to be understood by minority sectors within CRIC as ethnic fights for "territory," not just land (Ibid). In fact, in 1971 CRIC's charter was altered to include the defense of indigenous history, language and customs (Jackson, 2002). This is an important development, as it is demonstrative of the importance of indigenous identity and the language of cultural exception rather than

the language of inclusion. This occurred even in an organization such as CRIC that was less “traditional” in nature.¹⁹

While CRIC can be viewed as a regional movement of Cauca, it also helped to form a national organization in 1982 known as ONIC.²⁰ It was that year that the First Indigenous Congress was held in Bogota and was attended by more than 2,000 indigenous delegates across Colombia (Jackson, 2002). ONIC’s charter included a mandate to defend indigenous autonomy, history, culture, and traditions while also seeking to continue the struggle of indigenous land recuperation (Ibid). It is important to note that ONIC’s organizational structure was more vertical than horizontal. This means that there was a national office with thirty-five regional affiliates that were created along departmental, rather than ethnic, lines (Ibid). There is a clear intent behind such an organizational structure, as ONIC affiliates see their organization as a “supracommunity administrative level” that transcends territorial-based ethnicity (Jackson, 2002).

A rival, more traditional movement that was also based in Cauca was the Indigenous Authorities of Colombia (Autoridades Indigenas de Colombia; AICO). AICO was born in the 1980s out of Guambianos desire not to be seen as peasants (Jackson, 2002). The organization also aspired to be national in scope while, in contrast to ONIC, having a non-vertical hierarchical structure. The former characteristic was exhibited in its membership alliance, which included the Emberá and Arhuaco, two pueblos located in other parts of Colombia. The latter characteristic was a function of AICO’s desire to present a model distinct from ONIC’s, one that was not federated and placed more power

¹⁹ By less traditional, I mean an organization that ascribes less importance to indigenous authority structures such as the cabildos and instead focuses on a more vertical hierarchical structure.

²⁰ CRIC and ONIC were not the same entity and often times took different directions on issues and pursued different strategies. CRIC, however, was partially responsible for ONIC’s creation and was an affiliate of this cross-regional, national-level organization.

in the traditional cabildos. In fact, AICO openly criticized ONIC for being authoritarian, excessively vertical, and dismissive of traditional authorities (Jackson, 2002).

Two characteristics of indigenous movements are to be particularly noted. First, the movements are not at all homogenous. Rather, they are composed of diverse indigenous groups and exhibit organizations with varying organizational structures and strategies. ONIC sees its lack of association with a given region as a distinct advantage while AICO vehemently sees such a national program to be destructive to traditional indigenous governing entities. There is also a divide in the way indigenous identity is represented. ONIC often employed a “trait list” of indigenusness that essentialize indigenous identity by associating native culture with discrete cultural traits (language, traditions, and social organizations) (Rappaport and Dover, 1996). AICO, on the other hand, rejected such “outmoded” anthropological criteria in favor of the “romanticizing of indigenous resistance in an appeal to history as the prime definer of native identity (Ibid). The second key characteristic of these organizations speaks to a shared purpose, which becomes particularly salient in the ensuing analysis. While their ethnic representations, organizational structures, and strategies may be distinct from one another, they both frame ethnic struggles in the language of cultural difference and a defense of indigenous territories. That is to say, while cultural difference may be *performed* differently by organizational leaders, cultural difference as a defense of territory was a key part of the broader indigenous movement (Jackson, 2002). I should make it clear, prior to moving on to the analysis below, that these qualities are of particular importance to the argument presented here. During the National Constituent Assembly, as well as the years before and after, the indigenous movement was able to present a more unified, commonly

agreed upon set of basic demands than the Afro-Colombian movement. Issues of territorial autonomy and cultural preservation were common. We might view this in terms of a general outlook on ethnic politics. Indigenous actors agreed upon a politics of difference and rights through exclusion, while some Afro-Colombian actors sought rights through inclusion, thereby creating a gap that was often difficult to bridge. The framing processes for each movement were affected by this set of circumstances, with mobilization capacities soon following.

Opportunity Knocks: Institutional Apertures

Constitutional Reform and Immediate Impact on Race/Ethnicity

Building on general social unrest, a fervent student movement known by the phrase *Todavía Podemos Salvar a Colombia* (We Can Still Save Colombia) issued a call for reform to political elites prior to the 1990 legislative elections (Dugas, 2001). The students issued a manifesto which demanded that a plebiscite be included among the electoral mandates, a ballot measure that would express Colombians' desire for institutional and social reform. As Colombian voters were already being asked to consider candidates for six elective offices, the ensuing measure became known as the *septima papeleta* (seventh ballot). Proof of public support for the *septima papeleta* was made apparent on March 11, 1990, when an estimated two million extra ballots were cast in favor of the measure, whose end demand was the creation of a National Constituent Assembly that would take up the task of creating a new constitution for the republic (Dugas, 2001).

Although the seventh ballot was legally unconstitutional, its broad support was represented in electoral figures. This ultimately culminated in an official plebiscite occurring alongside the presidential elections in May of the same year. The Colombian Registrar counted 5,236,863 votes in favor of the creation of a National Constituent Assembly, a figure that would correspond to 86.6% of votes cast (Dugas, 2001: 810). Consequently, the incoming administration of Cesar Gaviria Trujillo shifted the conversation from whether or not an assembly would be created to what the composition of this body would be, gathering input from major political parties, political movements, influential organizations, and academics. The assembly was composed of delegates that represented the most diverse social and political sectors of Colombia; workers, students, traditional political elites, as well as marginalized ethnic groups including indigenous populations and Afro-Colombians (Agudelo, 2001).

The 1991 Constitution produced by the National Constituent Assembly would engender the potential for new social and political spaces, giving many Colombians renewed hope. Many viewed this event as a potential panacea that may serve to cure the ills of a conflict-laden society with a debilitated civic structure. More importantly, ethnic minorities saw it as a political opportunity through which they might transform a history of exclusion. This new hope was tied into a rhetoric which championed inalienable rights of citizens against the state, political inclusion, respect for difference, and a sense of plurality which recognized the diversity that composed the Colombian nation.

The Constitutional Assembly generated a social contract that greatly contrasted the old structural framework. This was particularly true for questions of race, ethnicity, and inclusion of minorities. The pre-reform Latin American state was exclusionary and

included a “rigid, race-based class hierarchy and concentrated productive forces in the hands of a tiny elite” (Van Cott, 2000: 2). Post-reform states, in contrast, sought to “extend the benefits of citizenship and the market to a larger proportion of the state and democratic regime (Ibid: 3). Thus, the post-reform state in Latin America was inclusionary, taking up the task of recognizing its pluri-ethnic, multi-racial make-up and integrating traditionally marginalized minorities. This meant extending some existing legal recognition of indigenous peoples while for black Colombians it meant finally becoming “visible” in Colombian history and society (Arocha, 1998).²¹

This development in the racial ideology opened a particular space in which ethnic and racial minorities could engage the state and reconstitute the relations that they shared with it. This development is of great importance, as I hold it to represent the beginning of a common opportunity structure for both sets of ethnic actors in Colombia. This transformation in the state approach to race translated to the possibility of re-forming identities, articulating ethno-racial claims, and securing collective group rights, thereby invigorating a new set of ethnic social movements and demands. The impact of this shift cannot be overstated. As Brysk explains, early ethnic movements avoided making collective appeals based on group rights as these were broadly rejected as challenges to sovereignty, thus being radical and treasonous (Brysk, 1994). Therefore, the newfound ability to express collective claims (i.e. land, resources, and autonomy) delivered a great impact to what Sidney Tarrow calls the “repertoires of contention” that are available to these ethnic movements. This is illustrative of the willingness of Colombian government to hear claims that theretofore were inaudible to the status quo. Such an opening provided fertile ground for ethnic social movements to advance their agendas.

²¹ Arocha argues that the preceding official ideology presented Colombian as an entirely non-black nation.

Institutional Realignment

If the altering of the state racial ideology endows ethnic groups with a newly legitimized way of framing ethnic claims, institutional adjustments ultimately provided new avenues for ethnic groups to gain access to government. As I briefly stated earlier, a debilitated party system can be credited (or blamed, depending on the angle taken) with creating an opportunity for the rise of ethnic parties onto the national scene. Mainwaring and Scully took note of this in the 1990s, stating that Colombia's traditional parties were highly factionalized, with party factions presenting their own set of candidates. They would add that while traditional parties maintained a stranglehold on electoral politics, there was a big push by the left to challenge the "weak" and "eroded" traditional parties of 1990s Colombia (Mainwaring & Scully, 1995). However, this circumstance is more important as a precursor to the key opportunity which existed in constitutional reform. Thus, party debilitation is secondary to the explanation provided here. Instead, this paper views ethnic challenges to traditional power structures to be a function of reserved spaces of political representation. Both ethnic groups were able to secure reserved representation in legislative institutions. Indigenous groups secured two seats in the Colombian senate as well as an additional seat in the chamber of representatives. Of great importance to Afro-Colombian populations was the acquisition of Transitory Article 55, which might also be described as a promise on behalf of the state that legislation would be later drawn up to address the needs and concerns of black communities. The subsequent law that was later written by government officials, in negotiation with black leaders, was Law 70 (*ley 70*), which would henceforth lay the framework for the collective black claims that would be deemed legitimate by the state, as well as the avenues through which they could be

pursued. Particularly pertinent here is article 66 of law 70, which established two reserved seats in the chamber of representatives for “black communities” (*comunidades negras*). This “black district” (*circunscripcion negra*) within the lower chamber of the legislature would become effective for the first time in the 1994 legislative elections. However, and as we will see later, the electoral figures of that election painted a bleak picture of the strength of a unified black vote, even coming off of the large legal victory that was law 70.

General Outcomes of the ANC: Equal Opportunity?

Before analyzing in greater detail the electoral outcomes between actors, it may be helpful to first identify some immediate contrasts exhibited by the two movements that can be observed after the ANC. Table 1 delivers a visual of the key issues and outcomes that were prevalent for both groups, showing the disparities. Many of these outcomes can be explained in the ethnic asymmetries that occurred during the National Constitutional Assembly (ANC). During this process, the ethnic diversity of indigenous groups was substantiated by Constitutional articles 286 and 287, which established the framework for transforming the communal land reserves (*resguardos*) into indigenous territorial units that were to be as autonomous as municipalities (Arocha, 1998). Arocha’s detailed account of the process for black communities is exceptional. He states that

...Transitory Constitutional Article 55 (AT55) was not only a scaled-down version of the innovations applicable to the indigenous communities but a temporary measure that could only apply permanently after Congress had passed what is now known as Law 70. That law, in turn, had to be implemented by means of specific decrees to be submitted to President Ernesto Samper for approval. To complete this long process, the executive had to appoint two high-level commissions composed of leaders of the black movement, government officials, and academics to draft the law and its rulings. (Arocha, 1998: 81)

One observer suggested that these results are indicative of an asymmetrical reform process that truly revealed the state's intransigence in perceiving black demands as legitimate and equal to indigenous (Hooker, 2005). This argument suggests that black movements were less successful in framing their claims to the state on the basis of black ethnicity. To be fair, this assertion is not entirely without merit. Arocha (1998) noted that the defense of Afro-Colombian ancestral territories was complicated by a lack of understanding generated by the complexity of the aforementioned legal decrees (Transitory Article 55, Law 70, and their predecessor laws). Afro-Colombian community councils "must produce historical, demographic, economic, and cartographic studies of their communities" that none of the council members know how to collect. Indigenous groups are also under these obligations, but there are government bodies that exist to assist them in data collection, thus facilitating their claims²² (Arocha, 1998). These observations easily give one the perception that the state was generally less receptive to black claims, simply because their legitimacy was questioned, a notion that might suggest an opportunity structure that was actually *unequal* from the onset. But this argument fails to reveal a key facet of the story. I agree with Hooker that the initial problem has to do with how claims are framed. My disagreement is in the audience to which attempts at framing claims was unsuccessful. I hold that the reason for the belittling of black claims by government is due to the inability of the movement to frame claims to followers rather than government. That is to say, the illegitimacy of black demands was not just a perception of the government apparatus, but of many Afro-Colombians themselves, a

²² Arocha does mention in later work that Afro-Colombians now receive similar assistance, although its comparability with that of indigenous groups is unclear.

large segment of whom also disagreed with the definition of legitimate black claims. This, in turn, led to the fragmentation of the movement and the inability of black elites to hold as much political leverage in reform discussions. The result is a set of outcomes that reflect the higher position of indigenous groups. Most importantly, all of this disrobes the weaknesses of black leaders to successfully frame and mobilize their respective movement.

Table 1.1: Comparison of Indigenous and Black demands during constitutional reform period.

Demand	Indigenous	Black
Acceptance of Autonomy Claims	Yes	No
Recognition of Legal Plurality	Yes	No
Quotas in Legislatures	Both Chambers (2 Senate, 1 Chamber of Representatives)	Chamber of Representatives Only (2 seats)

Analysis

Framing Processes: The Afro-Colombian Movement

Peter Wade aptly noted the great deal of internal diversity in the black movement. In particular, he points out that a large part of black organizations seek to take up the issues that are central to rural community councils of the Colombian Pacific which are formed to file land title claims. On the other hand, there are also the urban movements who may or may not focus on peasant issues, as has been previously noted. “As might be expected, these (organizations) vary widely in terms of their ideological stance vis-à-vis black identity and racism” (Wade, 2002). This circumstance led to a variety of ways for

“blackness” to be “ethnicized” by leaders and organizations. Organizations seeking to protect rural peasants, such as the PCN (*Procesos de Comunidades Negras*), sought to mold black identity around cultural difference and rights attached to traditional use of territory (Agudelo, 2002). Other organizations, such as *Cimarron*, sought in many instances to adopt a racial framing that sought rights based in inclusion rather than difference.²³ This point of view sought to appeal to the urban black population more so than the rural communities (Wade, 2002). The 1994 and 1998 electoral cycles are demonstrative of the divisions that are present in the black movement. Zulia Mena was voted in under the banner of the OBAPO (*Organizaciones de Barrios Populares*) while Agustin Valencia came in under a host of organizations from various parts of the southwest Colombia. Again, these organizations do not necessarily have the same ideology, goals, or racial agenda. While both were elected in 1994, these types of divisions prevented lasting success at the national level as they divided a black vote already confined by a lack of followers who could identify with the black movement. As electoral data will show, this prevented the development of party consolidation as black parties never became a legitimate opposition to the traditional party structures.

Agudelo (1999) noted that black rural populations, and the organizations that served them, tried to mimic what had worked for indigenous sectors. It would appear that the success of riverine and mining communities in articulating this brand of black ethnic rights had some deleterious, albeit unintended, effects on the black movement as a whole, particularly in terms of building a lasting national electoral presence. In order to acquire support and effectiveness, black organizations have had to focus on localized

²³ The movement objectives of both *Cimarron* and the PNC laid out in the previous section provide greater detail as to the nature of these differences (pp. 37-38).

issues and politics. While this may lend itself well to mayoral or possibly even departmental politics, at the national level it has led to the inability to mobilize a broad, unified voting base. Moreover, black organizations have suffered from a dearth of leadership and qualified candidates, again due to the inability to resist being siphoned away by the Colombian Liberal Party. Agudelo is quite clear in stating that the history of Liberal Party domination in the black region of Colombia has proven intransigent. Thus, the traditional problem of clientelism is alive and well while the development of nascent parties is vastly hindered (Pardo, 2002).

To translate the black experience into the language of McAdam, McCarthy and Zald, the conscious strategic efforts of black activists to frame ethnic rights around concepts like territorial rights, cultural preservation, and resource control was indeed successful in legitimating and motivating collective action. However, this mobilization was largely limited to the rural populations of the Pacific littoral. Many urban black Colombians were not motivated to action and many even continued to reject “black politics” (Wade, 1995). Even *Cimarrón’s* message of resistance and suffering often failed to resonate with them and many still viewed the racial mixing process as a democratizing one (Ibid). Moreover, the failure to develop a cohesive framing that legitimated action for a broader support base led to an absence of coherent goals across organizations and long-term political objectives. The result was competition among movement actors for state resources, the distribution of resources to pockets of supporters (clientelism), and a form of institutionalization that included the swallowing of the Afro-Colombian movement by the traditional parties (Pardo, 2002). Pardo articulated it quite well when he stated that, “Faced with a lack of organizational flexibility and ideological

consistency, the results obtained by the movement in the institutional setting serve to halt its development and even reverse it” (Pardo, 2002, my translation). What Pardo has astutely noted here is the fact that the successes achieved by black elites in terms of institutional access were often deleterious to the movement. Otherwise stated, access often meant cooptation of leadership with the end result being a surrendering of certain goals. This cooptation was made possible by the fact that the movement was less formidable, a weakness that is attributable to fragmentation and a narrow support base.

Framing Processes: The Indigenous Movement

Contrasting the Afro-Colombian movement, Colombia’s indigenous population did not suffer from a rural-urban divide. One source noted that the vast majority of indigenous people in Colombia lived in rural areas (Moreno, 2007), while another went a step further, demonstrating that almost 82 percent of indigenous people lived in the indigenous protected *resguardos* (Van Cott, 2005). Thus, indigenous groups were able to avoid the pitfalls that are apt to occur when one must frame an ethnic movement around a diversity of desires, motivations, and class interests. Most Indians could attach their own interests to the group desire for a set of interconnected rights; territorial (*resguardos*), cultural preservation (indigenous identity), and protection of resources. Even diverse, national-level organizations with differing organizational structures were able to unite behind this set of shared issues.

The ability to produce consistent framing and coherent objectives around key issues had positive effects on indigenous social movement organizations. Local and regional affiliates that existed under larger organizations, while often from diverse tribal groups, were able to come together beyond the local level in moments of indigenous

need, often times under a larger organizational banner such as ONIC or AICO. This represents a great contrast with the black movement. There is also a contrast with Agudelo's observation of the Liberal stronghold in the Pacific region. Van Cott (2005) noted that the traditional parties had very little presence in indigenous regions of Colombia, thus the cooptation of leaders and the wresting of the voting base was far less likely in these areas than it was in the Afro-Colombian Pacific. That is not to suggest that some form of cooptation was not present in the former case. Indeed there was some shifting of loyalties, a practice that often led to party switching. Equally important is the fact that electoral success created animosity within organizations as actors sought to further their own political careers (Van Cott, 2005). It appears, however, that indigenous actors had a greater say in how they would be coopted and institutionalized, selecting allies rather than simply surrendering to them. This is confirmed by the fact that the consolidation of indigenous parties was aided by the ability of indigenous groups to expand support to non-ethnic sectors of society (Jackson, 2002). This is most likely a function of the development of independent, electorally viable indigenous parties that were able to provide legitimate alternatives to the traditional power structures, not only for movement followers, but also for other unrepresented sectors (e.g. the left).

To once again translate these observations directly to the concepts articulated by McAdam, McCarthy and Zald, it would appear that a more cohesive ethnic framing in the indigenous movement contributed to a greater connection among the collective vehicles (SMOs) through which indigenous actors mobilized and engaged in action. That is to say, the development of broadly shared understandings, facilitated by the mostly rural demographic of adherents, led to the development of SMOs who did not struggle for

resources to the same degree as Afro-Colombian SMOs. This unified character was accompanied by a mobilized ethnic voting base that gave elites proper motivation to remain faithful to the movement (reduction of personalist tendencies) and solidified ethnic parties as legitimate alternatives. Thus, the form of institutionalization that occurred in this instance was one in which the movement had greater control over the terms of their inclusion. The apparent result was less cooptation, greater acceptance of indigenous demands, and the development of independent leadership that could continue to champion ethnic demands through ethnic parties (Van Cott, 2005). To be entirely clear, I do not assert that indigenous SMOs are homogenous in their ethnic representations, tactics, or organizational structures. But their ability to connect around key issues during the ANC and at critical points in implementation have placed them in a better position to continue struggling behind a clearer, more widely accepted ethnic platform. Without this, party consolidation would have been very unlikely.

Indicators of Electoral Viability

Despite the ability of the black leadership to successfully lobby for reserved ethnic seats in the chamber of representatives (Article 66, Law 70), the voting figures for this special district were indicative of the inability of black SMOs to translate their fragmented movement into a mobilized electorate. The first round of legislative elections that featured reserved seats took place in 1994, roughly three years after the ANC and one year after the passage of Law 70. When casting ballots, voters have can choose to vote for either their departmental district *of* the reserved district (indigenous or black), but not both. Thus, a voter who votes for the black district can be viewed to value reserved black

representation as a path to responsive government. Table 1 shows the results for the 1994 legislative elections. Of particular interest is the total number of votes that were cast for the special district. This figure came to 131,207, which would amount to 3.25% of the total votes casted (approximately 5.58 million). We would have to call this figure modest given the fact that the National Department of Administrative Statistics' (DANE) 2007 figures show that 21% of Colombia's population is considered black.²⁴ Softening the figure further is a comparison with the votes obtained by indigenous parties in the special senate district designated for that group. Indigenous senate candidates received a total of 108,119 votes while only making up roughly 2% of the national population. This fact is striking and speaks volumes of the comparative ability to mobilize a voting base.

Furthermore, the numbers in Table 2 demonstrate that even in departments where black Colombians make up a majority of the population (shown in all caps) gaining a large percentage of the votes casted was still elusive. The department exhibiting the highest percentage was the Choco, an expected outcome considering the fact that the black population makes up over 90 percent of the total population (DANE).

The state of affairs leading into the 1998 elections was as equally telling as the electoral outcomes. A decision issued by the Colombian Constitutional Court in September of 1996 rendered the inclusion of reserved seats in Law 70 unconstitutional on the grounds that it had not been presented to the court for verification (Agudelo, 1999).²⁵

²⁴ There is an important caveat that should be attached to this statistic, however. While many black Colombians are considered black in Colombian society, many do not self-identify as black. This phenomenon complicates the ability of researchers to assess the percentage of blacks who do self-identify as such are voting along black ethnic lines.

²⁵ Just the section mandating reserved seats was deemed unconstitutional, the remainder of Law 70 was not subject to the same decision and remained in place.

Table 1.2: Total votes by candidate for the district for black communities, 1994 legislative elections.

Candidate	Votes
Zulia Mena	39,109
Agustin Valencia	13,935
E. Roberto Crabali	13,488
Justiniano Quinones	11,112
Cebedeo Carabali	9,191
Arturo Grueso	8,304
Rudesindo Castro	8,116
Ventura Diaz	6,323
Orlando E. Palacios	6,250
Jesus M. Lucumi	5,737
Jair Valencia	5,244
Victor Leguizamon	4,398
Total	131,207

(Source: National Registry of Colombia)

Table 1.3: Total votes for the district for black communities by department (top seven departments by percentage shown).

Department	Votes	% of Total
CHOCO	4,297	8.09%
Bogota, D.F.	32,144	5.06%
CAUCA	5,652	3.98%
VALLE DEL CAUCA	20,020	3.55%
NARINO	6,325	2.63%
Guajira	2,017	2.42%
Bolivar	7,028	2.40%

(Source: National Registry of Colombia)

One observer noted that equally responsible for the removal of the district for black communities was the poor performance of the two representatives elected to the offices in the 1994 election year. The practical invisibility of these two public servants, both to other legislators and to the black communities who depended on their representation, made the removal of the district a non-event (Ibid). This forced candidates of black

parties to compete on equal ground with the rest of the field, a circumstance which led various candidates to try their luck in the single-district senate race. Table 3 shows the outcomes for the 6 candidates of black parties in the national senate race of 1998 in comparison with their figures from the 1994 chamber of representatives vote. These figures show drastic drops in the black vote for almost all black movement candidates, with one (Agustin Valencia) performing almost on the same level as he had the previous cycle. None of the candidates were elected to the Colombian senate. It can be plausibly suggested that the figures presented in Table 3 are incomparable, as one takes place in the context of a lower house election while the other takes place in the upper house. While this case can be made, it is also important to note that the voting structure of the reserved ethnic seats in the chamber of representatives takes place on a national level. In other words, the candidates seeking election in the reserved district compete with all others on a national list of reserved seat candidates, and every voter across the nation has the same opportunity to vote on the reserved district as well. Thus, reserved elections, much like the single-district senate election, are national in scope rather than departmental. So, to be clear, the voting figures seen here represent the number of votes received nationally in 1994 (chamber reserved district) with the number of votes received nationally in 1998 (senate).

Table 1.4: Votes for black party candidates for 1994 chamber election and 1998 senate election.

Candidate	Total Votes 1994 (Chamber)	Total Votes 1998 (Senate)
Zulia Mena	39,109	19,785
Agustin Valencia	13,935	13,793
Jair Valencia	5,244	3,395
Smith Cordoba	Did not participate	1,515
Jesus Lucumi	5,737	1,325
Carlos Rosero	Did not participate	8,535

(Source: National Registry of Colombia)

Table 1.5: Candidates elected to special district for black communities and party affiliation.

Legislative Period	Representatives	Party or Movement	Total List Votes	Total Candidate Votes	Highest Departmental Support
1994-1998	Zulia Mena García	OBAPO	No Data	No Data	No Data
	Agustín Valencia Mosquera	N/A	No Data	No Data	No Data
2002-2006	María Isabel Urrutia Ocoro	Movimiento Popular Unido	40,968	N/A ²⁶	Valle Del Cauca (33.8%)
	Wellington Ortiz Palacio	Joint Organizations	30,928	N/A	Bogotá D.C. (51.40%)
2006-2010	María Isabel Urrutia Ocoro	Alianza Social Afrocolombiana	7,751	7,751 ²⁷	Nariño (30.99%)
	Silfredo Morales Altamar	AFROUNINCCA	6,849	3,108	Bolivar (43.85%)

While no black parties have exhibited electoral success across multiple election cycles, even within their special district, this is not the case with indigenous parties.

Since 1992, both the AICO (*Autoridades Indigenas de Colombia*) and ASI (*Alianza*

²⁶ The system of preferential voting within lists was not put into place until the 2006 election cycle after the Political Reform of 2003 was passed.

²⁷ This figure is identical to the total list votes because Maria Isabel Urrutia Ocoro opted to present a closed list to voters.

Social Indigena) have maintained constant representation in congress (Moreno, 2007). There was also the appearance of the MIC (*Movimiento Indigena Colombiano*) during the 1994 and 1998 elections. The MIC consequently disappeared from the scene in 2002 when ASI and AICO would once again become the two largest electoral forces (Ibid). Figure 4 shows the total votes casted for the special indigenous district of the Colombian senate. We can easily observe an increase in total votes from 1994 to 2002 in the amount of 134,149. We also see that indigenous parties were not dependent on the ethnic district for representation, gaining more than the allotted seats in 3 out of 4 election cycles.

It has been noted elsewhere that non-indigenous parties have tried to incorporate indigenous candidates into their lists in order to harness some of the electoral power of this ethnic group (Moreno, 2007). This development can be viewed in two ways; we can perceive it as an attempted cooptation of the indigenous movement *or* we can identify it as an indicator of an abundance of qualified indigenous candidates who are seeking other avenues of election away from the controls of entities like AICO and ASI. It should also be noted that these two perceptions may not be mutually exclusive of each other. Despite the swallowing of parts of the movement, indigenous parties continue to exhibit a lasting quality and continue to be electorally viable parties, whether through an indigenous voting base or by gaining the support of non-indigenous sectors of society (Moreno, 2007). Movements toward the latter form of support are indicative of parties that have indigenous foundations and beginnings but who seek to become “supraethnic” in nature, thereby transcending the specificity of ethnicity (Ibid). Regardless of how we choose to interpret the above voting figures, the basic outcome is clear: indigenous parties have

been able to capitalize on the opportunities brought on by structural crises, newly perceived threats, and institutional realignment.

Table 1.6: Total indigenous party votes for reserved senate district by year.

Election Year	Total Indigenous Votes	Additional Senate Seats²⁸
1994	108,119	0
1998	150,281	1
2002	242,268	2
2006	157,585	1

(Source: National Registry of Colombia)

Table 1.7: Candidates elected to special senate district for indigenous communities and party affiliation.

Legislative Period	Representatives	Party or Movement	Total List Votes
2002-2006	Efren Felix Tarapues	AICO	35,215
	Francisco Rojas Birry	Movimiento Huella Ciudadana	29,578
2006-2010	Jesus Enrique Piñacue	ASI	43,903
	Ernesto Ramiro Estacio	AICO	21,264
2010-2014	Marco Anibal Avirama	ASI	26,428
	German Carlosama Lopez	AICO	23,809

Conclusions

As is the case with most studies, this one exhibits some considerable limitations.

Knowledgeable readers may fairly question the assumption of a constant opportunity

²⁸ This column denotes the number of senate seats acquired by indigenous candidates beyond the two reserved seats.

structure across the two movements. I should comment that a common opportunity structure is derived as a ‘best-guess’ variable, and a simplistic one. This means that I have taken a basic, simplified understanding of political opportunity structure, theorizing it as the availability of access points in the political system. Other factors such as the environments influence on political claims, the state’s propensity for repression, and the temporal location of the movement itself have been omitted. The justification for such a move was to isolate the framing and mobilization variables in order to better understand the movements themselves rather than the structures that operated in their environment. The constitutional reform process and the ANC are occurrences which make such a formulation of opportunity justifiable. These processes are the access points that altered “the configuration of forces in a (potential or actual) group’s political environment that influences that group’s assertion of its political claims” (Brockett, 1991: 254, cited in Foweraker, 1995:71). It is my assertion that the extent to which movement’s capitalized on this access is determined greatly by mobilization and framing rather than the greater details of the opportunity structure.

It is also quite possible that the question presented here may have benefited from a localized analysis. That is to say, it may be unfair to assess movements solely based on national representation. Moreover, the link between local interests and national party representation is arguable, a fact that supports calls for local analysis. The greatest hindrance preventing such an analysis was reliable access to local information across elections and for all of the important municipalities. Moreover, the level of detail necessary to make a comparison at such a level, without the benefit of field research,

would have undoubtedly proven to be a difficult obstacle to overcome. It is for this reason that national data and reserved representation became the foci of comparison.

The national electoral outcomes that have been observed exhibit striking contrasts. Black organizations have not been able to translate the institutional aperture into the formation of electorally viable parties while indigenous groups have been quite successful in doing so, all the while comprising a far smaller percentage of the Colombian population. But if the political opportunity structure is constant, we are still at a loss as to *why* this is the case. To repeat, it is my contention here that the black movement suffered from incoherent framing, an issue that led to fragmentation of those organizations. This, in turn, hampered the ability of Afro-Colombians to mobilize a dependable, loyal electorate. In contrast, indigenous actors were able to frame their movement along ethnic lines with great success and alongside a coherent set of demands. The result was superior mobilization of loyal supporters and the continued visibility of dominant indigenous parties.

A key part of issuing claims to government is first establishing their legitimacy, not only vis-à-vis the state, but also for political followers. Followers of any particular social movement must be moved to action by an identification with a commonly agreed upon set of goals and demands that they seek to gain from government. It also follows that the state's perception of this common understanding is critical to a group's ability to substantiate their claims and achieve their collective goals, all aided by an enhanced organizational capacity and resource mobilization. It is often unclear why some groups are able to construct a unified movement while others fail in this regard. In the case of Colombian ethnic movements, the demographic circumstances of the two main ethnic

movements placed one in a position to experience complications in framing the movement while facilitating unified framing in the counter-example. The diversity of desires, goals, and perceptions of race within the Afro-Colombian movement made a cohesive framing difficult to sustain over a long period of time. The result was a diverse set of organizations that experienced only effervescent moments of unity.

It has been noted elsewhere that in Latin America “the defense of ‘autonomy’ is often an attempt to distance contemporary movements from the political manipulation” of traditional political powers while “the notion of autonomy serves more general ideological purposes” (Foweraker, 1995). Indigenous SMOs were able to lock their attention into issues of autonomy, resource control, and cultural preservation. This was the source of their unified message to both followers and the state. Thus, by carrying this message indigenous populations achieve a great deal, including the ability to distance themselves from traditional power structures and be selective about how their demands would be integrated into state institutions. This produced a lasting movement with independent and capable leaders, as well as powerful allies. These conditions were conducive to greater success in comparison with Afro-Colombians.

Many would posit that increasing rates of violence and displacement are also key causal factors for the lack of a more palpable black agenda. While this observation has some traction, we should also note that indigenous organizations such as OREWA have found ways to flourish in the same Chocó province that is inhabited by a large black population. CRIC, an organization which has been shown to have electoral success in the past, has its home in the Cauca province, an area that has experienced a great deal of activity from both paramilitary and guerilla combatants. Thus, positing violence against

black populations as a major cause of the observed lack of black political organization seems insufficient, as indigenous people have not been spared these unfortunate occurrences. In fact, if we reposition the discussion we may see this as a possible benefit to black organizations. Asher (2009) notes that the increase in the number of black communities displaced by violence has been an issue around which the various black sectors described here have been able to coalesce. This has led to an increase in international support (human rights networks, churches, and solidarity groups) that has given greater visibility of black politics in Colombia (Asher, 2009). “As displaced Afro-Colombians face new forms of discrimination and invisibility, there is a resurgence in activism against racial discrimination, as well as for socioeconomic and political equality” (Ibid: 155). Oddly, these tragedies may provide the black movement with a new set of demands that might link them with key allies who identify with the issues brought about by displacement.

It remains to be determined whether or not the diverging character of the two movements has led to vast differences in the formation of electorally viable ethnic parties at the local, regional, and national level. Of equal importance is the need to study what the programmatic impact of a less mobilized movement might be. This would entail analyzing the success of ethnic elected officials and social movement organizations to influence legislation that improved the lives of black and indigenous people. Thus, the new questions would focus upon the translation of the movements into descriptive representation in state institutions and whether or not that descriptive representation indeed exhibited substantive results. In this vein, future study should be cognizant of the double-edged sword that is electoral politics, particularly for indigenous groups that have

exhibited success. It has been noted that the indigenous elite can begin to increase the “adjudication of the traditional,” possibly leading to a diminishing of traditional authority (Dover and Rappaport, 1996). Otherwise stated, electoral struggles informed by a national indigenous agenda may be deleterious to the authority of indigenous communities. It is obvious that party consolidation is hardly the end of the road for ethnic strife.

The inability of black communities to sustain a cohesive movement is largely attributable of a failure to develop a unified framing, particularly in terms of how “blackness” was to be politicized at the national level. This circumstance resulted from two key factors: a rural-urban divide and the resulting fragmentation of black social movement organizations. That is not to suggest that the indigenous movement was devoid of internal strains due to competition and diversity. This would obfuscate the true history of that movement and belie their tendency to be internally democratic, a circumstance which inevitably breeds some level of internal division. However, an agreement across the movement of basic ideology and objectives led to a greater display of support and organization across organizations, thus restricting the damage of sectarianism. This support, again while not entirely absent, was far less cohesive in the case of Afro-Colombian organizations, a dearth that precipitated the inability of these actors to broaden their original grassroots approaches and join forces in united-action fronts. As Fals Borda (1992) rightfully indicates, the survival of movements across Latin America was dependent on the ability to “link one protest or struggle for rights or services to another, to look for steadfast allies of different social backgrounds, and the form networks of mutual support and coordination at several levels.” It is these links

between indigenous groups that led to cultural action in larger, regional and national arenas. The ultimate result was the resistance of large levels of cooptation and eventually the formation of electorally viable parties that have endured over multiple electoral cycles.

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