

## Political Articulation: Parties and the Constitution of Cleavages in the United States, India, and Turkey\*

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*Political parties do not merely reflect social divisions, they actively construct them. While this point has been alluded to in the literature, surprisingly little attempt has been made to systematically elaborate the relationship between parties and the social, which tend to be treated as separate domains contained by the disciplinary division of labor between political science and sociology. This article demonstrates the constructive role of parties in forging critical social blocs in three separate cases, India, Turkey, and the United States, offering a critique of the dominant approach to party politics that tends to underplay the autonomous role of parties in explaining the preferences, social cleavages, or epochal socioeconomic transformations of a given community. Our thesis, drawing on the work of Gramsci, Althusser, and Laclau, is that parties perform crucial articulating functions in the creation and reproduction of social cleavages. Our comparative analysis of the Republican and Democratic parties in the United States, Islamic and secularist parties in Turkey, and the Bharatiya Janata Party and Congress parties in India will demonstrate how “political articulation” has naturalized class, ethnic, religious, and racial formations as a basis of social division and hegemony. Our conclusion is that the process of articulation must be brought to the center of political sociology, simultaneously encompassing the study of social movements and structural change, which have constituted the orienting poles of the discipline.*

This article examines three contemporary political projects: white racial formation and suburbanization in the United States, Islamic mobilization in Turkey, and Hindu nationalism in India. The outcome in each case has been a racialized or ethnoreligious bloc. Our research question attempts to illuminate the decisive processes that are common to all three cases. To that end we ask simply: Why these particular social formations and not others?

Despite the fact that each of these projects is often identified with a specific political party—the Republican Party in the United States, the Justice and Development Party in Turkey, and the Bharatiya Janata Party in India—much of the literature fails to systematically elaborate the role of parties in the construction of these

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ethnoreligious formations. This failure stems from two factors. First, political parties have generally been accorded secondary status in the grand theoretical explanations of social change. Once an important area of sociological inquiry, an unspoken division of labor has relegated the study of parties to political science, and the constitution of the social, such as class and racial formation, to political sociology, the sociology of race and ethnicity, or the sociology of religion (Burstein 1998:39,47,55; Costain and McFarland 1998:1).

But second, this disciplinary division of labor, we believe, conceals a key assumption, held increasingly by both disciplines, that parties either reflect the preferences or social cleavages of a given society or are reducible to the social movements or states of which they are a part. Thus, for instance, Americanists have argued that contemporary racial conservatism originates with social dislocation due to labor migration, the civil rights movement, and economic uncertainty (Carter 1995; Lassiter 2006; Phillips 1969). Students of Indian politics have explained the popularity of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in terms of the rise of the middle class, the growing political assertion of lower castes, and rapid socioeconomic change with the breakdown of state socialism (Chhibber 1997; Hansen and Jaffrelot 2001; Hasan 2002; Kohli 1991). Finally, scholars of Turkey have made sense of the increasing dominance of Islamic parties (ultimately, the Justice and Development Party) as a natural reflection of the balance of power between the secular and religious sectors of the population, of divisions in the ruling secular elite, and of dynamic movement-like activity on the part of Sufi communities and neighborhood networks (Göle 1997; Huntington 1996; Lewis 1993; Mardin 1989; Rubin 2007; White 2002; Yavuz 2003). Those explanations that offer a larger role for parties tend to conceive of party practices as a matter of mere sloganeering or focus on the disorganization of formerly dominant parties (Aistrup 1996; Çarkoğlu 2006; Edsall and Edsall 1991).

The explanatory structure of these theories places the articulating practices of parties as secondary to the larger social transformations and crises unfolding in each case. The hegemony of the parties in question is seen as a *fait accompli*. However, using the benefit of hindsight rather than exploring the contingent successes of party practices reveals some important empirical problems. These problems stem from the larger assumption that racial and ethno-religious appeals, as opposed to class- or caste-based appeals, for example, share an elective affinity with moments of instability and consequently destabilized identities. Existing theories, in other words, are hard pressed to explain why some real or available historical possibilities are taken while others are not.

To fill the gap in current theoretical approaches that neglect this crucial mechanism, we offer a theoretical alternative that we call “political articulation,” within which political parties work to naturalize some identities and collectivities and suppress others. We therefore challenge the notion that social cleavages exist prior to parties, while also specifying the relationship between party practices and the dynamics of social closure. What is common to our three cases, then, is the decisive articulating role of political parties, without which the aforementioned social formations would have failed to constitute themselves.

Parties, we argue, are often central to the constitution of the social because they give a specific logic to the reproduction of social formations. Without this or a substituting articulating logic, constituents of the “social,” the heterogeneous terrain of social relations (economic, institutional, kin, religious, ethnic, etc.), do not necessarily hold together. Following this, we define “political articulation” as the process through which *party practices naturalize class, ethnic, and racial formations*

*as a basis of social division by integrating disparate interests and identities into coherent sociopolitical blocs.* Cleavages, therefore, are only the *possible* differences among actors who populate the social; they do not naturally carry a political valence, but may be deployed by parties to aggregate majorities.

The three cases—the United States, India, and Turkey—have been selected as exemplars of our perspective as they typify three distinct and important political projects. We do not wish to suggest that these are the only cases that would demonstrate the significance of political articulation; toward the end of this article, we outline several other cases that justify a focus on party practices. Nevertheless, the case selection is ideal because it chooses three very different cases, thus demonstrating that political articulation is not a historically delineated phenomenon that is only relevant, for example, to weakly developed party systems. The striking similarity of political results in our cases points to the importance of political articulation and can therefore be the basis of further theory building. In other words, the comparison is based on the logic of the method of agreement, even though our discussion of successful and failed articulation within the cases secondarily integrates the method of difference.

The article will proceed in three parts. We begin by summarizing key theoretical perspectives in the social sciences that address the role of parties. These fall into two broad categories—one in which parties are seen as reflections of underlying cleavages or aggregate preferences, and another in which parties are effectively collapsed into social movements or the state. We counterpose our approach to the reflections approach while building on the social movements approach to offer a more sharply delineated theory of the relationship among parties, movements, and sociopolitical blocs. Next, we analyze the practices of the Republican and Democratic parties in the United States, Islamic and secularist parties in Turkey, and the BJP and Congress parties in India to demonstrate how in each case political parties forged class, religious, ethnic, and racial formations in historically specific conditions. We contend, using counterfactual reasoning, that projects organized around such formations fail to exercise political effects when they do not do the cultural, parliamentary, and extra-parliamentary work to naturalize and then either hold together or supplant identities and collectivities as coherent blocs. We then conclude with the implications of our empirical section and propose guidelines that could help inaugurate a research program centered on the twin processes of party and social formation.

## PARTIES AS REFLECTIONS

### *Social Cleavages and Voting Behavior*

The dominant sociological approach to party formation, which originated in the seminal work of Lipset and Rokkan (1967), suggests that parties are generated by, and reflect, the principal cleavages in a given society (Lipset and Rokkan 1967:5; Rokkan 1999:302–05). Lipset and Rokkan's "freezing hypothesis," for instance, claims that party systems ossified during the early 20th century, reflecting the major cleavages of the interwar years (Veugelers 1999). This reflections approach is also shared by the dominant rational choice perspective of voting behavior in political science, which assumes that party systems are shaped by the distribution of voters along a community's ideological spectrum (Downs 1957:20, 140). Burnham's (1970) theory of critical realignment similarly holds that the sheer diversity of American society

and the coalitional nature of two-party politics create rising levels of strain that precipitate critical elections every 30 to 40 years (1970:9–10).<sup>1</sup>

Although these works are foundational for good reason, they all allow too little theoretical space for party elites to shape and organize the cleavages, ideologies, and diverse constituent demands attributed to actors on the ground.<sup>2</sup> They assume cleavage or preference formation to be “natural” processes that occur outside party formation, and prior to it. We will show in our empirical section that in fact the opposite is true, namely, that it is political parties that actively *naturalize* identities and collectivities and integrate them into coherent blocs.

## THE AUTONOMY OF THE POLITICAL

### *State Autonomy*

The state-centered literature emerged as a counterweight to certain strands of Marxism, which held that the state was the embodiment of capitalism’s class contradictions. Neo-Weberianism defines the state as an organization that holds a monopoly on the means of coercion within a territory (Tilly 1985). This draws upon Weber’s thesis that the progressive rationalization of state bureaucracy has made the state itself objective, neutral, and fundamentally autonomous from the social. The state is thus viewed as an autonomous organization, located at the intersection of class structures and the international system of states, where it maneuvers to extract resources and build administrative capacities (Evans 1995; Skocpol 1979). Mechanisms like bureaucratic expansion, territorial centralization, and state collapse are seen as the prime movers of social transformation. Yet, within this attempt to delineate an autonomous role for politics, parties have remained curiously ancillary to the process (Ertman 1997; Mann 1986; Skocpol 1979). Instead, parties appear as institutions that carry out or reinforce these “Weberian” tasks. When state-centered explanations integrate political parties as causal factors, they look at the way parties respond to the timing of bureaucratization, legacies of state capacity, and social pressures, rather than analyzing how political parties are formative of the social and the state itself (Finegold and Skocpol 1995; Orloff and Skocpol 1984; Skocpol 1980).<sup>3</sup>

Drawing on Timothy Mitchell (1999), we posit that the neo-Weberian analytical separation of the state from society underestimates the degree to which the very idea of the state is a contextual construct. The line separating the state from society is not given; the ingredients of both the state and society are redefined in each political context. Moreover, as Jessop notes, “the unity of the state” is itself a “project” that results from the promotion of party spirit that, in turn, gives shape to the state and links it to the national popular imagination by framing it in particular ways (1990:364). Inspired by these critiques of the state autonomy approach, we argue that (in certain contexts) political parties define the axes along which the expansion

<sup>1</sup>For a review of the realignment literature, see Mayhew (2000).

<sup>2</sup>There are, however, important exceptions to the foregoing approaches. Aldrich (1995), for example, argues that parties originate in legislative chambers where elites discover that their preferences are realized more efficiently when they align themselves with like-minded colleagues (1995:28). Shefter (1994) conceives of parties as mechanisms through which elites mobilize mass constituencies either to take, or to secure their hold, over the government (1994:5, 21). While we are sympathetic to the emphasis on party practices in these accounts, they do not in fact explicate the relationship between party practices and cleavage formation.

<sup>3</sup>For an early precursor to this approach, which is actually closer to our position because of its emphasis on the centrality of the party for maintaining and even creating social order, see Huntington (1968).

of state capacity will develop, though we do not deny that parties sometimes play an ancillary role in bureaucratic expansion and centralization. The study of state autonomy can help us understand whether a state is able to flex its muscles or not, but it cannot explain, for example, whether the state will adopt ethnic exclusivity or a religious orientation. For that, we need an analysis that centers on parties.

### *Social Movements*

Social movement approaches have developed more nuanced ways of exploring the remaking of the social through political processes. In the “political opportunities” approach, the central mechanisms that explain change are divisions within the state elite, the emergence of elite factions sympathetic to activists, and the willingness of the state to resort to violence against mobilization (McAdam 1982; Tarrow 1998). Parties are given a less central role relative to elite resilience, strategy, and failure in explaining social movements (McAdam 1982). In another strand of the social movements literature, resource mobilization theorists explain social change based on the capacity of activists to accumulate resources. They therefore focus more on the resources that party elites might grant to movement activists (Oberschall 1973), when they do not marginalize parties in their explanations altogether (see, e.g., McCarthy and Zald 1977). In both accounts, party elites are the resources of social movements rather than central to explaining their direction, outcome, and timing.

Piven and Cloward’s work, with its special focus on the interactions between movements and parties, epitomizes some of these theoretical differences from our approach. In *Poor People’s Movements*, Piven and Cloward draw on Michel’s classical institutionalist framework (1979:xvi, 159) to argue that political parties have no positive role to play in social change. These organizations, rather, suck up the positive bottom-up energy of the people, with the unintended help of reformist or revolutionary organizations on the ground (1979:72–82). The protestors are the real inciters of change through their disruptive capacities, not the establishment parties or the challenging (reformist or revolutionary) organizations and parties (1979:xxi–xxii, 27–32). Political parties ultimately co-opt and absorb the forces of social change, rather than foster them.

Since then, Piven and Cloward (2000) have come to the conclusion that while political parties are still less dependable than popular movements, they can be reformed to incorporate the energy of the grassroots. In this framework, parties do not have quite the same chilling effect on social change because they can be prevented from obstructing change and can even channel popular discontent in ways that encourage change. We, however, suggest that beyond merely absorbing or rechanneling popular pressure, parties construct grievances<sup>4</sup> and energize the grassroots.

A related tendency in some earlier strands of the social movement scholarship takes grievances to be ubiquitous and available to be tapped (Hafez 2003; Olson 1965; McCarthy and Zald 1977; Tilly 1978).<sup>5</sup> More recent approaches within the social movements literature have acknowledged the importance of “framing” such that when projected movement frames align with popular grievance “frames,” the ensuing

<sup>4</sup>Even in their earlier work, Piven and Cloward recognize that political leaders help redefine grievances (1979:15–18). However, in their rendering, such redefinition results in social change only when it backfires: only when protestors use it against the political leaders themselves. We assert, more broadly, that politics sets the whole terrain for movement activity; the political construction of grievances might both bolster and hurt the social projects of party leaders.

<sup>5</sup>For an exception to this general tendency, see Steinberg (1999).

resonance can determine a movement's success (Snow and Benford 1988). Our theoretical emphasis is slightly different; while we concur with Snow and Benford's view that framing is the key to successful mobilization, we do not take popular grievances as given. Instead, we problematize the notion of grievances as a taken-for-granted domain of politics and show how constructing specific grievance discourses—for example, of Hindus, (pious) Muslim Turks, or the white American middle class—is a historically specific political project that is reinvented by parties in different ways through time.

## TOWARD POLITICAL ARTICULATION

There is a growing recognition within the social movements literature that parties can be formative of movements and vice versa (Costain and McFarland 1998; Goldstone 2003; Meyer 2002).<sup>6</sup> As an alternative to the aforementioned framing theory, McAdam et al. (2001:33–34, 143), for example, suggest that social identities and actors are *constructs* that result from political processes. Further, the role of parties in leading movements toward specific goals, including the formation of distinct policy regimes, has been well developed, for instance, in the work of Desai (2007), where she argues that left parties in India drew upon social movements to articulate different sociopolitical blocs that underpinned two different types of policy regimes. Similarly, Burstein (1998) urges us to dispense with the distinction among interest groups, social movement organizations, and political parties, and instead view them all as intermediary organizations operating in the same field to influence public policy and connect citizens to their government (1998:47, 55).

We build on the insights of these authors to further develop Althusser's concept of "interpellation,"<sup>7</sup> which for us is a key companion concept to political articulation. Our position is that political parties reconstruct certain issues as grievances through the differential interpellation of subjects, defined as the process of recognition of an individual as a concrete subject by ideological-political practice (Althusser 1971). Outside this process of recognition, individuals or groups do not possess clearly specified political issues or grievances. Politics (re)defines what the grievance is and who the sufferers (and thus the people who should be mobilizing) are. Most important, competing parties can interpellate the same person (or group of people) as an oppressed Muslim, an unemployed individual, or as a (sub-)proletarian, which would all produce very different results. Interpellation is therefore a process of imaginary identification with a cause (and parties, institutions, and leaders associated with that cause), which gives coherence and unity to the multifaceted and potentially contradictory or politically meaningless life histories and experiences of individuals. Whereas people find themselves as exploited and exploiter, relatively more masculine and relatively more feminine, relatively pious and relatively secular in multiple situations throughout their lives, through interpellation many start to see themselves, say, as "Muslim business-men" or "Hindu workers."

<sup>6</sup>Mildred Schwartz (2005) has made an interesting attempt in this direction by coining the concept "party movements." However, in her work it remains unclear how and why the dynamics of party movements are different from nonparty movements.

<sup>7</sup>We also use a broader definition of political identity than that embraced by McAdam et al.: "Identities are political, then, insofar as they involve relations to governments" (2001:134).

To arrive at the concept of political articulation, we follow a path similar to that of Antonio Gramsci, who initially took the centrality of class in Marxist theories as given and subsequently reformulated this centrality as ultimately a construct of political struggles.<sup>8</sup> Similarly, we recognize the importance of institutional dynamics and social cleavages (class, ethnicity, religion), but hold that *how* and *when* they become central depends on the political context, which in most modern societies is shaped by competition among political parties.

Our argument can be summarized as follows. Political parties bring together the constituents of the social, which always threaten to come apart. It is the incessant “suturing” activity of parties in cultural, parliamentary, and nonparliamentary arenas that “holds” class, religious, and ethnic formations together and refashions them as constitutive elements of hegemony. We understand hegemony not simply as “legitimate” domination (which implies some transparency), but as the active participation of the broadest strata in the making of their subordination through the naturalization of social differences and institutional structures. We emphasize that this active consent is not spontaneous: it is always organized by a distinct leadership. It is the structuring work of this leadership that some of the dominant theories neglect.

Our approach, however, does not offer a purely voluntarist conception of politics in which parties can organize constituencies as they please. We hold that social cleavages, class relations, institutional rules, and the economy all shape the possibilities and limits to hegemony. Parties cannot create cleavages from scratch. Yet, what the foregoing approaches lack is a *mechanism* that holds these different moments of the social together. These moments have to be integrated by someone, some group, or a collection of individuals and groups. This integrating group is not some super-subject above history, but is defined and created by the work of integration; the activity creates the subject. Conversely, society is not a self-reproducing entity but a result of the work of integration. Neither class, nor religious communities, nor ethnic groups have self-reproducing logics that bind them together (Brubaker 2004; Jones 1983). Similarly, there is no natural link between any social group and the state that claims to represent it. It is always political work that forms groups and links them to the state. Theorists have named the active work of integration “articulation” (Hall 1986; Laclau 1977; Omi and Winant 1994:Chs. 5, 6).<sup>9</sup>

In most modern societies, it is the political parties that carry out this work. Yet, we also emphasize that political parties are not predestined to play this role. First, we suggest that political articulation is more crucial during times of major social transformations (such as the transition from a rural to an industrial economy or from a regulated to a market economy), which tend to boost the heterogeneity of social formations. Second, in some cases, political organizations are weak and do

<sup>8</sup>Lenin (1902) was the first Marxist to conceptualize the role of the party as an organization that is formative, and not simply reflective, of social consciousness and mass struggles, even though Marx ([1852] 1978) himself had studied how states and parties shape, divert, rechannel, and mediate economic forces. The political sociology revisions of Marxism focused on the social backgrounds of rulers or reduced each political organization (including political parties) to an apparatus of the state, even when the autonomy of the latter was recognized (Miliband 1969; Poulantzas [1968] 1973, 1974:325). While Block (1987) and Przeworski (1985) have recentered the role of politicians and political parties, we go beyond both by pointing out the ideologically structuring power of parties—that is, their hegemonic power to define the very terms in which rationality, interests, and incentives (which these authors take for granted) are discussed and evaluated.

<sup>9</sup>Bob Jessop (1982) has granted a similar role to parties and underlined how they coordinate conflicting particular interests and articulate them to a general interest. However, he has mostly emphasized economic interests, while our cases necessitate looking at how parties articulate other types of interest with economic interests.

not have decisive influence over the state and civil society. In such cases, factions within the state and civil society (or sometimes even prominent intellectuals and charismatic figures) act as quasi-parties to articulate social formations and cleavages. This was indeed the situation with Gramsci's native Italy, where intellectuals like Croce, more than organized parties, offered integrating logics. Nevertheless, such political disorganization invites crises, leading to perpetual instability, charismatic eruptions, and/or turmoil (e.g., fascism and eventually civil war in Italy).

Even though we draw on Gramsci's conceptualization of the political party, we would like to underline some differences between our approach and his. Critics of Gramsci, especially Laclau and Mouffe (1985), have pointed out that he has ultimately reduced hegemonic formations to class. Laclau has also criticized classical as well as contemporary Marxists for not understanding how the "economy" and "classes" are discursively constructed (Laclau 1990, 2000:290–93). Laclau's emphasis on the power of discourse to actively construct social antagonisms and "chains of equivalence" (2005) between social actors is a welcome corrective to what he calls the "naïve sociology" that takes political forms as representative of preconstituted social entities. However, in contrast to Laclau and Mouffe we avoid treating discourses as purely detached and free floating; instead, we hold that particular discourses become relevant at specific historical moments. We also draw attention to organized political actors (in our cases, parties) that creatively bring together disparate discursive elements in challenging economic and political conditions.

In addition, we see striking parallels between our discussion of political articulation and Bourdieu's analysis of classification struggles, as well as important differences. Like Bourdieu (1984:479–81), we point out that social classes or groups are constructed by struggles (though our cases underline *political* struggles among the universe of struggles). However, while Bourdieu holds that struggles occur in fields that are defined by their *rupture* from ordinary citizens (1991a:9, 1991b:176–77, 196–97), our analyses hint that political struggles, while autonomous from the social, owe their effectiveness to *linking* the "experts" to the populace. Moreover, we take issue with Bourdieu's idea that different fields are aligned with each other through the operation of similar structuring logics (1991a:26–27, 1991b:182–83, 187–88), or homologies, as our discussion highlights that politicians actively articulate initially dissimilar arenas, groups, interests, and fields. Finally, Bourdieu emphasizes parties insofar as they are engaged in the practice of representation. This act of conferring power, particularly on the part of the dominated, results in what he calls "political fetishism," a process by which groups come "into their own," yet lose control over the group (1991b:204). We see strong parallels between his dialectic of group formation and representation and our concept of interpellation and articulation. Nevertheless, in our approach parties play a more autonomous role than Bourdieu appears to acknowledge.

In short, we combine Bourdieu's classification struggles and Laclau and Mouffe's more flexible theorization regarding the open potentials of articulation (and the open nature of the social) with Gramsci's concrete focus on institutions, class forces, world-historical contexts, and conjunctures. To emphasize the integration of the political and the social in our approach, and to differentiate our stance from other Gramscian perspectives where the political party does not play a decisive role, we further specify the processes we are studying as *political* articulation, which we define as the process through which party practices naturalize class, ethnic, and racial formations as a basis of social division by integrating disparate interests and identities into coherent sociopolitical blocs.

The perspective on political articulation outlined above constitutes only a general approach to the analysis of parties and social change. The exact mechanisms and processes of articulation have to be specified in each new world-historical juncture and each specific case. Accordingly, we demonstrate how the articulation approach can help us better understand political mobilization and social change in the contemporary United States, India, and Turkey, before concluding with preliminary thoughts on the implications of this perspective for other cases.

### CASE SELECTION AND LOGIC OF ENQUIRY

Below, we compare three quite different political and social contexts. We start with racial formation in an advanced capitalist democracy, move on to ethnoreligious formation in a South Asian democracy, to then analyze religious formation in a “European” Islamic party and political bloc. While the cases could not be further apart with respect to economic development, legacies of state formation, dominant cleavages, and cultural factors, taken together our test of alternative hypotheses and theoretical elaboration of the political articulation approach clearly show that parties are the decisive articulating agents without which the social blocs of the post-1970s era would have failed to constitute themselves.

The primary logic of enquiry in all three cases is counterfactual. By “mentally altering” the narrative, we show that without the articulating practices of each party, the ethnoreligious or racial formation in each case would have failed to occur. However, counterfactuals are of little use if they were not demonstrably possible at the particular historical conjuncture (King et al. 1994:78). We show, accordingly, that the specific role of each party was contingent rather than necessary. By posing such historical counterfactuals, we are doing more than juxtaposing historical narratives. Each historical case and sequence offers us multiple data points with which to test the relative strength of competing approaches. As a result, our comparative and historical approach offers three crucial theory-building tools identified by Rueschemeyer (2003:328): conceptual equivalencies across cases, the identification of general problems, and the development of focused theoretical frameworks for further research.

In the following section, we group our cases together into a two-part discussion: first, we identify common weaknesses in the existing approaches to our cases and elaborate our alternative political articulation theory, and conclude with a discussion of the limits of political articulation, and the sources of failure of these projects.

### ARTICULATION PRACTICES: PARTIES AND THE INTERPELLATION OF SUBJECTS IN THE UNITED STATES, INDIA, AND TURKEY

New Deal growth liberalism in the United States emerged as an alternative to its older welfare-based counterpart as the Great Depression dragged on into the late 1930s. Both variants of New Deal liberalism had rejected the producerist ideology of the 19th century and thus assumed that increased *purchasing* power was the key to economic recovery. As early as the 1932 presidential campaign, Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR) announced that “we are at the threshold of a fundamental change in our popular economic thought ... we are going to think less about the producer and more about the consumer.” As the crisis of underconsumption deepened, President Roosevelt and his advisors embraced the Keynesian notion that the state must engage in deficit spending (e.g., on jobs programs, home financing, defense appropriations) to fuel aggregate demand, since private markets were unable

to accomplish the task on their own. By 1941, FDR would promise the American public that his policies would protect a “constantly rising standard of living” (Cohen 2003:24, 54–55; Schulman 1991:ix).

The United States’ entrance into World War II derailed the growth economy as the state stockpiled consumer materials for the war effort, but the New Dealers returned to the problem of aggregate demand as the war drew to a close and passed the Employment Act of 1946, the “Magna Carta of postwar economic planning,” which defined the federal government’s responsibility as “promoting maximum employment, production, and purchasing power.” No longer hamstrung by the conservationist impulse of the war years, the Democratic Party began in earnest to interpellate Americans to the state as citizens of a “consumers’ republic.” As Lizabeth Cohen notes, the postwar era saw the emergence of a new identity: “the purchaser as citizen who simultaneously fulfilled personal desire and civic obligation by consuming” (2003:119).

A broad consensus among the nation’s leading stakeholders, including FDR’s successors, suggests that this formulation sustained the hegemony of New Deal growth liberalism over time and across party and class lines. Both the right-wing National Association of Manufacturers and the moderate Committee for Economic Development could agree with liberal economist Robert R. Nathan that “[m]ass consumption is essential to the success of a system of mass production.” In November 1944, the leadership of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) wrote: “Our economy feeds and grows on purchasing power as a baby does on milk.” And Republican president Dwight D. Eisenhower credited the government for mitigating the effects of the 1957–1958 recession by “maintain[ing] personal income and consumption expenditures.” A diverse coalition of American stakeholders, in other words, consented to be governed by the principle of aggregate demand as it was articulated by the New Deal Democrats (Cohen 2003:115–19, 121).

The interpellation of the purchaser as citizen was accomplished principally through defense spending and home finance. Between 1950 and 1959, Department of Defense contracts amounted to \$228 billion, an increase of 246 percent from the decade of the war itself. In contrast, the nation’s business as a whole expanded 76 percent, a staggering amount in any other era, but outpaced by the defense industry, which, by 1962, had become the nation’s largest business. Sixty-two percent of the federal budget went to defense expenditures between 1946 and 1965. Defense spending translated into jobs and, in turn, into mass migration from the Northeast and Midwest to the Sunbelt. In Orange County, California 28,000 jobs were created between 1957 and 1961 alone, not counting the several thousand jobs created in related industries like electronics. By 1969, Orange County had grown from a population of 130,000 in 1940 to 1.5 million (McGirr 2001:25–29). Between 1970 and 1976, the population of all but three states in the South, whose share of defense dollars more than tripled from the 1950s to the 1970s, outstripped even California’s growth rate (Schulman 1991:160).

But if defense spending furnished the jobs of the New Deal growth economy, then federal home finance policy furnished its iconic mass consumption commodity, the single-family home. Prior to the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) and the Government (or General) Issue (GI) Bill, first mortgages were limited to one-half or two-thirds of a home’s appraised value (thus requiring high downpayments), and were due back to the bank within a relatively short time frame. The FHA and GI Bill allowed for minimum downpayments of 7 percent, with government-backed mortgages payable over as long as 30 years. These programs helped 16 million World

War II veterans purchase homes. The rate of homeownership jumped from 44 percent in 1940 to 62 percent in 1960, and for the first time in American history, a majority of Americans became people of property (Cohen 2003:195; Jackson 1985:204–05).

At the same time, the FHA institutionalized a vast system of class and racial segregation by (1) encouraging loans to single-family homes as opposed to multifamily dwellings, (2) limiting the size and terms of loans for the repair of existing structures (thus making it cheaper to buy new homes and almost impossible for working-class residents to renovate inner-city dwellings), and (3) favoring loans to all-white suburban subdivisions. The FHA's own underwriting manual recommended: "If a neighborhood is to retain stability, it is necessary that properties shall continue to be occupied by the same social and racial classes" (Jackson 1985:206–07). These practices reinforced the consumerist framework of postwar citizenship by creating a racialized brand hierarchy of residential neighborhoods, within which Americans strove to "trade up" from inner-city ethnic neighborhoods to inner-ring suburbs and on to prestigious outer-ring suburbs (Cohen 2003:202). Numerous studies have now explored what Lassiter calls "the racial contradiction at the heart of postwar liberalism," namely, that as the promise of black civil rights came within reach, segregated housing became "an essential feature of the New Deal social contract" (Lassiter 2006:7).

Crucially, having achieved homeownership with relative ease, many whites expressed puzzlement as to why others could not do the same, or why the Democratic Party, who made it all possible, would then "punish" them for living and educating their children in their adoptive neighborhoods. What emerged was a "colorblind" discourse of white innocence and victimhood that viewed residential segregation as an outcome of individual merit rather than collective racism, and that therefore defended segregation as a consumer right (Lassiter 2006:1, 3; Lipsitz 1998: 5, 20, 22; MacLean 2006:15–16, 20; Sugrue 1996:211). Within this ideological schema, civil rights were permissible, allowing for a politics of racial moderation in the North *and* South, so long as juridical equality did not disturb whites' privileged access to homes, schools, and jobs.

If racial formation was a distinct product of the liberal New Deal project of interpellating citizens as consumers, the rise of Hindu nationalism in India was tied to a broader (but ultimately limited) project of interpellating citizens as consumers within a neoliberal project that rejected the mutual identification of Congress hegemony and state socialism. Ironically, India's economic liberalization had taken its first tentative steps toward, and then decisive break with, state socialism under Congress rule, but it was the BJP that succeeded for a while in articulating a hegemonic bloc. This remains a puzzle. The BJP was formed in 1980 as the parliamentary wing of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangha (RSS, National Defense League), a secretive, underground organization founded in 1925 that advocated extreme Hindu militancy.<sup>10</sup> It was formed out of a split within the center-left<sup>11</sup> Janata Party over the question of the affiliation of some of its members with the RSS. In its previous incarnation, the

<sup>10</sup>Mahatma Gandhi's assassination in 1948 was carried out by an RSS member named Nathuram Godse.

<sup>11</sup>The characterizations of center and center-left in Indian politics are fraught with difficulty because of the original alignment of many of the Jana Sangh and BJP members with democratic resistance to the usurping of executive power by Indira Gandhi during the Emergency, and their overall association with popular resistance against the Congress Party's patronage and corrupt structures. Yet, they part company with the left parties in their strong opposition to a socialist program despite an initially anti-capitalist stance.

BJP was known as the Jan Sangh, a party that advocated a philosophy known as “integral humanism.” Paradoxically, this view held that the ills of rampant capitalism had to be moderated with a holistic approach to society, that is, by viewing the “whole” as larger than the sum of its parts. It proposed an “Indian” view of reality, a culturally specific solution to the problems of poverty and exploitation that relied upon democratic decentralization, a philosophy with popular roots in rural India. In its 1985 manifesto, the BJP retained its adherence to integral humanism, attempting to use this grassroots and culturalist concept of democracy, with largely Hindu overtones,<sup>12</sup> to oppose a “corrupt, westernized and elitist” Congress Party. Yet, from the vantage point of 1980 its success would have appeared a dream. Despite Indira Gandhi’s imposition of the highly unpopular Emergency powers<sup>13</sup> in 1975, and the Congress Party’s defeat in the 1977 national elections, the Congress was back in power in 1980. In the 1980s national elections, the Congress Party won 42.7 percent of the seats, and the BJP was not in the running.<sup>14</sup> The BJP confessed internally that it had a “glimmer of hope” that it might pose a “democratic alternative” to the Congress Party but that it looked unlikely for a long time.<sup>15</sup> Indeed, between 1980 and 1983, the BJP’s victory was anything but assured. It lost dismally to the Congress party in Delhi and in the Jammu and Kashmir assembly elections. The Congress Party was still considered the dominant force in the country and, moreover, increasingly a legitimate representative of the “Hindu community” because of its growing willingness to speak in religious idiom to broaden its appeal.

A crucial factor in the BJP’s success was its ability to steer the course of the rapid political and economic changes taking place, both within India as well as globally during the 1980s and 1990s. First, like the center-right parties in the West, the BJP adopted a flexible ideology, appearing moderate in its parliamentary performances, advocating political centrism, yet hard-line militarism, while seeking to widen its social and class base beyond the urban traders and businessmen that constituted its early support. As the BJP veteran and future prime minister A. B. Vajpayee stated: “Having tasted power once, we realized that unless we became a party of the national mainstream and enjoyed support from all sections, *we could not become a national alternative*” (emphasis added) (Noorani 2000:59).

This ideological flexibility was assisted by the “political opportunity structure” in two important ways. The first was Indira Gandhi’s assassination in 1984 in retaliation for a long and violent campaign led by Gandhi to quell militant Sikh separatists in Punjab. Although she was succeeded by her son Rajiv Gandhi, continued electoral support for the Congress Party concealed a series of organizational and internal problems within the Congress. Paradoxically, Rajiv Gandhi had taken the lead in opening up the Indian economy to market reforms. The BJP opposed many of these reforms for their supposed effects on “national integrity,” accusing the Congress of selling out Indian companies to foreign interests. By 1988, its anti-globalization stance was accompanied by a turn toward a more aggressive cultural nationalism. Its extra-parliamentary agitations, involving riots in several towns and cities across India and numerous acts of violence, succeeded in forging a sociopolitical “Hindu” bloc

<sup>12</sup>All its references are to Hindu texts and scriptures, but in 1985 the BJP still proclaimed a “positive secularism” that was not anti-faith but rather respected all religions.

<sup>13</sup>During the Emergency period (1975–1977), Indira Gandhi (via the president of India) suspended civil liberties, placed restrictions on the media and freedom of expression more generally, and invoked extraordinary powers for the executive.

<sup>14</sup>See Election Commission of India (1980:83).

<sup>15</sup>See Bharatiya Janata Party (1985).

comprising divergent interests including traders, small businesses, the urban middle class, and rural constituencies in some regions including farmers and tribal communities. The interests of traders and small businesses in economic liberalization was understandably much weaker than that of the urban middle classes who sought access to jobs and consumer goods, both of which were denied to them under the statist, public-sector-dominated economy under Congress leadership. But in states where the BJP won large majorities such as the western state of Gujarat, the articulation of a “Hindu bloc” involved articulating tribal, lower-, middle-, and upper-caste communities into a larger anti-Muslim bloc. These subaltern groups were not only urged to shift support from the Congress Party on economic grounds, but were interpellated through ethnicized discourses and practices of ethnic suturing such that they would come to identify with antagonistic classes against a common enemy—Muslims and Christians.

In 1991, with the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi during the national elections, the BJP gained a prime political opportunity to undertake a rhetorical and discursive construction of India as a fragmenting country beset with regional secessionism and everyday violence. In arguing that the Congress Party and India faced a total crisis, a political vacuum that could only be filled by the BJP, which stood out as a “beacon of stability, high moral character and discipline,”<sup>16</sup> it paralleled the strategies for ascendancy used by Islamist parties in Egypt, Turkey, and Iran, for example, which rushed to fill the void generated by the collapse of secular pacts. The BJP shrewdly utilized the political opportunity in 1991 to garner a majority in parliament by using alliances with leading state-level parties in Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Bihar, and Andhra Pradesh, among whom the sole factor in common was their opposition to the Congress Party.

The BJP’s effort at creating a political bloc through parliamentary tactics (a broad coalition known as the National Democratic Alliance or NDA) was supplemented by high-visibility extra-parliamentary strategies aimed at highlighting an ethnoreligious cleavage. Suppressing economic grievances, the BJP highlighted Hindu nationalist pride. The famous 1996 Babri Masjid agitations in northern India, for example, staged emotionally charged claims that the ancient mosque had been built by demolishing a Hindu temple in the 16th century. Processions to reclaim the temple were accompanied by violent attacks on Muslims in several towns and cities across India, in which 2,000 people were killed. The use of populist techniques such as loud music, distribution of cassettes of fiery speeches by militant religious leaders, and the use of festivals to promote a politicized Hindu agenda were deployed in stark contrast to the orderly political rallies and didactic speeches of Congress leaders who were portrayed as Westernized elites, distanced from “the people.” The BJP therefore injected a populist note into politics as much as it rose upon it, constituting a new social through what Laclau calls “chains of equivalence” (2005:37), that is, a reaggregation between different sectors and their demands into a “self-evident” political underdog defined in antagonism to “others” such as Muslims and Christians. These antagonisms were produced through specific practices on the ground wherein popular Hindu images, rituals, and even holy men were made part of the political common sense, becoming inextricably a part of political demonstrations and electoral campaigns.

If the BJP’s hegemonic project was premised on the creation of a “Hindu” bloc from these divergent interests, it simultaneously sought to promote itself as a national

<sup>16</sup>Bharatiya Janata Party (1991:18–19).

Table 1. Percentage of Total Votes Won for BJP and INC, 1980–2004

Year	BJP	INC
1980	0	47
1984	8	49
1989	11	40
1991	20	36
1996	20	28
1999	24	28
2004	22	27

*Source:* Election Commission of India. Statistical Reports on General Elections to the Lok Sabha, 1980, 1984, 1989, 1991, 1996, 1999, and 2004.

leader in the parliamentary arena, to seize the ground from under the Congress Party that had monopolized the space of the “national party.” These imperatives, however, were contradictory, and managing these contradictions was in part the task of political articulation. For instance, given that the Congress Party had already begun market reforms in 1991, and protectionism was a dead letter in the global arena, the BJP would have surely failed if it had continued to project itself as an anti-globalization, rightist nationalist party. Certainly, at the outset the most rapid expansion of the BJP’s electoral fortunes occurred during the period when it remained largely pro-protectionism and anti-globalization. Table 1 shows that the share of total votes for the BJP rose sharply between 1980 and 1991, but this share remained fairly constant between 1991 and 2004 (this will be discussed subsequently). Indeed, the success of the BJP during the 1980s is evident in the fact that while in 1984 the BJP had won two out of 543 lower house seats in the national elections, this figure rose to 86 seats in 1989 and 119 seats in 1991 (Election Commission of India 1989, 1991). This expansion preceded its most aggressive promarket policies.

However, if cultural nationalism helped constitute a bloc of voters with multiple and contradictory interests—small business, middle classes, traders, sections of the working class, and some big bourgeoisie—flexible economic policy was the key to the ability of the BJP to pose itself as a national alternative to the Congress. By the mid 1990s, the BJP had dropped its anti-globalization rhetoric in favor of a strident pro-liberalization policy.<sup>17</sup> This was the product of leadership struggles within the party, and the emergence of a pragmatic wing that sought to modernize its image and promote itself as a national leader within the global world. As a result of aggressive liberalization policies, a wave of middle-class prosperity boosted the image of the BJP under its “India Shining” campaign.

In government, the BJP presided over the systematic dismantling of the public sector, encouraged foreign investment against protests from left parties, boosted consumerism, and led a middle-class economic boom. The apparent contradiction with its earlier criticisms of Congress-led liberalization were set aside, although there was internal dissent from the RSS, which continued to argue for economic self-sufficiency

<sup>17</sup>The RSS, which claimed a large part of the leadership of the BJP, was said to be unhappy with the BJP’s simultaneous moves toward moderate parliamentary politics and pro-market policies, which it has historically viewed with suspicion.

and opposed multinational takeovers of the economy (Hansen in Hansen and Jaf-frelot 2001:309). Arguably, the BJP managed to ride two horses—purported caution of globalization, with successful management of a market transition—at least for a while, smoothing the rough edges of the transition with a cultural nationalism that appealed widely to the public. While its anti-globalization stance favored the small shopkeepers and manufacturers whose livelihoods were threatened by deregulation and the lowering of import tariffs, ironically, India's largest trade union, the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh, which is affiliated to the BJP, is deeply fearful of the impact of liberalization on labor, and has thus found itself in frequent opposition to the BJP's policies. As we will argue in the next section, the creation of a broader Hindu nationalist bloc was premised on holding together contradictory objectives, and an underlying social base with varying degrees of interest in supporting strident neoliberalization. However, the rapid ascendancy and almost a decade in power undoubtedly propelled the party and a Hindu nationalist politics to a position it could scarcely have imagined during the 1970s. This fact is owed less to the exigencies of state formation, or emerging social movements of caste or religion, than to its interpellation practices.

A similar story emerges in the case of Turkey. In 1970, Islamists established a mass political party for the first time in Turkish history, under the name MNP. Together with defending the economic interests of small provincial businessmen and tradesmen, the party also appealed to the religious feelings of small entrepreneurs. The more conservative of the peasants, provincial artisans, and Sufi orders also supported the party (Saribay 1985). The MNP combined the forces of all these sectors under an anti-elitist, vaguely social-justice-oriented program, similar to the first phase of the Indian BJP. These sectors did not come together as a natural result of preexisting divides in society, as the cleavage approach would assume, but were severed from the center-right and articulated to a new project by the MNP. Formerly conservative subjects were reinterpellated as Islamic subjects. Had the center-right parties kept these sectors in their orbit through the necessary concessions and maneuvers, the Islamist challenge in Turkey would never have been as serious.

The party was closed down by the secularist military in 1971, to be reopened in 1972 under the name MSP. The MSP's program advocated heavy industrialization based on communally owned enterprises under state regulation. In the 1970s, the secular parties represented a national developmentalist system (Keyder 1987), and the Islamists voiced the losers of this system, who wanted to take part in the protectionist national economy without abandoning their autonomy. Throughout this decade, the MSP remained a small party.

The next decade witnessed a major change in Islamism (Arat 2005). Especially after the Iranian revolution, the MSP started to radicalize. The military intervention in 1980 interrupted further radicalization. The 1980 junta both expanded official Islam's sphere in order to fight the Left, and suppressed autonomous expressions of Islam so as to prevent the emergence of a religious opposition. However, after the party reopened under the name of RP (Welfare Party) in 1983, the youth of the party started to push it again in a radical direction (Çakır 1990). This radicalization was in part a mixed response to a transition to a neoliberal economic program in Turkey after the military intervention, and more specifically to the dismantling of protectionist policies. Upon the military's closure of all existing parties and civil organizations in 1980, a new center-right party (ANAP) led neoliberalization, supported by secular businessmen, pious tradesmen, and a secular professional class. The Islamists were again going to win some of these sectors to their side in a

decade, attesting parties' incessant disarticulation and rearticulation of social sectors, which cleavage and institutionalist explanations are not well equipped to explain.

The RP came to be an articulation of competing strands, with emphasis on further politicization of religion (against the desires of the Sufi orders) combined with moderation (against the desires of the radical intellectuals). The incorporation of radical cadres resulted not only in an indecisive radicalization of the party, but also in the moderation of the radicals. This radicalization consisted of intermittent attacks against democracy, secularism, and capitalism, but it was indecisive as the party never made these attacks programmatic. The RP could not become the leader of an Islamic Revolution. However, it did define the terrain of Islamic politics. This moderation and politicization set the tone of the Islamist movement in the 1980s and 1990s: as Sufi orders integrated with the RP they further politicized, and the absorption of the radicals into the party moderated their Islamism. The median Islamic subject, as interpellated through these interactive political practices, came to be a politicized, pious, and cautious activist. This combination demonstrates that the political party does not simply express grievances from the electorate, but molds popular concerns. This process demonstrates that, in the absence of the party, the social movement actors would probably have followed different paths: the Sufi orders would remain more moderate, and the youth would radicalize further.

Together with still supporting provincial businessmen and artisans, the RP's program placed a strong emphasis on redistributive social justice. On one hand, the party furthered the interests of an expanding provincial business class that adopted more quickly to neoliberalization when compared to the state-protected bourgeoisie. With the changing needs of this class, heavy industrialization was dropped from the program to emphasize flexible production. The party's proposed socioeconomic program, on the other hand, envisioned a world where morality dominated the market (Erbakan 1991). Such a market bound by morality would enable small businessmen to operate without exploiting the poor, who would also be protected by the state. These promises, which articulated an acceptance of open markets with communitarian socialism,<sup>18</sup> brought with them immense urban poor support.

The RP came out of the 1994 municipal elections as the leading party (Çınar 2005), following which Islamist municipalities carried out a redistribution of urban resources. Also, the ideological impetus of the party had enabled it to stay clean in the post-1980 environment, where secular actors pursued the corrupt wealth generated by irregular privatization.

These moves of the RP increased its popularity and it came out of the 1995 national elections, too, as the leading party. The RP's policies led to protests by secularist, middle-class civil organizations that implicitly called for a military intervention. The military, responding to these demands, gradually pushed the RP out of government and then out of legal existence (1997–1998).

This culminated in the founding of the Virtue Party (FP). The FP got rid of the rhetorical anti-capitalism in the RP's program. Rather than reacting against global competition from the West, the FP sought to negotiate the terms of this competition. It declared itself a pro-human-rights party (White 2002). It expected help from Europe against secularist authoritarianism, which never came. Yet, in line with the MSP-RP tradition, it was an Islamist party, and desired the replacement of the secular elite—which again exemplifies how political parties are crucial in articulating

<sup>18</sup>For the internal contradictions of this program, which led to serious problems for the Islamist party, see Buğra (2002).

Table 2. Changes in the Platforms of Islamic Parties from 1970 to the Present

Acronym	Party Name	Years	Platform
MNP	National Order Party	1970–1971	National-communitarian developmentalism, Islamism
MSP	National Salvation Party	1972–1980	National-communitarian developmentalism, Islamism
RP	Welfare Party	1983–1998	Social justice, communally regulated markets, Islamism
FP	Virtue Party	1997–2001	Islamism, democratization
SP	Felicity Party	2001 to present	Islamism, nationalism
AKP or Ak Party	Justice and Development Party	2001 to present	Conservatism, democratization, market reforms

*Note:* This table is based on one of the author's research on Turkish Islamic parties' programs and manuals.

hitherto unrelated demands (here, populist Islamization and democratization). The secularist courts closed down the FP too (Koğacıoğlu 2004), after which the Islamists formed a new party, the Felicity Party (SP).

As several ways of challenging secularism had failed, a part of the Islamist leadership opted for joining the system: a new articulation emerged out of Islamism's defeat. The increasingly neoliberal opposition split the party to establish a new organization in 2001—the Justice and Development Party (AKP). The platforms of the Islamic parties of the last 35 years are summarized in Table 2. The AKP eventually built its program on market reforms, democratization, and European Union (EU) accession. Moreover, with the rise of the AKP, pious Muslims wholeheartedly embraced a consumerist identity, shifting the ideal model of piety from religious activism to religious consumerism.

This maneuver of the ex-Islamists resembles the strategy of India's BJP, which also switched from populism to neoliberalism: making use of global openings and painting the secularists as authoritarian and elitist. The difference from the BJP case lies in the way that the AKP sought to join the ranks of the elite rather than replace them. Consequently, unlike the BJP, the AKP toned down rather than boosted the militancy of its base after its neoliberalization. Such differences prevent us from attributing the similarities of the AKP and the BJP solely to some overall logic (as of institutional dynamics) and lead us to focus on the creative moves of parties.

As different from its predecessors, the AKP did not seek to dethrone the ruling secularist elites. Responding to its conciliatory tone, a vast number of "center-rightist" (mildly secular, neoliberal) politicians, intellectuals, and voters soon joined its ranks. This granted the AKP a resounding election victory in November 2002—34 percent of the vote in a highly fractured multiparty system where the second party (the Kemalist<sup>19</sup> CHP) only got 19 percent and the other parties all below 10 percent (Yavuz 2003). Despite mounting secularist opposition, the party increased its vote to

<sup>19</sup>Kemalism denotes a nationalist, rigid secularist, and authoritarian political line in Turkey, as differentiated from the moderate secularist and less authoritarian center-right.

46 percent in the 2007 elections. The AKP thus (re-)constituted the social by disarticulating several sectors from the center-right and rearticulating them to an Islamic project. Without the AKP's move to expand its hegemonic bloc, it is unlikely that these widely divided forces would have reorganized out of the familiar opposition of Islamism and the center-right.

The neoliberal turn of the ex-Islamists was accompanied by an amelioration of the institutional battles in Turkey, demonstrating the interplay between party dynamics and state dynamics. For example, in the first years of its government, the AKP's relations with one wing of the military were resolved in favor of democratization. The liberally oriented wing of the military cautiously welcomed the transformation of Islamism (Heper 2005). However, the (Kemalist) Land Forces continued to voice its dislike of the AKP. The Land Forces still threatens to destabilize cleavages in the coming years, as its chief Büyükanıt has replaced Özkök as the top commander in 2006. The transition from Özkök to Büyükanıt might mean that the Turkish military is moving from a neoliberal to a Kemalist position. Here again, we see how the activities of organized actors (in the case of Kemalism, the generals more than political party leaders) reshuffle cleavages rather than being determined by preexisting cleavages. However, the Turkish case also shows that political platforms suffer a great deal under capitalist democratic (or even semi-democratic) conditions when these actors are not organized in political parties.

Thus, the dominance of political parties in each case is to some degree explained by the practices of the parties themselves, and not just by socioeconomic change on the ground. Of course, the latter is not insignificant. The Great Depression, for instance, was critical in the American case, but economic crises cannot predict whether or in what ways parties will respond to such ruptures. For example, conservative Republicans and Democrats led by President Hoover and Al Smith, respectively, refused to politicize the Depression. The Progressive factions of both parties, by contrast, led by FDR and the New Deal Democrats, moved to reverse what they believed was a crisis of underconsumption by integrating otherwise disparate voting blocs around the concept of purchasing power, not just as a watchword, but as a way of life. They did so through cultural practices in the media, parliamentary practices like the passage of the GI Bill, and extra-parliamentary practices such as the racialized administration of federal housing policy.

## FAILED ARTICULATION

When the emerging "Great Society" faction of the Democratic Party and allied social movement organizations challenged residential segregation in the United States beginning in the 1950s, the white citizens of the consumers' republic revolted, not in the language of "massive resistance" associated with the Jim Crow South, but with the themes of individual merit and consumer entitlement, typical of New Deal liberalism. Every region of the country, with every passing struggle, sounded a similar complaint: that white Americans had worked hard all their lives only to have their consumer rights violated. In the battle over "open housing" during the 1950s, for example, the bulletin of a Chicago working-class neighborhood read: "A working man purchases a home . . . secures a mortgage, improves the property and enjoys the fruits of his labor and then, all of a sudden . . . city planners and do-gooders decide that they are going to dump a project in his backyard and resettle the entire community" (Hirsch 1983:210–11). The racial contradiction of New Deal growth liberalism culminated in the judicial rulings of the 1970s, which redefined

Table 3. Percentage of White Southern Vote for Segregationist/States' Rights Candidates by State and Subregion, 1948–1968

Candidate	Thurmond (1948)	Goldwater (1964)	Wallace (1968)
Mississippi	92	91	83
Alabama	84	77	78
South Carolina	76	70	41
Louisiana	52	65	60
Georgia	22	65	51
Deep South	56	71	63
Arkansas	17	49	46
Tennessee	14	51	39
North Carolina	9	49	37
Florida	16	56	32
Virginia	11	52	28
Texas	10	44	22
Outer South	12	49	31
Total South	23	55	40

Source: Lassiter (2006:229).

state-sponsored residential segregation as *de facto* socioeconomic segregation and therefore permissible under the law (Lassiter 2006:10).

But if the New Deal prefigured the failure of the Great Society, then it also paradoxically decreed that the states' rights brand of segregationism, typified by the Republican "southern strategy," would also fail. National Opinion Research Center and Gallup poll data from the period show a North-South convergence in favorable attitudes toward school integration, reflecting not only postwar liberal discourse but also what Burstein calls the "indirect impact" of the civil rights movement on public opinion (Burstein [1985] 1998:xx, 94–96; Orfield 1978:108–10). These data are further corroborated by electoral returns reflecting the triumph of pro-growth racial moderates over racial extremists in the South from 1948 to 1972. In this period, New Deal growth policies based on defense contracts shifted the seat of political power from the rural black belt to the metropolitan sunbelt. As its dependence on federal deficit spending grew and as desegregation became the law of the land, the "New South Democrats" emerged, "racially moderate pro-development Whigs who promised to abide by the law and keep federal dollars flowing into the Sunbelt" (Schulman 1991: 131, 139–40). By the 1970s, it became apparent that what V. O. Key (1949) had once called the "solid south" was no more (1949:665). As Table 3 reports, in presidential contests where a states' rights candidate was on the ballot, a majority of white "outer South" voters rejected that option. Moreover, while segregationism was triumphant in the deep South, its margins of victory decreased from 1964 to 1968, and by 1972, at the height of the busing controversy, all but one governor's mansion in the South had succumbed to either New South Democrats (including future president Jimmy Carter of Georgia) or the few racially moderate Republicans who had defied the southern strategy of the Nixon White House (Lassiter 2006:254–73).

Indeed, the Republicans, whose racially moderate "suburban strategy" had delivered southern votes in ever-larger numbers to Eisenhower and Nixon from 1952 to

1968, shifted gears in 1970 to outflank segregationist challengers like George Wallace and solidify the party's control over the region. That strategy backfired, however, by embarrassing an already racially moderate electorate and put the South in play for New South Democrats for generations to come. In 1994, the year of the so-called Republican Revolution in Congress, the Republicans still controlled only three of 22 state legislatures in the modern South (i.e., not only counting the old Confederacy) (Aistrup 1996:2). And in what is perhaps the most famous instance of New South Democratic ascendancy, Bill Clinton of Arkansas split the South with the Republican Party in 1992 and 1996 (Leip 2005a, 2005b).

Admittedly, the Republicans have done better in national-level politics since 1980 than the Democrats, but they have done so not by calling for the end of New Deal pro-growth policies, but by selectively calling for safeguards to New Deal white entitlements in the areas of housing (and, by extension, education) and defense-related employment, while pursuing an aggressive policy of neoliberalization in other economic sectors (Davis 2007:46–47, 54–55, 57). The result has been a perennial struggle between the two parties for the formidable cross-class coalition of racially moderate white voters that originated with New Deal growth liberalism.

In the Indian case, the internal contradictions of party organization and cross-class strategy finally came to a head in the 2004 elections when it was defeated by a Congress Party-led coalition. This was not surprising as the BJP tried to combine strident market reform benefiting the middle classes and big business but failed to stem the growth of poverty during its rule (Suri 2004:5408). In an authoritative National Election Survey (NES) carried out after the poll, most of the poor and some sections of the middle classes felt that employment opportunities and economic conditions had deteriorated during the economic reforms carried out by the BJP (NES 2004 cited in Suri 2004:5407). Sixty-four percent of the strata called “employees,” who included skilled workers, clerks, small businessmen, and traders, felt that the economic reforms had led to a deterioration or no change in their economic condition. A majority of those polled were against the privatization of public sector enterprises, and easy entry of international investors. Not surprisingly, opposition parties, most notably the Left Front led by the Communist Party of India (Marxist) or CPM and a revitalized Congress Party, freely used evidence of increasing class inequality under BJP rule,<sup>20</sup> and the widespread public revulsion at the pogrom of over 1,000 Muslims in the BJP-ruled state of Gujarat in 2002, to bring about its electoral defeat in the national elections. Put differently, neoliberal reforms (as political practice) had also constituted new sociopolitical blocs opposing the reforms.

The ascendancy of the BJP and its allied Hindu militant organizations remains a puzzle from the point of view of all the major theories discussed in this article. First, they fail to explain why the Hindu right was the “obvious” successor to the Congress Party, and why this project succeeded. Second, the organizational weakness of the Congress Party and alleged weakening of the Indian state offered political opportunities to several projects—center-left as well as a reinvented Congress Party—and not solely to religious nationalism. The success and consequent failure of the BJP's political project is therefore best understood by granting articulating practices

<sup>20</sup>The Left Front and Congress Party formed a coalition government in 2004 and remain in power today. However, their critiques of the BJP differ sharply; while the Congress Party has continued to extend the market reforms initiated before and during the BJP tenure, the CPM has voiced opposition to many aspects of the reforms. Both parties, however, were strident in their expose of unchecked greed and growing inequality under the BJP. Evidence on inequality during the 1990s suggests that, in particular, the divide between urban and rural classes grew, and the BJP had failed to address this issue.

and interpellation their force and autonomy in suturing social formations, which are always precarious, open to contradictions, and threatening to come apart.

The failure of the BJP to continue its specific articulation project in the face of challenges from other parties, not least the once written-off Congress, is contrasted by the Turkish case. While social movement organizations in Turkey were determined to fight the Islamists through street action, the military, and the courts, the Kemalists lacked an effective party that could articulate all these forces and deal a decisive blow to the AKP. The failures of the main anti-Islamist party (the Republican People's Party, CHP) in this regard once again demonstrate the importance of parties in sociopolitical battles.

The CHP became a popular party in the mid 1960s, after it moved away from secular authoritarianism and adapted a populist platform. This expanded the party from an exclusive coalition of bureaucrats, notables, and professionals to include working classes, peasants, and Kurds. After the CHP was closed down by the 1980 military intervention, it reopened under the name SHP (Social Democratic Populist Party) and attempted to shift from populism to European-style social democracy. However, once in power in the early 1990s, the SHP failed to make any progress on the Kurdish question, ultimately costing it the Kurdish vote. Moreover, the SHP's corruption at the municipal level destroyed its credibility.

Another reason for the SHP's marginalization was its shift to the rigid secularist position of the pre-1960s CHP. As a result, the center-left's base shifted from a working-class/middle-class coalition to one of professionals, bureaucrats, and worker aristocracy. During the 1990s, pious Kurds and informal workers (two partially overlapping populations) began to desert the center-left and join the Islamists. This disarticulation spelled the end of the party as a governmental alternative.

Once the CHP reopened in the mid 1990s, it relied mostly on its pre-1960s mission of authoritarian secular nationalism, further weakening the leftist elements within the now-defunct SHP. The CHP thus became the political leader against Islamism. However, due to the liquidations of its prominent social democratic leaders, it alienated even secularized sectors. While the party abandoned its mission of social protection, it did not replace that with a new social vision, that could allow it to articulate new sectors. Today, some secular people still vote for the CHP because of its emphasis on anti-Islamism, thanks to which it claims the position of the second party in the parliament. But the party lacks the moral authority of the AKP, the leaders of which are perceived as true believers with popular origins, while most of the CHP's voters deeply distrust their leaders. The CHP is also short of comparable links with civil organizations. Secularist social movement organizations resort to coalitions with fringe parties and paramilitary organizations in the absence of trustworthy guidance from the CHP.

If the CHP had reinterpreted its leftist turn of the 1960s under the new conditions, rather than purging social democracy from its ranks, the social scene in Turkey would probably look different today. The left could possibly produce (with its own original interpretation) either the class-based, populist articulation seen in Venezuela and Bolivia, or the social-liberalism witnessed in Chile and Brazil.

The fluctuating trajectory of Kemalism has important lessons regarding social theory. Kemalist parties' popularity from the mid 1960s to the mid 1990s (when some pious workers used to vote for them) demonstrates that the weight of the secular-religious cleavage in Turkey is dependent on parties' articulating practices rather than being the governing logic of society and politics. The secularists' too-heavy reliance on the bureaucracy after the mid 1990s also demonstrates that a

sociopolitical program that has a bureaucratic rather than party leadership is bound to suffer. Therefore, state institutions might be important actors in social processes as the state-centered theories hold, but their projects cannot easily come to full fruition under modern conditions without effective party leadership. Finally, while social movements are indispensable weapons for any social project, they cannot by themselves compete against rival projects that have strong party leadership. In the absence of political articulation, they lose orientation and make recourse to extreme measures.

This section has therefore offered examples in which parties fail to do the work necessary to naturalize and then either hold together or supplant identities and collectivities as coherent power blocs. In the American case, neither the Democratic Party's Great Society project nor the Republican southern strategy were able to supplant the New Deal's racially moderate white majority with a progressive or reactionary alternative. As a result, both major parties have since worked to exploit the old cleavages of growth liberalism rather than dispense with them. The BJP, in its strident advocacy of neoliberal reform, failed to keep the poor, sectors of the middle class, and various categories of "employees" in its once dominant coalition. The association between Hindu nationalism and neoliberalism has been destabilized even further since the electoral defeats of the BJP-led coalition in the 2004 and 2009 elections. Bitter struggles over the appropriate leadership of the Hindu nationalist project are likely to occur, and could well cause a radical backlash against a neoliberal strategy within the party. A new hegemonic project will require a new series of interpellations and articulations. And finally, the main anti-Islamic party, the CHP, in Turkey squandered the support of a cross-class secular left by allowing corruption in its ranks and by shifting to an authoritarian secular nationalism that excluded social democratic leaders, among others. To the extent that these factors weakened the parties in question, then political articulation can be said to explain failed, as well as successful, political projects.

## CONCLUSION: TOWARD A NEW RESEARCH AGENDA

We have demonstrated, using three divergent cases, the centrality of the political party to the constitution of ethnic, religious, and, by extension, to other social formations such as class. Political leaders mobilize ethnic and religious identities, economic grievances, and social movements to integrate citizens with the state and implement their sociopolitical projects with the active consent of the governed. Moreover, we have shown through counterfactual analysis that (1) otherwise-dominant cleavages have ceased to structure social relations when parties such as the Congress Party and the Kemalists have failed to hold their leadership and power blocs together, and (2) would-be hegemonic projects fall flat when, as in the case of the Great Society Democrats, parties do not do the necessary work to naturalize alternative social formations capable of supplanting existing power blocs. Several other cases will help further demonstrate the articulating role of the political party in other contexts and suggest guidelines for future research.

In Egypt, the Muslim Brotherhood has made use of the crisis of the nationalist project to construct an Islamist alternative. Fighting against both secular nationalism and the leftist opposition, it has brought together the middle classes and the financial bourgeoisie under the banner of Islam. The Brotherhood first took over the student movement in the 1970s, and then the professional associations in the 1980s and 1990s. Banned as a political party, it had its members elected as

independent candidates. Through these activities in social movements, associations, and the parliament, the Brotherhood has articulated different identities, professions, and classes into an Islamic bloc against the secular nationalist regime. As different from Turkey, the regime has not opened up to the Islamist party (except intermittently in order to use religious activists against leftists), restricting the Brotherhood's ability to implement its project in its totality. However, despite ongoing repression, the organization has been successful in forming social cleavages around religion.

The Islamist movement has followed a different path in Palestine. While initially following the same strategy as its Egyptian counterpart (taking over universities and associations), the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood started to use violence against the Israeli regime to compete against the nationalist Palestine Liberation Organization in the 1980s, leading to the severing of formal continuity with the Egyptian Brotherhood and the establishment of Hamas. While making headlines with violent political activity, Hamas appealed to broad sectors of the population by integrating social justice activism, efficient municipal services, and religious revival, just as Islamists did in Egypt and Turkey. Understood in the West as plain and simple terrorism, the *intifada* actually referred to this combined military, political, social, and religious activity. As in the Turkish and Egyptian cases, the political party successfully reshuffled ideological belongings in Palestine, breaking the hegemony of ethnic and national identification and redefining the national struggle as a religious one.

Similarly, the story of postapartheid South Africa cannot be told without an account of the articulating practices of the African National Congress (ANC). Fearing socialist redistribution schemes and outright political disfranchisement, white elites vowed to dismantle the apartheid state provided that the ANC was willing to shepherd a program of neoliberal restructuring that would effectively secure the former's economic interests. While the party's dominant faction, led by Nelson Mandela, was agreeable to the deal, it required the support of more radical constituent organizations, which it gained through conciliation, outmaneuvering, and popular mobilization, constructing the ANC as the natural "bearer of . . . potential nationhood" (Suttner 2004:6). The result has been the integration of once fiercely antagonistic class and racial fractions, including, among others, white landed elites, the incipient black bourgeoisie, and South Africa's communist-led trade union federation. Though a spate of grassroots movements has emerged in recent years, for instance, to challenge the party's mishandling of the HIV/AIDS pandemic (e.g., the Treatment Action Campaign) and the broken promise of socialized housing and water (e.g., the Anti-Privatisation Forum), their eclectic base has thus far held firm (Clarno 2008; Suttner 2004).

Parties do not always succeed in implementing their hegemonic projects, however, and even when successful, such projects need continual work or else they threaten to come apart. The difficulties of containing the Islamic bloc within the nation-state, and loyal to the military in Pakistan, for example, is a product of the failure of either General Musharraf or the Pakistan People's Party to articulate emerging interests within their older frames. The contours of the Islamic bloc in Pakistan have shifted in accordance with the retreat of the PPP, Musharraf's concessions to Islamists, and the political tactics of the Muttahid Majlis-E-Amal, a coalition of smaller Islamist parties who work among the poor and advocate a hard-line Islamic state. What is often understood as a "resurgence of Islamism" is in fact a product of continual struggle and political work to redefine the contents of religious hegemony. Parties can therefore accompany surges of popular support, but these do not always lead to the constitution of new hegemonic social formations.

The Obama campaign and administration, for instance, while successful in defeating John McCain, embody the failure of parties in the United States to supplant growth liberalism with an alternative political project. Indeed, the president stated publicly that all his actions to end the current financial crisis “have been designed to increase aggregate demand” (Obama 2009). Though it is still too early to tell, the 2008 electoral returns suggest that the mobilization of racially moderate white voters was once again the key to victory. The Democrats carried Virginia and Indiana for the first time since 1964, and North Carolina for the first time since 1976, largely on their strength in the D.C., Chicagoland, and research triangle suburbs, respectively.

If the foregoing contrast cases are any indication, then future inquiry must be pitched at four autonomous planes of analysis simultaneously: the trajectory of party formation (including its leadership, strategies, and practices in the parliamentary and extra-parliamentary arenas), the discursive naturalization of social cleavages and institutions, the context of capital formation, and the historical conjuncture at which the foregoing do or do not converge. These four elements together should form the basis of a research program that would investigate the rising and falling fortunes of class, ethnic, and religious formations, not as predetermined convergences of structural factors, but as contingent political projects conducted by parties in the cultural, parliamentary, and extra-parliamentary arenas.

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