

Civic Associations and Authoritarian Regimes in Interwar Europe: Italy and Spain in Comparative Perspective

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What is the relationship between civic associations and authoritarian regimes? While Tocquevillian theories have concentrated mostly on the connection between civic associationism and democracy, this article develops a Gramscian approach, suggesting that a strong associational sphere can facilitate the development of authoritarian parties and hegemonic authoritarian regimes. Two countries are used for comparison, Italy from 1870 to 1926 and Spain from 1876 to 1926. The argument here is that the strength of the associational sphere in north-central Italy provided organizational resources to the fascist movement and then party. In turn, the formation of the party was a key reason why the Italian regime developed as a hegemonic authoritarian regime. The absence of a strong associational sphere in Spain explains why that regime developed as an economic corporate dictatorship, despite many similarities between the two cases.

Contemporary work on civic associationism focuses mostly on democracy (Arato 1981; Paxton 2002; Putnam 1993; Wuthnow 1991). This analysis investigates instead the relationship between associationism and authoritarianism. I explore how the strength of the associational sphere influenced the degree of regime hegemony in two cases of interwar European authoritarianism: the Italian fascist

regime and the Spanish dictatorship of Miguel Primo de Rivera (1870–1930). By hegemony I mean the extent to which a regime politicizes the associational sphere in accordance with its official ideology. A hegemonic authoritarian regime exists to the extent that official regime unions, employers' organizations, and professional associations exist. In contrast, economic-corporate dictatorships leave the preexisting associational terrain intact. I treat Italian fascism and de Rivera's Spain as instances, respectively, of hegemonic authoritarianism and an economic corporate dictatorship, and I ask how the strength of the associational sphere shaped these divergent outcomes.

Classic scholarship in the Tocquevillian tradition suggests that a developed associational sphere should preserve a realm of private non-regime-dominated social relations (Arendt 1958:323; Friedrich and Brzezinski 1966:279; Kornhauser 1959:30, 76–90; Lerderer 1940:72). Therefore, it should be difficult to establish a hegemonic authoritarian regime in the context of a strong associational sphere. I suggest, in contrast, that relatively strong associational spheres in the pre seizure of power period have sometimes rendered authoritarian regimes more hegemonic than they would be had associationism been weaker. To establish my argument,

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I develop a historical and comparative analysis of Italian fascism and Spanish authoritarianism in the early 1920s. My main argument is that the Italian fascist party could emerge only in the context of a relatively strong associational sphere, and the Italian fascist hegemonic authoritarian regime could emerge only because there was a strong fascist party. Radical right-wing forces were unable to constitute themselves as a fascist party in the Spanish case, where civic associationism was relatively weak. Thus, significant pockets of nonpoliticized social existence remained in Spain. The result was an economic-corporate dictatorship.

THEORIZING CAPITALIST AUTHORITARIANISM, CIVIC ASSOCIATIONISM, AND HEGEMONY

Drawing on Gramsci (1971:259), I use the term hegemony to refer to the political organization of consent. Some regimes devote considerable effort to the political constitution of their supporting social interests, while others adopt a more pragmatic bargaining orientation to these. Hegemonic authoritarian regimes, as a consequence of their concerted organization of consent, tend to eliminate the distinction between public and private existence penetrating the associational sphere and reducing the realm of nonpolitically relevant activities. In contrast, economic corporate dictatorships tolerate and encourage nonpolitical organizations, generally basing themselves on alliances with preexisting groups that they neither create nor greatly alter. Thus, the main theoretical puzzle here is “Why do authoritarian regimes with similar bases of social support differ in their degree of hegemony?” I seek to relate these different outcomes to differences in the strength of the associational sphere prior to the seizure of power in the cases of Spain and Italy in the early twentieth century (Gramsci 1971:216, 259).¹ The associational sphere refers to a third sector between states and markets comprised mostly of voluntary associations, such as mutual aid societies

and cooperatives, employers’ organizations, unions, chambers of labor, and democratically oriented political parties (Paxton 2002; Schofer and Fourcade-Gourinchas 2001; Putnam 2000:15–28; Skocpol and Fiorina 1999:2; Wuthnow 1991:7).

I consider two theories of the relationship between associationism and authoritarianism: the Tocquevillian view and the Gramscian alternative for which I will argue. Tocquevillians argue that civic associationism protects the sphere of private existence making hegemonic authoritarian regime formation difficult. The Tocquevillian approach identifies two specific mechanisms: insulation and organizational balancing. The insulation argument suggests that the more developed the sphere of associations, the more difficult it will be to establish authoritarian party organizations because such organizations appeal primarily to persons who are socially atomized and, therefore, lack well-structured interests (Arendt 1958:311; Kornhauser 1959:46, 64; Tocqueville 1988:523). The organizational balancing argument suggests that associations provide people the means to act without invoking the state and such associations also balance state authority by creating alternative power centers (Putnam 2000:345; Tocqueville 1988:516). The Tocquevillian analysis of authoritarianism and civic associationism follows logically from this view. Strong associational spheres should present an obstacle to the formation of authoritarian parties and hegemonic authoritarian regimes (Arendt 1958:323; Gannett 2003:11–12; Goldberg 2001; Kornhauser 1959:76–90; Lerderer 1940:72; Tocqueville 1988:516).

The Gramscian view rejects the Tocquevillian claim of a zero sum relationship between social self-organization and political power (Bellamy and Schechter 1993:123; Gramsci 1971:160; Laclau and Mouffe [1985] 2001:xvii). For Gramsci, the sphere of associations is important because it produces technologies of political rule that potentially can extend the reach of the state (Bellamy and Schechter 1993:122; Gramsci 1971:259). More specifically, Gramsci rejects the two basic arguments of the Tocquevillian position. First, for Gramsci, associations are not necessarily opposed to authoritarian parties. Such parties are based precisely on an integration of local and sectoral interests, not on a socially atomized mass (Anderson

¹ Although generally not stated in Gramscian terms this distinction is quite common in the literature on authoritarianism (De Felice [1981] 1996:10–11; Gentile 2000:240–41; Linz 1970:262; 2003:29–40, 68; Pavone 1998:75).

1965:242; Gramsci 1971:181). Second, although associations may start as opposed to the state, they can be reabsorbed by it. Indeed, in Gramsci's view, strong associational spheres can enable hegemonic authoritarian regimes to the extent that associations provide a congenial environment for the construction of authoritarian parties, which are both a key agent and central institutional feature of hegemonic authoritarian regimes (Gramsci 1971:221). The associational sphere, in this scheme, is a potential transmission belt rather than a bulwark protecting private existence. It is worth emphasizing that the Italian fascists themselves largely shared this Gramscian view of the associational sphere (Bottai 1934:29; Panunzio 1987:272). Adrian Lyttelton (1987:205) neatly catches the point when he contrasts de Tocqueville with the nationalist and then fascist theorist Alfredo Rocco (1875–1925):

The 'intermediate association', for De Tocqueville a necessary check on the power of the State, which would otherwise overwhelm the isolated individual, for Rocco was instead to be a cog in the machinery which would ensure his [sic] subordination.

This leads to a relatively clear prediction. In historical contexts, where an authoritarian seizure of power is likely, one may expect the associational sphere to facilitate the construction of a hegemonic authoritarian regime. The absence of a strong associational sphere should place limits on authoritarian party formation, and this should have consequences for the kind of authoritarianism that emerges. Thus, in contrast to the Tocquevillian suggestion that the associational sphere always constitutes a barrier to hegemonic authoritarian regime formation, the Gramscian view suggests that it can be an enabling structure for this type of authoritarian rule.

CASE SELECTION AND METHOD

This article develops a comparative and historical approach to civic associationism and authoritarianism. The relative strength of civic associationism in Italy and its relative weakness in Spain became causally relevant through the activity of social agents, who attempted to build radical right-wing political movements and authoritarian regimes in the specific historical circumstances of early twentieth century Italy

and Spain. Thus, in this study, the cases should be understood as members of the conceptual class of sequences of "transitions to authoritarian rule" (for this use of case language see Abbott 1983:137; Abbott 1992:53). My approach is unusual because I synthesize a Millian comparative strategy (for examples, see Brenner 1985:252; Emigh 1997:651; Ertman 1997; Gorski 1993; Skocpol 1979:37) with an analysis of suppressed alternatives embedded in historical sequences (Moore 1978:385–91; Weber 1949:172). I use Mill's comparative method to justify my focus on Italy and Spain. Specifically, I use the method of difference, which compares cases that are similar in theoretically relevant respects but that differ in outcome (Mill 1971:211–19; Skocpol and Somers 1980:184).

I do not, however, adopt a Millian approach to developing my own *explanation*. The Millian approach is particularly inadequate for socio-historical explanations, because it does not demand a specification of mechanisms, and it leads to misleading generalizations particularly because the method obscures the possibility of divergent causal pathways to similar outcomes (Burawoy 1989:769–72; Lieberman 1991, 1994; Steinmetz 1998:173). I push beyond a conventional Millian approach, because I show *how* the associational sphere in Italy was connected to the formation of a fascist party, which then became a central actor in the construction of a hegemonic authoritarian regime in the Italian case. The existence of the fascist party in Italy blocked the possibility of the more relaxed dictatorship that Benito Mussolini (1883–1945) tried to institute. Conversely, the absence of a strong party actor in the Spanish case explains why, despite the existence of fascistic currents in Spain, the regime developed as an economic corporate dictatorship. Thus, my method emphasizes how associationism should be understood in terms of the specific historical trajectories through which authoritarian regimes consolidated in Spain and Italy in the early 1920s. This methodological strategy uses possibilities intrinsic to the historical sequences themselves to establish the importance of the conditions identified in the comparative section of the essay (Desai 2002; Elster 1978:175–232; Moore 1966:108–10; Moore 1978:385–91; Weber 1949:172; Zeitlin 1984:18–20). This analysis produces a different

type of generalization than a standard Millian theory of explanation would demand. I do not aim to discover a covering law, i.e., a statement of the type, "In all instances where a relatively strong associational sphere combines with a political crisis hegemonic authoritarianism will be the outcome" (for critiques of covering law models, see Bashkar 1998:41; Steinmetz 1998:176–7). Rather, I seek to show that in the context of post–World War I Italy, a strong associational sphere was a crucial mechanism in the construction of the fascist party, which was equally a crucial mechanism leading to a hegemonic authoritarian regime.

The structure of my analysis is in terms of background conditions and sequences of events. The trajectories that I select are Italy from 1870 to 1926, and Spain from 1876 to 1926. I establish the rough comparability of Spain and Italy in terms of their class structures and states at the beginning of the twentieth century. I then discuss regional and cross-national differences in associational strength in the two cases. Finally, I show how these differences mattered for authoritarian movements and regimes in the two countries. Specifically, I trace the divergent forms of political organization that similarly placed radical right-wing forces hit upon in different regions of Spain and Italy and in the two national cases.

TWO PERIPHERAL CAPITALISMS

An agro-industrial bloc closely connected to the state, supporting high tariffs and political authoritarianism, began to consolidate in Spain and Italy by the late nineteenth century. Many scholars suggest that this was major reason for authoritarianism in both cases. Big holdings and a politically dependent labor force were common in preunification southern Italy, and the problem was exacerbated in the late 1860s when the Italian state sold off public lands mostly in the south (2.5 million hectares out of a total of 3 million hectares privatized) (Castronovo 1975:58; Zamagni 1993:21–2, 56, 175). Southern agrarians generally pushed for tariff protections, rather than cost-cutting to support their economic position. Key sectors of Italian industry (railroads, steel, shipbuilding, cotton cloth manufacturing, and sugar refining) also demanded and received substantial state support

(Federico 1996:771–2; Zamagni 1993:89, 95, 162).

Labor repressive large landlords in Spain concentrated in the south and west of the country (Simpson 1992:108–9), and a huge late nineteenth century land sell-off (10 million hectares) enlarged this group (Simpson 1995:44; Tortella 2000:56; Trebilcock 1981:327–8). As in Italy, an alliance of industry and labor repressive agriculture pushed tariff protection in the late nineteenth century. Catalan textile producers and Castilian wheat growers pushed for a total protective tariff, which the government enacted in December of 1891 (Tortella 2000:199).

Thus, both Italy and Spain possessed one of the classic preconditions of authoritarianism: a nascent state-dependent group of industrialists, and a significant sector of large landholders socially dependent on the political subordination of the agrarian masses. These key interests coalesced around tariff protection in both cases. In Italy, landed interests in the south and the valley of the Po allied with the nascent steel industry to support a state-led industrial development under the leadership of Prime Minister Agostino Depretis (1813–1887) (Carocci 1975:74–5). A similar industrial and agrarian bloc, based on an alliance among Catalan textiles, Basque mining and southern agriculture developed in Spain in the late nineteenth century (Tusell 1990:14–20).

The political institutions of the two regimes also made the development of democracy difficult. Neither the Italian nor the Spanish parliament was based on an alternation between parties that won competitive elections. Rather, governments emerged on the basis of gentlemen's agreements among deputies. In liberal Italy, governments were based on big parliamentary majorities of the center rallying behind leaders of various political hues. Depretis initiated this system of political co-optation, called *trasformismo* (transformism), in the aftermath of the elections of 1882 when he invited members of the opposition to transform themselves into members of the majority (Chabod 1961:41–3; Salvemini [1945] 1960:xviii). Spanish liberalism was based instead on a system of party alternation between the conservative liberals and the liberals called *el turno* (the turn) (Lyttelton 1973:98; Gómez-Navarro 1991:60). When a turn was exhausted, the monarch (1875–1885, Alfonso XII; 1886–1902, María Cristina the Queen regent; and

1902–1923, Alfonso XII's posthumous son Alfonso XIII) would appoint a new government from the loyal opposition. This government would then fix the elections, with the complicity of the outgoing party, giving retroactive legitimacy to the alternation (Boyd 1979:4; Carr 1982:356–7). In both cases, however, there was little relationship between elections and governments.

Both liberalisms also had imperfect suffrage. In Italy, suffrage was limited to about two percent of the population until 1882, when Depretis expanded it to seven percent. Prime Minister Giovanni Giolitti (1842–1928) introduced universal suffrage in 1912, and a proportional electoral system was established in 1919. Electoral corruption, confined mostly to the south, played a key role in maintaining liberal dominance. In Spain, the liberal parliamentarian Práxedes Mateo Sagasta (1825–1903) introduced universal suffrage in 1890 (Carr 1982:359; Linz 1967:202). Laws in the late 1880s and 1890s also guaranteed freedom of association and the right to strike (Payne 1973:475; Tusell 1990:26). But these precocious laws were largely violated in practice by local political bosses, who coerced and manipulated the population into voting for official candidates.

The two countries, then, started the twentieth century in a similar position as peripheral capitalist societies with large regional disparities and powerful agrarian élites. In both cases the landed aristocracy and industrial interests fused into a state dependent agro-industrial bloc in the late nineteenth century. Both countries were also ruled by oligarchic liberal states. It should come as no surprise then that scholars have often stressed the similarities between the Italian and Spanish cases in terms of their political institutions and class structures (Stephens 1989:1060–61). Since these two factors were quite similar in the Italian and Spanish cases, it is unlikely that they can explain the divergent regimes that emerged in the 1920s.

CIVIC ASSOCIATIONISM IN ITALY AND SPAIN

On the basis of these relatively similar class and state structures, Italy and Spain developed differently structured associational spheres. In both cases associationism increased in a regionally uneven pattern in the late nineteenth cen-

tury, driven by early industrialization and the development of capitalist agriculture. This regional variation shaped radical right-wing movements in the post-World War I period in both countries. However Spain and Italy differed at the national level. Associationism in Spain was generally weaker, and specifically more regionally fragmented, than in Italy.

From the 1890s, two kinds of associations in Italy were particularly important at the popular level: cooperatives and mutual aid societies (Bonfante 1981:203–5; Carocci 1971:13–4, 18–9). By encouraging their development, Italian liberal élites aimed to give the working class and peasantry a stake in the liberal system while stimulating owners to fend for themselves (Degl'Innocenti 1981:36; Fornasari and Zamagni 1997:79). Most cooperatives were either consumer cooperatives providing low cost goods, or producers' cooperatives distributing jobs among their members (Degl'Innocenti 1981:28–9; Fornasari and Zamagni 1997:83). Using cooperatives, Giolitti wanted to relieve unemployment especially among the agricultural proletariat and to weaken the Socialists (Bonfante 1981:205). The policy encouraged the development of associations. According to the *Lega nazionale delle cooperative italiane* (National League of Italian Cooperative Societies), the number of Italian cooperatives increased from 2,199 in 1902 to 7,429 in 1914 while the number of members expanded from about 0.5 million to 1.5 million (Fornasari and Zamagni 1997:81). Cooperatives were regionally concentrated in the north and center of Italy in the three provinces of the Emilia Romagna, Tuscany, and Lombardy (Fornasari and Zamagni 1997:83).

The early part of the twentieth century was a period of associational development in Spain as well. As in Italy, this development was regionally uneven. In north-central Spain, where small property holders predominated, agrarian syndicates presided over by clergy and providing credit for seeds, machinery, and equipment, established a strong base of operations. For example, the Catholic *Agro-Social* of Navarre included a vast network of cooperatives, leisure centers, small rural mutual aid and insurance funds, and youth organizations (Muñoz 1992:77). There were also Catholic mixed owner and worker syndicates and numerous rural banks and farmers' circles (Perez-Diaz 1991:7).

In Spain, lay popular associationism took a variety of forms, from cooperatives, to mutual aid societies, to *Casas del Pueblo* (people's houses) (Carr 1982:454–55; Vives 1959:211–32). Alejandro Lerroux (1864–1949), a Republican politician, brought the model of the *Casas del Pueblo* to Spain from Belgium, where the socialists latter copied it. These were partly political and partly cultural institutions with committee rooms and lending libraries (Brenan 2000:219). An associational census conducted by the *Instituto de reformas sociales* (Institute of Social Reforms) demonstrates the explosion of popular associationism at the turn of the nineteenth century. The survey included associations that were founded between 1884 and 1904, and it showed that 78 percent of all workers' associations were founded in the years between 1899 and 1904 (Instituto de reformas sociales 1907:286). Associationism in Spain was regionally uneven as in Italy. Most evidence suggests that popular associationism was most developed in Old Castile, Navarre, the Basque country, and Catalonia. In the first three provinces in north-central Spain, Catholic associations of very small proprietors dominated.

Associationism was restricted to workers and small property holders in neither case. As industry developed in northern Italy, the industrialists formed a syndicate called the *Lega industriale di Torino* (Turin Industrial League) in 1906 (Adler 1995:75). Associations pursuing various industrial and professional interests appeared also during the tariff struggles of the 1880s (Banti 1996:162). Agrarian associations were quite important. Many of these grew out of older agrarian academies established for the purpose of protecting the economic interests of their members and spreading technical knowledge (Ridolfi 1999:130). By the late nineteenth century, they had developed into agrarian committees (Ridolfi 1999:131–2). In the early twentieth century, these became more militant. After a series of bitter strikes led by the revolutionary syndicalists, a form of radical precommunist socialism, in 1907 and 1908, landowners began to organize self-defense leagues. In 1910, these merged into the agrarian confederation, which controlled 10 subassociations, had over 6,000 members, and controlled the Bolognese newspaper *Il Resto del Carlino* (Banti 1996:294–5). White-collar professionals produced a version of associa-

tionism that followed the same municipal pattern. In 1903, a federation of white-collar workers was established. These processes intensified in the immediate postwar period as the organizational model of the trade union extended into the ranks of white-collar workers. In the period immediately before the rise of fascism, a new round of associational development among white-collar workers took place. In 1919, new associations of lawyers and prosecutors, doctors and engineers formed (Turi 1994:20). From 1906 to 1910 northern industrialists established the *Confederazione italiana dell'industria* (Italian Confederation of Industry) (Banti 1996:300).

Upper class associationism in Spain was driven partly by protectionist sentiment in Catalonia and partly by disgust over the consequences of the loss of Cuba in 1898 (Balfour 1997:80–3; Tusell 1990:47; Vilar 1987:71). As was also true of Italy, one of the most active periods of upper class associationism was during the tariff struggles of the 1880s (Vilar 1987:77–8). Upper class associationism in Spain tended, however, to be fragmented by regional nationalist sentiment. This was particularly true in Catalonia and the Basque countries where it developed in close relationship with regional separatism (Payne 1971:35–6; Payne 1973:579; Vilar 1987:76–7). Employers' organizations were also qualitatively weaker in Spain than in Italy. As Payne (1970:38) says in the following:

Spanish entrepreneurs were not accustomed to spending time and money on cooperative professional endeavors unless faced by dire necessity. Employers' associations thus tended to be local and limited, for these groups lacked the money and influence of their American, German, or even French and Italian counterparts.

The role of the Catholic Church in the associational sphere also differed in Spain and Italy. The church in Spain was a highly privileged official institution and tended thus to be less productive of associationism than in Italy (Payne 1973:603). During the late nineteenth century, Catholic religious orders proliferated (Callahan 2000:52; Carr 2000:232). However, these, especially the Jesuits, were wealthy and closely connected to political power (Brenan 2000:47). Grassroots Catholic organizations in Spain were confined mostly to the north and the east, and they were associated with Basque nationalism and Carlism. Attempts to break out of the north-

eastern stronghold were largely unsuccessful, partly because of the power of the church hierarchy (Carr 2000:232; Tusell 1974:88–7). Catholic workers' circles, originally promoted by the Catalan industrialist Claudio López Bru, marques de Comillas (1853–1925), and the Jesuit father Antonio Vincent (1837–1912) were generally unsuccessful (Tusell 1974:40, 87–8). The church in Spain thus tended to be much more an organization of the state than an organization of society. The following are Brennan's (2000:52) scathing words:

Instead of meeting the Socialists and the Anarchists on their own ground with labor organizations, friendly societies and projects for social reform, [the church] . . . concentrated its efforts upon the search for a government that would suppress its enemies by force.

The position of the church in Italy differed. Relations between church and state were strained from the unification of Italy to at least 1909. Indeed, the papal injunction known as the *non expedit* (meaning "it is not expedient") formally banned Catholics from participation in national level Italian political life. As a conse-

quence, Catholicism in Italy tended to be much less of a state-centered elite phenomenon than in Spain, and it tended to have a stronger grass roots organization. The Catholic reformers Romolo Murri (1870–1944) and Luigi Sturzo (1871–1959) imitated the methods of the reformist socialists and established cooperatives, unions, mutual aid societies, and popular libraries especially in north-central Italy (Webster 1960:9). Ragionieri (1972:294) writes the following:

The 'white' [Catholic] workers leagues flanked mutualistic and cooperative institutions in the urban centers and in the countryside, diffusing mostly in northern Italy, but also in some zones of central Italy and in Sicily.

Thus, precisely because of its difficult relationship with the Italian state, the church tended to produce more associations in Italy than in Spain. The similarities and contrasts between the two cases can be briefly summarized with quantitative evidence.

Table 1 shows five indicators of regional variation in the strength of civic associationism in prefascist Italy, and it suggests a fairly clear

Table 1. Regional Variation in Civic Associationism in Italy

Region	Cooperatives 1915	Leagues 1912	Members of Leagues 1912	Literate Persons (%) 1911	Periodicals 1905
Basilicata	36	0	0	35	2
Abruzzo and Molise	68	0	0	42	5
Sardinia	64	1	321	42	3
Calabria	117	1	102	30	4
Campania	231	4	613	46	10
Sicily	374	6	1,087	42	5
Marche	225	5	496	49	8
Apulia	263	5	2,104	41	5
Umbria	104	5	646	51	11
Veneto	669	5	664	75	6
Piedmont	620	8	930	89	12
Lazio	447	9	1,002	67	26
Tuscany	770	12	1,116	63	13
Lombardy	1477	15	1,316	87	12
Emilia-Romagna	1575	100	7,886	67	8
Liguria	389	16	1,873	83	12

Note: Data shown as number per 100,000 inhabitants, except where indicated.

Sources: Capecchi, Vittorio and Marino Livolsi. 1971. *La stampa quotidiana in Italia*. Milan, Italy: Bompiani; Degl'Innocenti, Maurizio. 1977. *Storia della cooperazione in Italia: 1886-1925*. Rome, Italy: Riuniti; Forgacs, David. 1990. *Italian Culture in the Industrial Era: 1880–1980*. Manchester and New York: St. Martin's Press; Ministero di agricoltura, industria e commercio. 1913. *Statistica delle organizzazioni di lavoratori*. Rome, Italy: Officina poligrafica.

Table 2. Regional Variation in Civic Associationism in Spain

Region	Associations 1928	Workers' Associations 1904	Workers' Associations 1913	Bosses' Associations 1913	Mixed Associations 1913	Nonprofessional Associations 1913
Galicia	8	4	<i>34</i>	17	1	5
Leon	9	6	18	25	1	<i>21</i>
Aragon	10	4	15	<i>46</i>	2	<i>18</i>
Andalusia	10	8	26	13	1	5
Asturias	10	7	<i>41</i>	34	2	3
Murcia	11	4	29	21	1	11
Extremadura	12	8	11	19	1	10
New Castile	16	<i>11</i>	28	22	2	13
Catalonia	25	23	<i>49</i>	<i>45</i>	3	<i>96</i>
Valencia	26	<i>13</i>	<i>44</i>	40	5	<i>21</i>
Basque Country	28	<i>20</i>	<i>82</i>	<i>47</i>	4	<i>33</i>
Old Castile	29	<i>10</i>	30	52	4	13
Navarre	<i>44</i>	7	16	<i>64</i>	4	9

Note: Data shown as number of associations per 100,000 inhabitants. Numbers in *italic* represent the top five regions within each of these associational indicators.

Sources: Instituto de Reformas Sociales. 1915. *Avance al censo de asociaciones*. Madrid: Imprenta de la Sucesora de M. Minuesa. Instituto de Reformas Sociales. 1907. *Estadística de la asociación obrera*. Madrid: Imprenta de la Sucesora M. Minuesa. Ministerio de Trabajo y Previsión. 1930. *Censo corporativo electoral*. Madrid: Imprenta de los hijos de M. G. Hernández.

north-south split. Veneto, Piedmont, Lazio, Tuscany, Lombardy, Emilia-Romagna, and Liguria had among the highest number of cooperatives per 100,000 inhabitants in 1915, highest densities of leagues, and highest densities of members of leagues per population. All of these provinces also had literacy rates of well over 50 percent (ranging from 51 percent in Umbria to 89 percent in Piedmont) and relatively high densities of periodicals when controlled for population.

Three associational censuses redacted in 1904, 1913, and 1928 give a similar picture for Spain. The *Instituto de reformas sociales* gathered the information for the first two censuses. The information for the third census was gathered in preparation for elections to de Rivera's national assembly (Table 2).

This evidence, like the Italian evidence, shows sharp regional imbalances in the Spanish associational sphere. The de Rivera survey includes information on three main kinds of association: associations of riches and production, workers' associations, and cultural associations. The other surveys include information on workers', employers', nonprofessional associations (like choral groups), and mixed workers and employers' associations. The bolded figures in each column represent the top five

regions on each one of these associational indicators. Catalonia and the Basque countries in every survey, for every indicator were among the top five regions in associational density. This is particularly important because these were precisely the areas with the strongest regional nationalist movements. Valencia followed these regions. It was in the top five on five of the indicators, and scored sixth in the density of employers' associations. Old Castile was in the top five on four indicators; Navarre three indicators; Aragon two indicators; and Galicia, Leon, and Asturias one each. Andalusia, Murcia, and Extremadura were not in the top five on any of these indices. Even in its areas of greatest strength the Spanish associational sphere was probably weaker than its Italian counterpart.

Table 3 compares the two associational spheres in terms of five indicators. In Italy by 1915, there were about 21 cooperatives per 100,000 inhabitants. In Spain, the corresponding figure was about 3. In Italy, the socialist party had entered parliament already by 1900 and played an important role in the struggles around the turn of the century. In Spain, the socialist party did not enter parliament until 1910, and it did not play an important political role until 1931 with the rise of the second republic. By the post-World War I period, approximately 5 per-

Table 3. Civic Associationism in Italy and Spain Compared

Indicators	Italy	Spain
Cooperatives per 100,000 inhabitants in 1915	21	3
Date of the entrance of the Socialist Party into Parliament	1900	1910
Percentage of the Population Enrolled in Socialist Unions in the post WWI period	5%	1%
Percentage of the Population enrolled in a political party in the post WWI period	1.0%	0.2%
Number of Literate Persons per copy of the major daily around 1914	60	143
Percent of the Population who could sign their names in 1910	62	50

Sources: Forgacs, David. 1990. *Italian culture in the industrial era 1880–1980: Culture industries, politics and the public*. Manchester and London: St. Martin's Press; Desvois, Jean Michel. 1978. "Las transformaciones de la prensa de la oligarquía a principios del siglo." *La crisis del estado español: 1898–1936*, edited by M. Tuñón de Lara. Madrid: Editorial Cuadernos para el Diálogo; Degl'Innocenti, Maurizio. 1977. *Storia della cooperazione in Italia 1886–1925*. Rome, Italy: Riuniti; Istituto de reformas sociales. 1915. *Avance al censo de asociaciones*. Madrid: Imprenta de la sucesora de M. Minuesa de los Rios; Linz, Juan. 1967. "Five: The Party System of Spain: Past and Future." *Party Systems and Voter Alignments: Cross National Perspectives*, edited by Seymour M. Lipset and Stein Rokkan. New York: Free Press; Seton-Watson, Hugh. 1967. *Italy From Liberalism to Fascism: 1870–1925*. London, England: Methuen; Tortella, Gabriel. 2000. *The Development of Modern Spain*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

cent of the population was enrolled in the socialist unions in Italy, and only about 1 percent in Spain. In postwar Italy, about 1 percent of the population was enrolled in one of the two mass parties (the socialists or the populari), while in Spain the corresponding figure was 2 percent. In Italy, 1 copy of the major daily newspaper *Il corriere della sera* circulated a day for every 60 Italians who could read, whereas in Spain 1 copy of *El debate* circulated for every 143 Spaniards. Finally, literacy was about 12 percent higher in Italy than in Spain in 1910.

The evidence then suggests two conclusions. Associationism was regionally uneven in both countries. In Italy, associations concentrated in Lombardy, Veneto, Emilia Romagna, and Tuscany. In Spain, associations concentrated in Catalonia and the Basque countries. However, in Spain, the associational sphere was generally weaker and split by regional nationalism, while this was not the case in Italy.

THE POSTWAR POLITICAL CRISES AND AUTHORITARIANISM IN SPAIN AND ITALY

Spain and Italy entered into similar political crises in the postwar period. The *biennio rosso* (red two years) in Italy, from 1918 to 1920, resemble the *trienio bolchevista* (Bolshevik three years) in Spain. Both were periods of social unrest following a failed attempt to sig-

nificantly extend political and civil rights. In both cases, conflicts pitting an alliance of radicalized urban and rural workers against a coalition of powerful industrial and agrarian ruling classes and small landowners undermined a postwar democratic trend. A countermovement, which emerged after the defeat of the revolutionary threat but presented itself as a defense against revolution, formed the basis for an authoritarian seizure of power in each country. But differences in the strength of the associational sphere affected the organization of authoritarianism within and between the two countries. In Italy, where associationism was well developed, fascists developed a mass party organization. In Spain, associationism had similar effects, but since the associational sphere was less developed, only regionally bound proto-fascist movements were possible.

Italy emerged from World War I with a deeply shaken conservative government facing a broad democratic coalition based on demobilized recruits (Tasca 1950:20). Most historical evidence indicates that the majority of the war veterans were interested in an expansion of Italian democracy, and the establishment of a constituent assembly. This political mood grew out of democratic interventionism, the movement that had pushed Italy to join the war on the side of the allies against the reactionary central powers. De Felice ([1965] 1995:469) writes, "the idea [of a Constituent assembly] circulated a lit-

tle in all quarters of democratic and revolutionary interventionism, and was not lacking supporters even among the non-maximalist socialists." For example, the main veterans' organization, the *Associazione nazionale dei combattenti* (The National Association of Combatants) made this a central plank of its program (Tasca 1950:20).

The immediate postwar period in Spain, and particularly in Catalonia, bears many similarities to the Italian case. Here the conservative Lliga Catalan spearheaded an assembly movement that linked socialists, Catalan regionalists and army reformers in a coalition that pushed for a constitutional convention. The Lliga Catalan dominated the movement, which also included political representatives of Asturian and Basque heavy industry (Harrison 1976:912). As Boyd (1979:78) remarks, this was an "attempt at bourgeois revolution." In both cases, however, an in part real and in part perceived red threat scuttled the possibility of a gradual extension of democratic rights. Men of property in both cases perceived this mobilization as especially threatening because it included both agrarian and industrial workers, and because it came on the heels of the Russian revolution.

Italy seemed on the brink of social revolution between 1918 and 1920. A mass socialist party, which had rejected collaboration in World War I and was explicitly committed to socialist revolution, seemed poised to win parliamentary power. Strike activity increased dramatically from 1918 to 1920 in both industry and agriculture (Elazar 1993:189). The old liberal élites were without political instruments to deal with these pressures. *Trasformismo* had basically ceased to operate by 1913, but a truly bourgeois party had not yet developed (Chabod 1961:41–2).

The situation in Spain was similar. Since 1917, strikes shook both Barcelona and the Andalusian countryside. The high point of this strike wave in Barcelona was the strike against an electrical firm called *La Canadiense* (The Canadian), which shut down 70 percent of the power to the city for over a month (Tusell 1990:167). During the so-called Bolshevik three years from 1918 to 1920, massive strikes broke out across Andalusia; and in Catalonia, the anarchists, socialists, and right-wing organizations fought one another in the street (Tusell

1990:169). The agrarian unrest was as threatening as the anarchist agitation in Barcelona. Esdaile (2000:241) writes, "Andalusia experienced a wave of strikes that brought an increase in wages, a reduction in working hours, the recognition of anarchist unions as *de facto* labor exchanges, and the abolition of piece works." In some places, the strikes were so successful that even the servants and the wet nurses of the landowners joined forces with the day laborers, and men of property fled their estates to the cities (Esdaile 2000:245). The monarchy came to terms with the army organized as the *Juntas de defensa*, an organization formed in 1916 to protect the interests of junior officers whose salaries had been undermined by postwar inflation and who resented "special promotions for *africanista* officers" (Payne 1967:184; Boyd 1979:76). The Spanish king Alfonso XIII met the demands of the military reformers and immediately used the army to crush the socialist-anarchist alliance (Boyd 1979:82–5; Brenan 2000:65–9; Tusell 1990:159–60).

THE CRISES COMPARED

Thus, in Spain and Italy, the basic social conditions for right-wing mass mobilization were present (Ben-Ami 1983:33–48). Preston (1990:13) writes, "In many respects, the Spanish crisis of 1917–23 is analogous to the Italian crisis of 1917–22." The combined effects of World War I and the Bolshevik revolution radicalized the industrial and agrarian proletariat in both cases (Carr 1982:509). In different ways, the political systems of both cases faced what were apparently insurmountable crises (Carr 1982:489–97; Tusell 1990:94–8).

There was, however, a crucial difference between the *biennio rosso* and the *triennio bolchevista*. In Italy, the crisis was intimately linked to the country's participation in World War I. Spain, as a neutral country, did not face this problem. Given that fascism initially arose precisely as a war veterans' organization, this difference is crucial. One of the main consequences of Italy's participation in World War I was precisely to exaggerate the differences between Italian and Spanish associational spheres already present in the prewar period. Especially after the defeat at Caporetto, in which the Austrians pushed the Italian army deep into its own territory, the war set off a wave of asso-

ciationism that continued into the postwar period (De Felice [1965] 1995:388–9; Gentile 1989:70–1). Italy's postwar experience was thus an instance of the broader phenomenon that participation in mass mobilizing warfare tends to be civic association building (Skocpol 1999:54–60).

In part, as a result of this development in the associational sphere, the Italian state faced a challenge of a different magnitude from its Spanish counterpart. In Italy, the strike wave of 1918–1920 combined with a serious electoral challenge by the socialist party, and to a lesser extent the Catholics. In Spain, no such direct political challenge to the Restoration system emerged. At no point in postwar Spain did any political force challenge the monopoly of the two dynastic parties (Linz 1967:212). The two crises were thus socially similar, but politically different.

CIVIC ASSOCIATIONISM AND RADICAL RIGHT POLITICAL PARTIES IN SPAIN AND ITALY

How, then, did differences in the strength of the associational sphere at both the regional and cross-national levels relate to differences in the development of fascist movements and regimes in the two cases? A relatively strong associational sphere provided the indispensable organizational environment for the development of radical right-wing movements in both Italy and Spain. But the relative weakness, and especially regional fragmentation, of the Spanish associational sphere meant that only regionally bound protofascisms could emerge in this case.

ITALY

Figure 1 is an overlay of fascist cell organizations per 100,000 people in 1921 on a map adapted from Robert Putnam's indicators of civic associationism from 1861–1920.² Since Putnam's approach is explicitly neo-Tocquevillian, the striking correspondence

between fascist cell organizations and the strength of civic associationism provides strong evidence for my argument (for a similar argument, see Kwon 2004). What explains this surprising relationship between the strength of civic associationism and fascism? This section identifies two mechanisms. First, a relatively strong associational sphere facilitated recruitment. In this context, fascists could expand by forming a federation of allied organizations and penetrating enemy organizations. Second a relatively strong associational sphere provided organizational techniques that the fascist movement and party adopted.

RECRUITMENT. The strategy for fascist expansion, established by Umberto Pasella, the first general secretary of the fascist party, was to multiply the number of cell organizations (*fasci*) as rapidly as possible. Pasella would contact a local sympathizer who would then organize a founding meeting. The movement at the beginning was internally highly democratic. Each organization was autonomous in its policies, and there was little formal doctrine constraining the members (Gentile 1989:40–1). Emilio Gentile (1984:253) writes the following:

As a self-styled 'libertarian' movement, the *Fasci di combattimento* had no statute or detailed regulations: organizations and methods of struggle were dictated by circumstances. There were no ties of leadership and members could also join other parties so long as they were patriotic and anti-Bolshevik. During this period [1919–1920], the ideology and organization of fascism were formed spontaneously or by imitation, thanks to local initiatives, often on the part of individuals and which frequently proved ephemeral.

Fascism in Italy thus became a mass movement precisely by providing an alliance framework for various preexisting associations. Two of these were especially important: patriotic associations and agrarian associations. Patriotic associations had a prominent place in the north-central Italy from the 1860s (Ridolfi 1999:156). They undertook various kinds of activities, such as dedicating monuments and conducting funeral services. Wartime mobilization, basically from 1915, gave a massive push to this form of associationism. These organizations were already in place well *before* the emergence of the fascist party in 1921.

² An earlier draft of this paper presented, in addition to the Putnam map, a map using the indicators in Table 1. Please contact the author for further information.

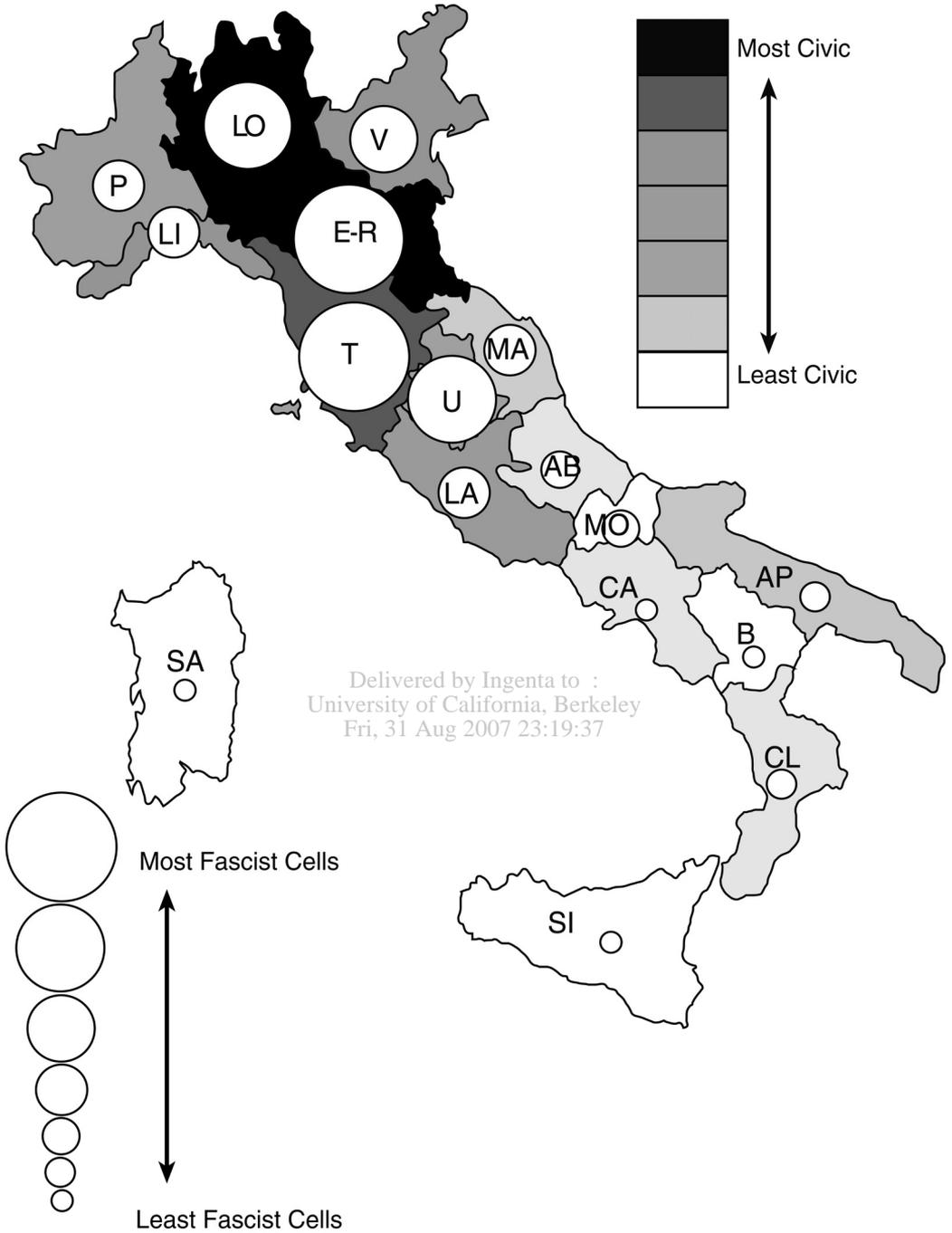


Figure 1. Fascism and the Strength of Civic Associationism

Note: Region names have been abbreviated as follows: AB = Abruzzi; AP = Apulia; B = Basilicata; CA = Campania; CL = Calabria; E-R = Emilia-Romagna; LA = Lazio; LI = Liguria; LO = Lombardia; MA = Marche; MO = Molise; P = Piemonte; SA = Sardinia; SI = Sicily; T = Tuscany; V = Veneto. *Sources:* Adapted from the following: Putnam, Robert D. 1993. *Making Democracy Work*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. Reprinted by permission of Princeton University Press. The information on fascist cell organizations is from the following: Gentile, Emilio. 2000. *Fascismo e antifascismo. I partiti italiani fra le due guerre*. Florence, Italy: Le Monnier.

Archival documents provide some sense of the Italian world of patriotic associationism, among which the fascists first expanded. Consider a political meeting that Mussolini attended in January of 1919 two months before he decided to found his own organization. This was a meeting of various Milanese patriotic associations to constitute a Milanese association for the League of Nations. The Italian National League and the Wilsonian Propaganda group called the meeting, to which they invited the heads of 24 patriotic organizations (ACS; MI; DGPS; 1919; Milano; Document 564). The meeting resolved to found a new association and entrusted a committee to draw up a statute and provide for financing. In April 1919, the Committee for the Defense of the Rights of Italy met to decide what kind of relationship it should have to Mussolini's newly formed *fascio di combattimento*. Approximately 200 people were at the meeting, and there was lively debate in which the committee decided to cooperate with Mussolini's organization to form propaganda squads (ACS; MI; DGPS; 1919; Milano; Document 2523). In May 1919, Mussolini's organization was cooperating with a larger umbrella group called the *fascio* of patriotic associations (ACS; MI; DGPS; 1919; Document 15933). Across northern Italy, numerous such associations formed in the period from 1915 to 1919. At Cremona, Venice, Milan, Turin, and Modena, groups with names like the League for Civil Defense, the Patriotic League, Social Renovation, the New Contract, and The Italian League for the Protection of National Interests formed the core of subsequent fascist cell organizations (Gentile 1989:70–4).

The fascist movement expanded precisely by providing a loose umbrella organization that welded these groups together. Indeed Mussolini's initial aim in founding what he called the *fascio di combattimento* was "to unite in a single *fascio* with a single will all the interventionists and the combatants, to direct them toward a precise aim, and to valorize the victory" (Chiurco 1929:98–9). In line with this strategy, the fascist movement first burst onto the national political scene as an electoral bloc, and then as a federation of local militia organizations. Fascism formed as a political party only in November 1921 (Gentile 1989:316–84; Milza and Berstein 1980:113).

But fascism did not arise just as an alliance of patriotic associations. The decisive expansion of the movement occurred in the first six months of 1921 as a result of its alliance with agrarian organizations. These organizations, as I indicated previously, emerged in response to day laborer and sharecropping organizations in the early twentieth century. They organized strike-breaking funds, financed local newspapers, established banks that funneled money to small holders (in an attempt to alter the agrarian class structure), and financed cooperatives and insurance for "free laborers" who agreed not to join the socialist leagues (Ministero di Agricoltura Industria e Commercio 1912:13). The fascist movement grafted itself on to this associational terrain. This gave it an anarchic and decentralized character. Despite the efforts of the urban leadership to control the financial basis of the movement, agrarian fascism was self-financing. The fascists set up informal taxation at the local level, and did not transfer funds to central committee in Milan. The *agrari* financed local fascist organizations and newspapers, not the Milanese leadership (De Felice [1966] 1995:45; Gentile 1989:166–8). In that sense, agrarian fascism was simply a re-edition of the agrarian organizations of the prefascist period (Gentile 1989:166). Fascism in the first instance was a broad alliance of two main kinds of associations: veterans' associations and agrarian associations.

In addition to providing an alliance framework for the agrarians and the patriotic associations, fascism penetrated the preexisting structure of working class associationism. For example, Roberto Farinacci (1892–1945), second only in importance to Mussolini among fascist leaders, used his contacts in the railroad unions, which he had established as a socialist, to build up a powerful local organization (Cordova 1990:45–53; De Felice [1966] 1995:506; Lyttelton 1987:171). Further, many of the rural leagues and chambers of labor, generally under the pressure from the fascist militia, passed over in their entirety to the fascists in the early 1920s. This provided fascism with an immediate mass organization in precisely those areas where socialist associationism had been most developed in the prefascist period (Ridolfi 1997:340–2; Tasca 1950:164). Regarding the case of Ravenna, Italian historian Maurizio Ridolfi (1996:262) writes that there

“were several examples of self-dissolution [of agrarian leagues], often passing directly over the fascist syndicate organizations.” From February to April 1921, masses of peasant leagues and union organizations shifted as a bloc to the fascists (Cordova 1990:42–3). The fascists also took over the entire structure of cooperative societies, erecting in 1926 the *Ente nazionale di cooperazione* (National Institute of Cooperation) (Degl’Innocenti 1981:51). Fascists purged these organizations of their previous leadership and then converted them to institutions linked to the party (Degl’Innocenti 1981:53). In 1928, after the operation of purging, there were still over 3,000 cooperative societies in Italy with over 800,000 members (Degl’Innocenti 1981:56). The fascists did not dismantle the socialist organizations; they penetrated them and used them to build their own mass organizations.

ORGANIZATIONAL TECHNIQUES. The Italian associational sphere, in addition to facilitating recruitment, provided specific organizational techniques that the fascists used in constructing their own party organization. Many of the associations discussed previously undertook three main types of activity: resource collection, cultural activities and social assistance. Fascist party federations conducted all three of these activities in ways that were strikingly similar to prefascist associations.

The agrarian organizations discussed in the preceding section depended upon contributions from local owners. Specifically, these usually took the form of “ordinary contributions” based on the area of land held and income, and “extraordinary contributions” collected at fixed rates for all the members (Ministero di Agricoltura Industria e Commercio 1912:13). This was exactly the principle method of resource collection used by the fascist federations. The fascist party secretary Achille Starace (1889–1945) codified the distinction between ordinary contributions based on ability to pay and extraordinary contributions in an administrative act in 1935 (PNF 1935:191–7). Administrative documents from the federations themselves show that this distinction was widely used from the early 1930s. Further, prefascist Italian associations (both elite and nonelite) were often linked to a newspaper. Funding a newspaper was also one of the principle activ-

ities of all fascist federations. In addition to the big national fascist papers, such as *Il Popolo d’Italia*, each federation had its regional publication. Finally, the fascist federations distributed considerable social assistance both in the form of small loans and in kind (this information is based on budgets contained in ACS; AF; PNF; DN; Servizi; Series I; boxes, 708, 714, 827, 829, 1123, 1128 and Series II; boxes 1091, 1181, 1584).

Further, the fascist party used specific political techniques, especially drawn from the sphere of socialist associationism, to establish control over the working class. The clearest example of such a technique was the labor quota. One of the key achievements of socialist organizations in the Po Valley was the imposition of a labor quota on employers that would ease cyclical unemployment among day laborers. Fascist unions generally kept labor quotas as a means of threatening agrarian employers and winning some mass support (Lyttelton 1987:223).

Given the continuities between fascism and the prefascist associational sphere in terms of recruitment mechanisms and organization, it is not surprising that, where civic associationism was less developed, especially in the south of Italy, the fascist party had enormous difficulty consolidating. Southern Italian fascism tended to be one of three things: a criminal organization tied to the agrarians, a superficial political cover for personalistic clientele, or an apolitical reform movement based on the military. The weakness of southern fascism was expressed in the greater power that prefects had in relation to the federal secretaries in these regions. Fascism as an autonomous party organization remained a phenomenon of north-central Italy (Colarizi 1977:156–63; Corvaglia 1989:822; Lyttelton 1987:189–90). The relatively strong associational sphere in northern Italy, then, provided key organizational resources for the development of the fascist movement, and then party. Thus, in the Italian case, a relatively strong associational sphere, far from constituting a barrier against the development of an authoritarian party, provided the materials out of which the fascist party was constructed.

SPAIN

The same general relationship holds for Spain with the fundamental difference that de Rivera did not come to power on the basis of a party movement, but rather he created a state party after the seizure of power. To the limited extent that fascist-like movements emerged in Spain in the early 1920s, they were located in the areas of the country with dense associational spheres. De Rivera's state party the *Unión Patriótica* (UP) developed in part as an attempt to copy Italian fascism, and in part as a union of various spontaneous efforts to support the dictatorship. Spontaneous support for the de Rivera coup concentrated in Catalonia and the provinces of Old Castile. In Catalonia the militia organizations reorganized themselves into the *Federación Cívico-Somatenista*. A group of Catholic conservatives in Valladolid in Old Castile formed the *Unión Patriótica Castellana* in November 1923. When de Rivera formally launched the state party in April 1924, a "powerful network of Catholic syndicates, newspapers, and ecclesiastical lay associations" formed the initial basis of many party cells (Ben-Ami 1983:130). The relationship between Catholic associationism and the UP is particularly striking. As the research of Gómez-Navarro shows, two different types of UP cell organization emerged after 1926. In the south in the areas of large landholding the old political bosses from the liberal period penetrated the UP. In the center and north, however, it was men coming from social Catholicism, either as union organizers or leaders of local Catholic political organizations such as the *Partido Social Popular* (PSP) who dominated the UP (Gómez-Navarro 1991:255).

But these pockets of authoritarian mobilization were isolated and they could not support the development of a mass national party as in the Italian case. The UP was never a dynamic party organization. Its central office was run out of the Ministry of the Interior. Furthermore many of its members were state employees who had been forced to join in order to keep their jobs. In addition former political bosses of the *el turno* system flocked into the party in order gain jobs and patronage (Ben-Ami 1983:140). Thus regional differences affected the UP as much as they had the parties of the *el turno*. The Castilian and Catalan groups competed to gain control of the new state party. The dictator's approach to these conflicts was to make the UP politically

ecumenical including everyone from the fascists to the old dynastic liberals (Ben-Ami 1983:131; Gómez-Navarro 1991:255–60). The UP had no affiliated professional organizations, little doctrinal base, and an extremely weak party press. To join the party one had simply to be recommended by a member and pay an annual fee of a single *peseta* (an incredibly small amount considering that the wages of a day laborer in the late 1920s were between three to five *pesetas* a day) (Gómez-Navarro 1991:231–3). The UP was basically a new organization for the old political bosses or *caciques*. This was clearly not an organization that provided the regime with structured support. One of the most remarkable features of the de Rivera regime is that the dictator did not appeal to support for the UP when his other sources of support began to decline in the late 1920s (Ben-Ami 1983:388).

THE REGIMES COMPARED

The existence of a strong authoritarian party in Italy and the absence of such a political force in Spain in part determined the differences between the two regimes. In both Spain and Italy, authoritarian regimes consolidated only several years after the seizure of power. By the mid 1920s, both had broken with even formal constitutional legality (De Felice [1968] 1995:3; Gómez-Navarro 1991:264). But the two regimes assumed an opposite stance toward their societies. Italian labor unions, professionals' groups, and industrialists' groups were forced either to dissolve or to become fascist organizations. This entailed formal politicization of a range of previously nonpolitical organizations. Thus, the Italian regime tended to become a hegemonic authoritarian regime because it expanded the realm of politically relevant activity (Milza 2000:800). The Spanish regime, by contrast, tended to depoliticize the associational sphere. Gómez-Navarro (1991:394) writes the following:

The regime of Primo de Rivera sought and promoted working class and professional associationism while repressing and curtailing political associationism.

One key reason for these different outcomes was the strength of the party organization in Italy compared to Spain.

FROM 'LIBERAL FASCISM' TO FASCISM AS REGIME

It was only from January 1925 (three years after the seizure of power in October 1922) that Mussolini's government began systematically to eliminate legal opposition and subordinate associations to the fascist party (De Felice [1968] 1995:220–1; Lyttelton 1987:269). The driving force of this process was the fascist party, which mobilized *against* Mussolini's attempt to establish a personalistic regime closely resembling the parliamentary dictatorships of prefascist Italy. The party thus constitutes the link between associationism and hegemonic authoritarianism in the Italian context. By the end of the 1920s the party established control over Italian society. Only approved fascist unions, employers' organizations, and professional organizations remained in effective existence (Rosenstock-Frank 1934:80–1). Opposition parties were outlawed. Citizenship was now considered a privilege reserved only to those who demonstrated political loyalty to the regime. Like all hegemonic authoritarian regimes, it required citizens "to participate, and special rights and privileges [were] reserved to those who demonstrate[d] their active commitment by joining the party" (Lyttelton 1987:149). The fascist regime thus demanded active rather than passive consent.

This outcome was in part the result of the defeat of Mussolini's initial postseizure of power strategy of establishing a personal dictatorship, which resembled in many ways the transformist governments of Giolitti. After the March on Rome, Mussolini moved to eliminate the fascist party as a major player by establishing an alliance with the bureaucracy, the General Confederation of Labor (CGL), the confederation of Industry, and a number of major political leaders of liberal Italy (Cordova 1990:177). The effort came close to succeeding. The CGL initially seemed open to collaboration. In early October 1922, the reformist unions renounced their alliance with the socialist party (Milza and Berstein 1980:180). For the next two years an alliance between Mussolini and a depoliticized labor movement, seemed not only possible but likely (Cordova 1990:168–78; De Felice [1966] 1995:617). Many of the leaders of liberal Italy also seemed willing to cooperate. Mussolini's first government was a formally constitutional coalition government in which

his own party had only 35 of the more than 400 seats (De Felice [1966] 1995:479). His entire policy from 1923 to 1924 was devoted to establishing a Giolittian style big majority and then passing an electoral law that would further solidify this majority. In order to govern, Mussolini used exactly the same techniques that Giolitti had perfected during the previous two decades. He worked to establish a big majority of the center by appealing to individual deputies to join his project for a big national list which most of the liberal deputies joined (De Felice [1966] 1995:575; Sabbatucci 2003:66–7). The regime that would have emerged from such an alliance would clearly have been much less hegemonic than the fascist regime actually was, and it probably would have closely resembled the de Rivera regime in Spain, as Lyttelton (1987:236) suggests.

That Mussolini was unable to establish a regime of this type is closely linked to the fact that it ran contrary to the basic interests of the fascist party. The formation of the party created a social agent whose vital interests consisted in politically incorporating ever-larger chunks of Italian society. The more unions, professional organizations, and cultural activities came within orbit of the fascist party the more posts there were for party members, and the more dues would flow into the organization (Lyttelton 1987:236; Pombeni 1984:487). Even relatively limited political pluralism threatened these interests. Mussolini's maneuvering in 1922 through 1924 had the predictable political consequence of creating an intransigent fascist alliance made of up the militia organizations headed primarily by Farinacci, and the union organizations led by Edmondo Rossoni (1884–1965).

From 1923 to 1925, the Farinacci–Rossoni axis organized a second wave of mass mobilization along two parallel lines: militia squad mobilization and a union offensive. Squadrist mobilization throughout the summer, fall, and winter 1924 combined with a series of delegations to Mussolini demanding a radicalization of the regime, constitute the immediate background for Mussolini's speech on January 3, 1925. This indicated the end of the parliamentary regime in Italy. From 1924 to 1926 a parallel mobilization of the fascist unions achieved a fascist monopoly on labor representation in April 1926 (De Felice [1966] 1995:453, 457;

Gentile 1984:259–60; Lyttelton 1987:245–67; Milza and Berstein 1980:180–7; Uva 1970:1031, 1052–3).

This analysis suggests then that the party was the key agent establishing a hegemonic authoritarian regime in the Italian case. As shown in the previous section, the party's development in the Italian case depended upon the existence of a strong associational sphere. Thus, this institution constitutes the key link between associationism and hegemonic authoritarianism in the Italian context.

FROM THE MILITARY DIRECTORATE TO THE CIVIL DIRECTORATE

As in the Italian case, it was initially unclear if de Rivera intended to break with the constitutional set up of 1876 and the old two-party system associated with it. The transition to a regime in the Spanish case occurred between December 1925 and September 1926 (Ben-Ami 1983:57; Gómez-Navarro 1991:265). There is little doubt that Italian fascism constituted a model for the Spanish. De Rivera and the Spanish king Alfonso XIII traveled to Italy in November of 1923 (two months after the pronunciamiento). To Victor Emmanuel III (1869–1947), the king of Italy, Alfonso reportedly introduced de Rivera as “his Mussolini,” and both stated that they hoped to “follow the path of fascist Italy” (Gómez-Navarro 1991:129–30). The historical connection between the two regimes makes their comparison especially interesting, because it demonstrates how similar political projects produced different regimes, in different historical contexts.

The establishment of the civil directorate and a national consultative assembly were the key moments in the turn toward a regime in Spain. The UP played no role in this turn. The driving force was de Rivera's desire to establish structured civilian support (Gómez-Navarro 1991:267). The lack of a strong authoritarian party meant that large areas of society remained outside any regime organizations. For example, the corporatist organizations of the de Rivera regime in contrast to fascist Italy left an only marginal role for the state party. The basic principle of de Rivera's consultative assembly was representation on the basis of “interests” rather than individual representation. There were four groups of representatives: those of the

state, those of the provinces, those on their own account, and those of “activities.” All of these representatives were selected from these four groups, and state employees and UP party members made up a substantial part of the assembly. However, highly specific interests, such as the Basque and Catalan bourgeoisies, the orange growers of Valencia, and olive and wheat growers, all had men in the Assembly without having any formal relationship to the UP (Gómez-Navarro 1991:277). The point of this assembly was largely to represent important economic interests socially, but not politically (Gómez-Navarro 1991:282).

The de Rivera Spanish regime set up a system of labor relations that was modeled on Italian fascism. But there was a huge difference between them. The fascists established regime organizations for all interest groups. The de Rivera regime pursued a different strategy. The regime repressed communist and anarchist organizations and compromised with socialist and Catholic ones. The split between these two strategies is apparent from the different way that strikes were handled according to who led them. If the striking organizations were affiliated with the communists or anarchists, then they were turned over to general Severiano Martínez Anido (1862–1938) at the Ministry of the Interior and therefore dealt with as a police matter. If the striking organizations were affiliated with the socialists, and thus considered politically safe, Eduardo Aunós Pérez (1894–1967) at the Ministry of Labor dealt with the strike as a matter of social policy (Gómez-Navarro 1991:412–3). Thus, the de Rivera regime institutionalized the division between political and apolitical activity, a distinction that the Italian fascist regime deliberately sought to erase. Thus, while the Mussolini regime after 1926, drilled workers, professionals, and owners into organizations controlled by the political organization of the fascist party, in de Rivera's regime the workers could belong to any organization they liked, and owners interacted with the regime largely through their own organizations (Ben-Ami 1983:292). Further, unlike in fascist Italy, in de Rivera's Spain workers could strike, as long as they made no political demands (Ben-Ami 1983:309).

The Italian regime by 1926 consolidated as a hegemonic authoritarian regime. In contrast, the de Rivera regime consolidated as an eco-

nomic-corporate dictatorship relying on the traditional instruments of the police and the army, and a system of informal cooptation of interest groups. The relationship of the regime to its key supporting interests was quite different from the case of the fascist regime. The de Rivera regime established a sharp division between social and political organizations, whereas the fascist regime overcame this division to a certain extent.

DISCUSSION

The analysis developed in the previous section suggests that a fascist regime in Italy emerged partly as the result of a relatively strong associational sphere in the prefascist period. While associational development occurred in Spain as well, it was weaker. These differences in the associational sphere affected the strength of authoritarian party organizations in the two cases. I show that fascist membership and cell organizations closely followed associational strength in Italy. The same general relationship held in Spain. Where the associational sphere was relatively strong in Spain, the UP was a more viable organization than it was in areas of weak associational development. However, because of regional differences and a general lack of associational development, the party organization in Spain was weaker. Different types of authoritarian regimes resulted. In Italy, a hegemonic authoritarian fascist regime emerged partly as a result of the fascist party's struggle against the central leadership. In Spain, the absence of a strong party allowed the regime to develop as a more relaxed economic corporate dictatorship. This evidence challenges the Tocquevillian account of authoritarianism. Associationism in Italy enabled both authoritarian party formation and, indirectly, the consolidation of a hegemonic authoritarian regime. In Spain, precisely the weakness of the associational sphere undermined both processes.

Other studies point in a similar direction (Berman 1997; Hagtvet 1980; Kaufman 1999; Koshar 1986; Kwon 2004). The research of Koshar (1986:96), Hagtvet (1980), and Berman (1997) has effectively demonstrated that the Weimar Republic in Germany had a dense associational sphere. Hagtvet (1980) shows that the constituencies among which the National Socialists drew the most support, white-collar

employees and small peasants, had among the strongest intermediate associations in the Weimar period. Further, the regional distribution of Spanish mass right-wing mobilization in the Second Republic is interesting. Historians suggest that mass right-wing mobilization concentrated in the Basque Provinces and in Navarre (Payne 1980:428). As I show, these were also provinces that had among the highest levels of civic associationism in Spain. Some work on contemporary Eastern Europe suggests that a strong associational sphere can sometimes aid parties of the radical right (Fisher 2003:91). The relationship between associationism and radical political parties does not seem to be restricted to right-wing radicalism. For example, Bonnell (1983:444) shows that the most organized, craft conscious sections of the workforce, not deracinated rural migrants were most susceptible to radical political ideas in late Tsarist Russia. Service (1979:36) also emphasizes the importance of working class self-organization to the ascendancy of the Bolsheviks.

These findings imply important theoretical consequences for theories of civic associationism. As I indicate at the beginning of this article, Tocquevillian work emphasizes two mechanisms by which associations block the development hegemonic authoritarian regimes: insulation and organizational balancing. Tocquevillians tend to argue that strong associational spheres insulate populations from over politicization (Kornhauser 1959:97). Thus scholars in this tradition suggest that by aggregating interests around local concerns, civic associationism promotes political moderation (Putnam 1993: 16–38; Tocqueville 1988:523). The absence of local level interest aggregation leaves the way open for totalitarian movements that appeal to mythical and inherently unrealizable political projects (Arendt 1958:311; Kornhauser 1959:46, 64). Tocquevillians also suggest that a dense associational sphere should inhibit hegemonic authoritarian regime formation by substituting private initiative for state initiative, and by balancing state power. Both of these claims seem untenable on the evidence presented here and in much other work. Membership in associations oriented toward local and readily understandable political projects not only seems compatible with, but an essential ingredient of, the organization of anti-

democratic mass party formation in a variety of historical contexts. Furthermore, strong associational spheres can operate as highly effective transmission belts for the consolidation of hegemonic authoritarian regimes after an authoritarian seizure of power.

The Tocquevillian argument is based on a two-sector model in which the associational sphere and the sphere of states and mass parties act, to a certain degree, as alternatives. It is precisely this model that Gramsci (1971:258–9) implicitly challenges. For Gramsci's work focuses on the *relationship* between the associational, party and state spheres, rather than parsing them into separate conceptual boxes. The Gramscian argument emphasizes the importance of political context in shaping the relationship between the associational sphere and regime formation. Civic associations, for Gramsci, are an organizational layer of modern society that may be mobilized for various political projects. None of this is to suggest that associationism is unimportant. For, as this article shows, associationism can shape authoritarian regimes. In this sense my argument has implications for theories of regime variation. The categories of dictatorship and democracy (or, for an earlier period, constitutionalism and absolutism) miss important dimensions of variation within each type. Much recent work on the state challenges these conceptualizations, either by focusing on the microprocesses of political power such as discipline (Gorski 2003), or by stressing the relative independence of administrative infrastructure from regime form (Ertman 1997). In the spirit of this work, this article stresses hegemony as an independent axis of regime variation. One of the most important ways that authoritarian regimes vary is in the degree to which they politicize the population (that is achieve hegemony), rather than basing themselves on a pragmatic bargain with key social groups. It is in trying to understand this aspect of regime variation that scholars should take the development of civic associationism seriously. As I show in two cases that were likely to generate some kind of authoritarianism, the degree of associational development explains the specific form that authoritarianism took. In this sense, my argument is a plea to bring the literature on civic associationism directly to bear on the problem of regime variation. This links to a final objective of this article: to develop ana-

lytically, and to demonstrate the empirical usefulness of, Gramsci's political sociology. Gramsci's reception in the social sciences, and specifically in sociology, has been narrowly focused around culturalist and economic interpretations of hegemony. But Gramsci also had a highly original and empirically useful political sociology. His central innovation was to develop a typology of regimes based on the concept of hegemony that breaks radically with the standard distinction between democracy and dictatorship. The key point is that hegemony constitutes an analytically distinct axis of regime variation connected to the strength of the associational sphere. Future scholarship should attend to the interrelationship of associationism and hegemony in both authoritarian and democratic contexts.

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