

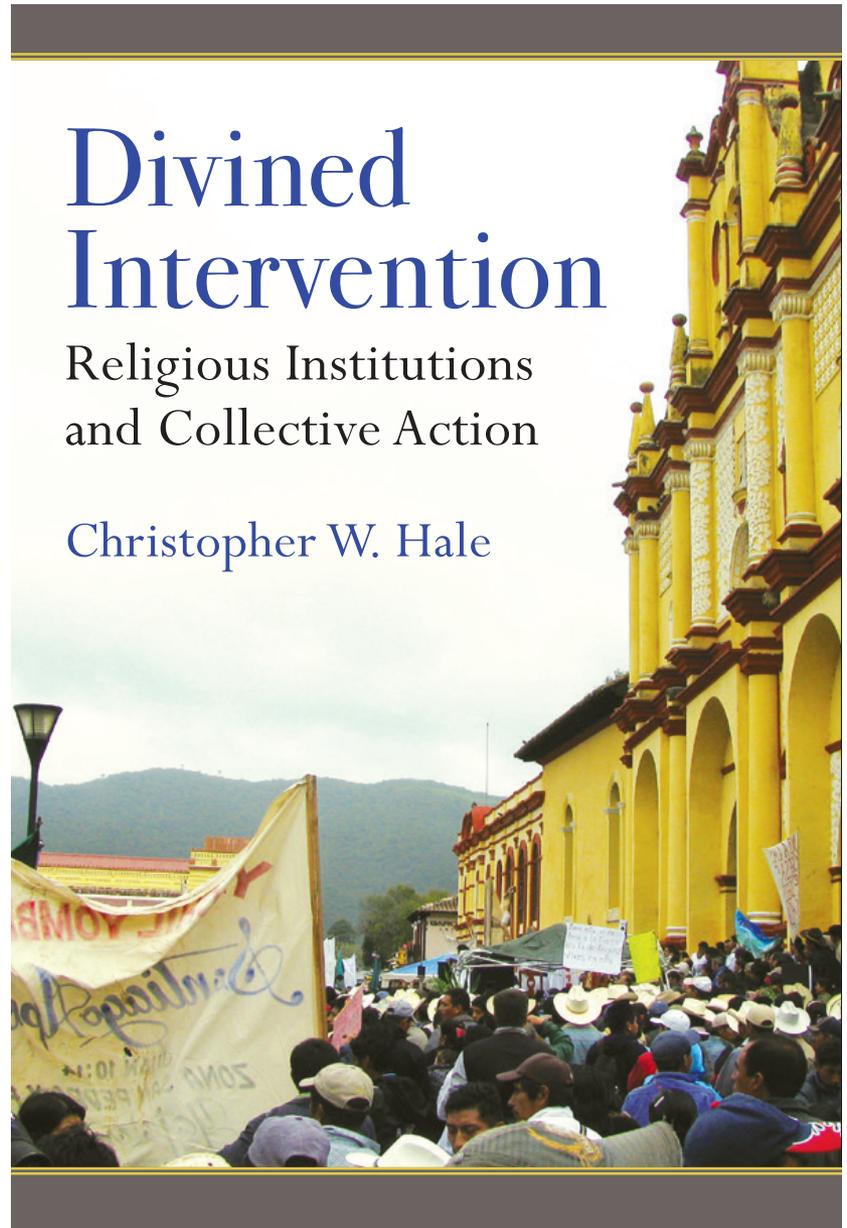
Global Religion Research Initiative

- Round 1:
Book Leave Fellowship
 - 2017-2018 academic
school year
- Led to book publication:
 - University of
Michigan Press
 - March 2020

Divined Intervention

Religious Institutions
and Collective Action

Christopher W. Hale



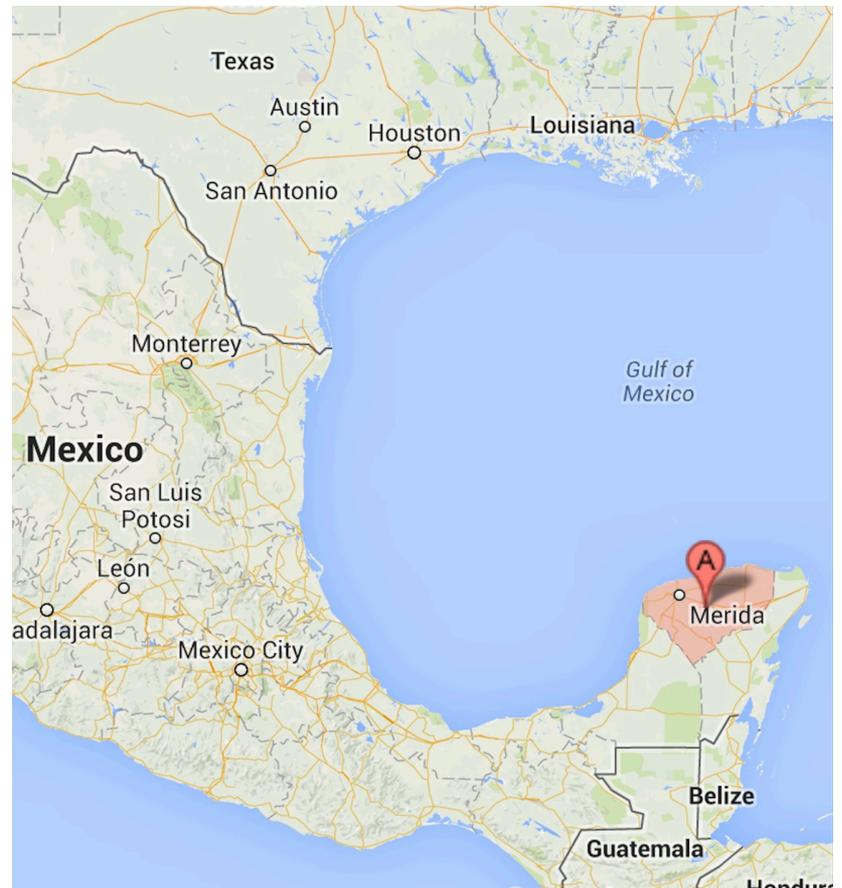
Why Indigenous Activism in Chiapas and Not Yucatan?



- Chiapas
 - Desperately poor
 - Large indigenous population
- High levels of indigenous activism:
 - EZLN (Zapatistas)
 - Vibrant civil society
- Catholic communities play important role

Why Chiapas and Not Yucatan?

- Yucatán
 - Desperately poor
 - Large indigenous population
- Little political activism
- Little activism from Catholic communities



Why Chiapas and Not Yucatan?

Chiapas

- 2,382 protest events
- 24.6% indigenous
- 57.3% rural poverty
 - Worst in Mexico

Yucatán

- 60 protest events
- 37.3% indigenous
- 48.4% rural poverty
 - Third worst in Mexico

Research Question

- Why do religious institutions facilitate secular political activism in some settings but not others?
- I argue where religious institutions are decentralized, they overcome local collective action problems and create an organizational infrastructure enabling political activism.
- Theoretical implications for:
 - Non-state local institutions and collective action
 - Ethnicity and public goods
 - Ideology vs. interests

Presentation Organization

- Previous Literature
- My Argument
- Research Design/Case Selection
- Quantitative Analysis / Results
- Qualitative Analysis / Results
- Implications/ Avenues for Future Research



Religion and Collective Action:

- Political process approach
 - Focus on frames, opportunity, and resource mobilization in creating collective action
 - Previous literature has successfully illustrated role of religious frames (C. Smith 1991; Philpott 2007, 511; Hurd 2008; Philpott 2000; Fox and Sandler 2006; Thomas 2005; Mitchell 2007) and religious opportunity structures (Gill 1998; Trejo 2012)
 - Problem: religions simply assumed to mobilize resources
 - How and when do they build grassroots resources?

Religion and Collective Action:

- Rational choice approach
 - Emphasis on free-rider problem (Olson 1965; Buchanan 1965)
 - Individuals have incentives to free ride off efforts of others
 - If all individuals share such incentives, little collective action is to be expected
 - Strict religious sects weed out free-riders and enable collective action (Iannaccone 1994; Berman 2011)
 - But mainstream religious institutions also can prompt collective action – difficult to explain from this perspective

My Argument

- Political activism creates benefits that are public goods
 - Subsequently subject to the free rider problem
- Decentralized religious institutions lead to political activism
 - Decentralization means local-level governance by the laity:
 - Monitoring, sanctioning, decision-making
 - Mechanism to overcome free riding incentives

- Causal Mechanism:

Decentralization → Reciprocity → Club Goods → Organization



Political Activism

Research Design

- Quantitative analysis
 - Mexican National Survey of Political Culture and Civic Practices Dataset
- Methodological advantage:
 - X is related to Y
- Qualitative Analysis
 - Case comparisons of Chiapas, Yucatán, Morelos
 - Extensive field research and interviews conducted in each state
- Methodological advantage:
 - How/why is X related to Y



Case Selection



- Why Mexico?
 - Common predominant religion in Roman Catholicism
 - Variation in Catholic governance styles across country
 - Variation in levels of activism

Statistical Analysis (Data)

- Dependent variable data source:
 - ENCUP dataset
 - 9,000 individuals
 - Protest activity
- Independent variable data sources:
 - Catholic Hierarchy Organization
 - Mexican Episcopal Conference
 - Mexican Census
 - Mexican Federal Electoral Institute
 - Jean Meyer's "La Cristiada: Los Cristeros" Vol. 3
 - United Nations Program for the Development of Mexico
 - National Commission for the Development of Indigenous Peoples

Activism Statistical Model:

- **Dependent variable:**
 - Activism
- **Independent variables:**
 - **Religious decentralization**
 - Religious competition
 - Political theology
 - Party competition
 - Church/state legacies
 - Deprivation
 - Ethnic heterogeneity
- **Individual Controls:**
 - Economic status; gender; age; religiosity

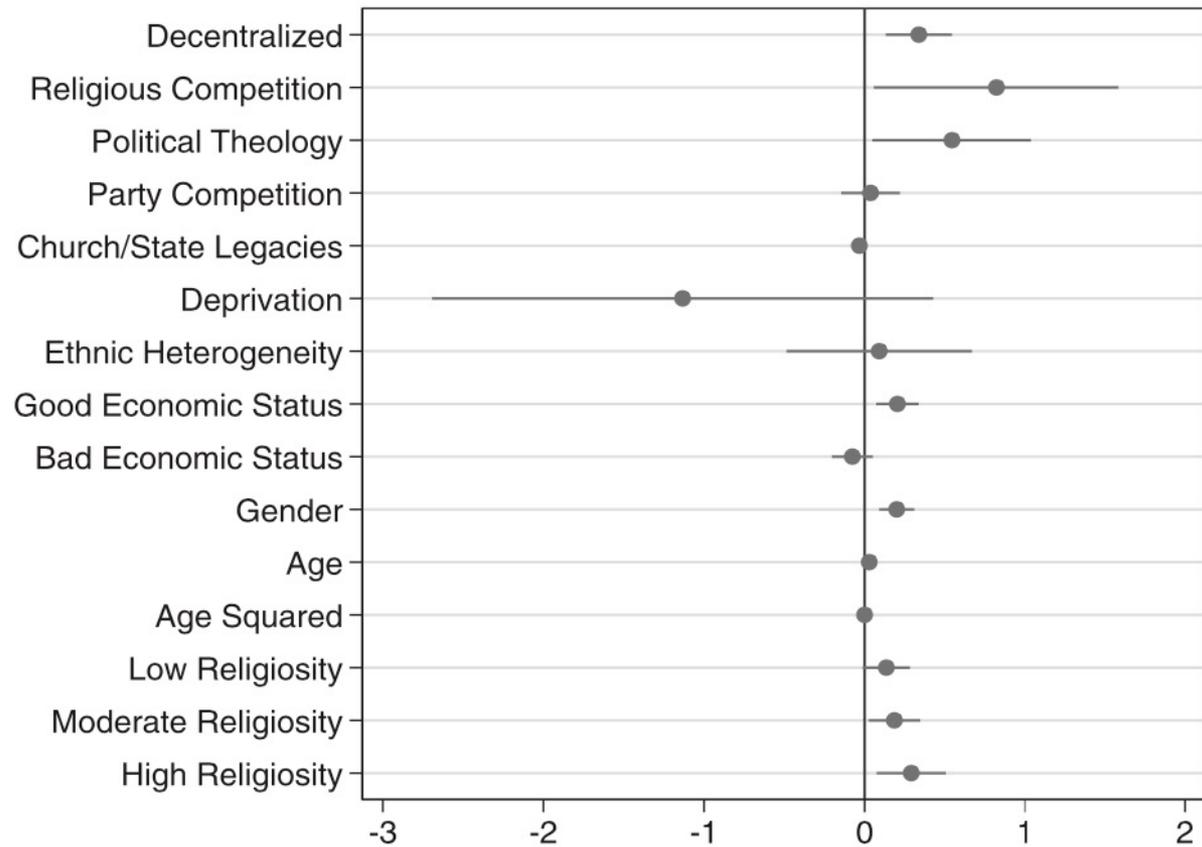


Activism Statistical Model:

- Primary model ran as fixed effects logistic regression
 - Fixed effects at diocese level
 - Year fixed effects
 - Standard errors clustered by diocese
- Robustness checks for:
 - Random effects
 - OLS
 - Variations on activism measure
 - Variations on decentralization measure
 - among others



Activism Statistical Model Results (Primary Model)



Statistical Analysis Primary Findings

- Religious decentralization strongly associated with increased individual-level political activism
- Presence of a political theology and religious competition are also both strongly associated with increased individual-level political activism
- There is a positive interaction effect between religious decentralization and both 1) political theology and 2) religious competition
 - The implication is that decentralization (enabling resource mobilization), political theology (framing), and religious competition (opportunity) mutually reinforce each other's impact on encouraging collective action

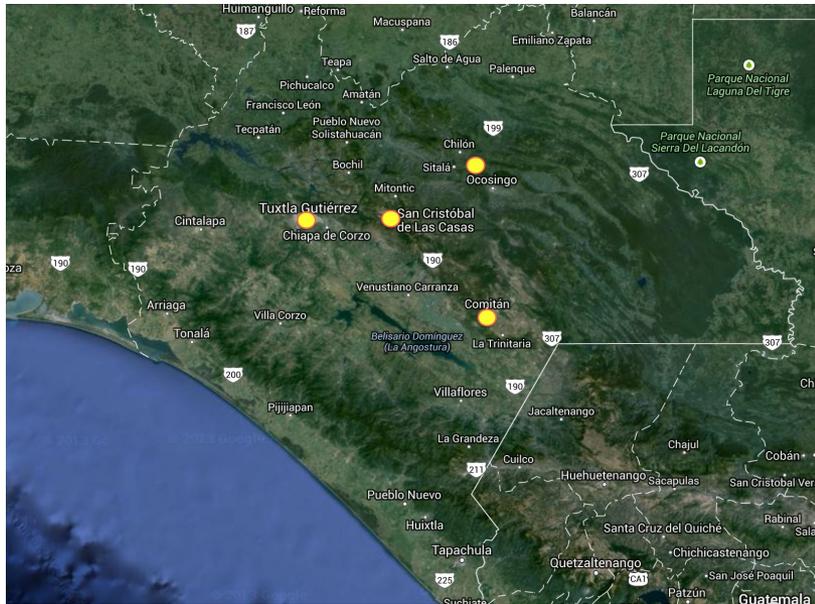
Qualitative Comparison / Data

- Comparison of indigenous political activism across three Mexican states:
 - Chiapas
 - Yucatán
 - Morelos (“shadow” case)
- 70+ interviews conducted in the field from 2011 to 2012
 - Bishops / priests / nuns
 - Laity
 - Political party leaders
 - Civic activists
 - Cooperative members
 - Regular citizens

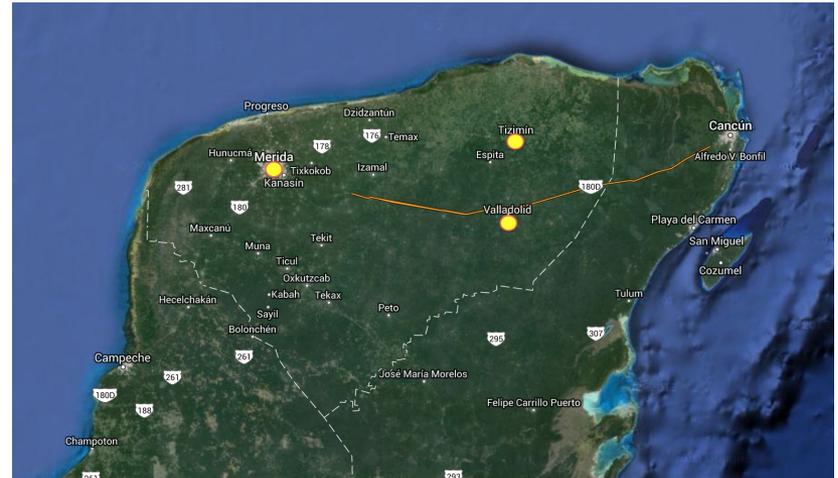


Location of Interviews

Chiapas



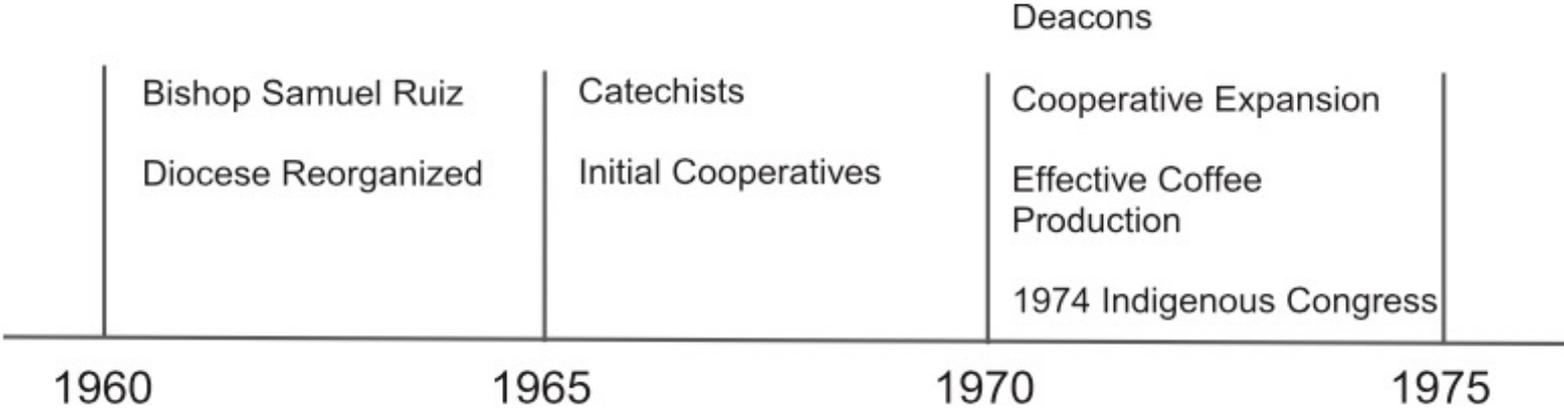
Yucatán



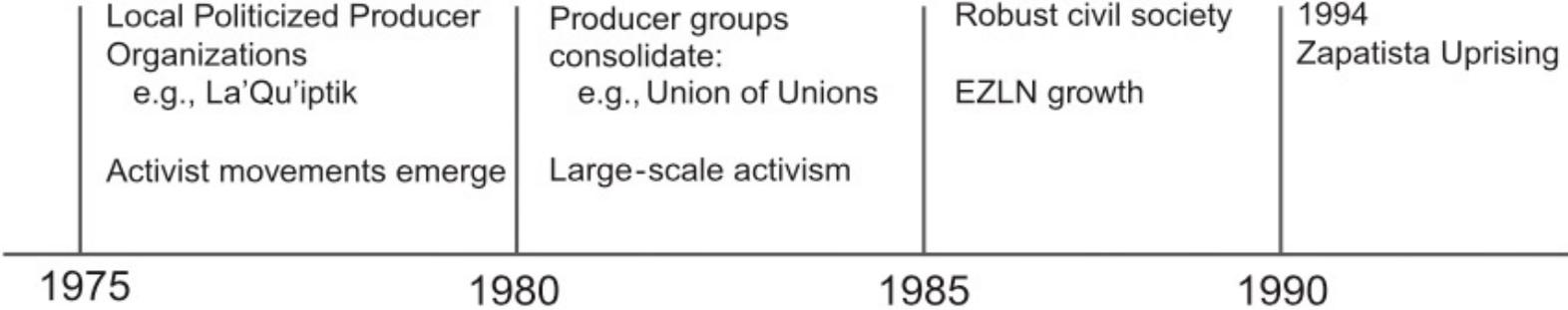
Chiapas

- High levels of indigenous activism
- Vibrant and engaged civic associations
- Rise during the 1970s and 1980s
- 1994 Zapatista uprising

Chiapas: Timeline of Events



Chiapas: Timeline of Events



Yucatán

- Low levels of political activism
 - Few indigenous or civic organizations
 - Few organized protest events
- “There are very few civic associations here”
(Interview 37)

Yucatán

- Archdiocese of Yucatán highly centralized
 - Doesn't facilitate local monitoring, sanctioning, or decision making
- Few networks of reciprocal interaction
 - Few regional civic organizations
 - No capacity to organize

Major Results - Qualitative

Chiapas

Highly Decentralized



High Reciprocity



Many Club Goods



High Organizational Capacity



Vibrant Political Activism

Yucatán

Highly Centralized



Little Reciprocity



Few Club Goods



Low Organizational Capacity



Little Political Activism

Summary of Primary Findings

- Religious decentralization positively associated with political activism
 - Statistical results demonstrate individuals in decentralized Catholic dioceses have higher propensities for engaging in activist activities
 - Qualitative case studies:
 - Decentralization overcomes free rider problems and incentivizes engagement
 - As more individuals interact, religious club goods increasingly valuable
 - More individuals interact – develop organizational capacities to manage club goods
 - These organizational capacities can then be marshaled for political activism
 - Presence of political theology and religious competition also positively associated with activism
 - Decentralization, political theology, and religious competition work together to create activism and mutually reinforce one another

General Implications / Avenues for Future Research

- Provides a framework for collective action combining insights from political process and rational choice approaches
- Framework for understanding nonstate institutions' ability to impact collective action generally
- Greater insights into the relationship between ethnic diversity and public goods
 - Ethnic heterogeneity often thought to be negatively associated with public goods
 - Project suggests multiethnic communities may be better able to produce public goods where decentralized institutions encourage the production of goods and services across ethnic communities